

# **MODULE 14: TERMINATION**

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## Module 14: Termination

The objectives of this module are to: 1) Review client progress, 2) Affirm the client for positive changes, and 3) Consider additional treatment referrals.

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### ====|| Module Outline ||=====

#### Target Discussion Points

- Check-in
- Express appreciation
- Discuss perceptions about change
- Explore thoughts about ending treatment
- Discuss areas for continued work
- Help the client prepare for the transition
- Consider additional referrals
- Complete agency-specific tasks
- Summarize session

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#### Importance of termination session

The client's relationship with the Clinician may play an important role in his or her efforts to change. Therefore, it is important to provide ample time in a termination session to reflect upon your work together, the client's progress in treatment and his or her feelings about ending treatment.

#### Timing of termination session

The termination session can be used at any point when the client is discontinuing therapy, whether it is planned or unplanned. If the client decides to leave treatment earlier than initially planned, this session may still be conducted in an abbreviated form with the client at the final session. When a client leaves early it may be helpful to discuss reasons for discontinuing treatment early.

#### Focus of session

In the majority of cases, the final session should be focused on termination alone. If there is something that needs to be wrapped up from a previous session, sometime within the termination session may be used to complete this unfinished work. However, the majority of the session should focus on bringing treatment to a close.

## **Prepare for termination**

### ***Clinician preparation***

Prior to termination, it can be helpful for the Clinician to review all case notes, worksheets and other materials completed during the treatment. Taking time to review materials may help the Clinician to recognize major accomplishments the client has made as well as the specific areas in which the client might need to strengthen his or her skills. Discussing the progress a client had made will help to reinforce the behavior change, and will be affirming to the client. The Clinician may also find it necessary to express concerns about problem areas in which the client needs additional work. The Clinician should also consider problem areas that the client declined to address within treatment. Aftercare plans should be finalized before the termination session to allow time for the client and Clinician to review them in the termination session.

### ***Prepare the client***

It is important to begin to prepare clients for termination well before the last session. When treatment is time-limited, the Clinician should make certain the client understands how many sessions will be provided for the client during the initial session. Periodically throughout treatment the Clinician should then remind the client how many sessions are remaining. By preparing the client ahead of time and providing reminders, the Clinician and client will have the opportunity to prioritize remaining skill modules and revise the treatment plan as needed.

*“We have three more sessions together after our meeting today. I want to make sure you use the remaining time in a way that will be most helpful to you. We may want to look over your treatment plan again; there maybe some material that we have not gotten to yet that you want to be sure we cover. We’ll also need to make sure your aftercare is in place before you leave so let me know if you have any concerns about the plans we’ve discussed.”*

### **Check-in**

The Clinician should conduct a brief check-in to assess how the client has been doing. Time for discussion of client’s thoughts, questions, or concerns about the session material from the previous week may be taken as needed.

*“Welcome back. It’s good to see you again. How have you been doing since our last session?”*

*“Do you have any questions or thoughts about what we worked on last time we met?”*

### **Express appreciation**

The Clinician should discuss his or her appreciation for working with the client. This should be individualized to the Clinician’s experience with the client.

*“Today is our last session together and I just wanted to let you know that I’ve really appreciated having the opportunity to work with you over the last 12 weeks. You’ve brought a great sense of courage and humor to our work together. You’ve had a lot of obstacles to overcome and I know it hasn’t been easy but you’ve been here every week and that shows how determined you are to make some changes in your life. I’d like to spend most of our time today talking about the changes you have made in your life over the course of this treatment. I would also like to hear something about where you think you’re going from here.”*

### **Discuss perceptions about change**

One of the primary purposes of termination is to acknowledge and affirm the changes that clients make over the course of treatment. Time should be used to discuss both the client’s and Clinician’s perception of changes that have occurred in therapy.

The Clinician should begin by eliciting the client’s thoughts about his or her view of changes in treatment. This discussion might include what has been helpful during the course of treatment in assisting the client in making changes.

*“We started working together about 12 weeks ago, and it seems a lot had changed since that first session. What do you see as the most important changes that you have made since we began our work?”*

*“You see that not drinking is the big change... I’m wondering what the impact has been on your life since making this change?”*

*“What was most helpful to you during this treatment?”*

*“What is the most important thing that you will take with you as we end our work together?”*

The Clinician should provide some feedback to the client about major positive changes as the client discusses his or her perceptions of change.

*“I’ve seen you go through a number of changes since we began working together and it’s clear that you’ve worked very hard to bring these changes about. When you came into treatment you were still drinking and having a very difficult time coping with urges but you’ve developed a number of different ways to manage this when it happens. You briefly returned to drinking but you were able to turn it around really quickly because this something you really wanted. You’ve been willing to take some chances and get involved with some new people in A.A. and I know that wasn’t easy for you. It seems like your overall mood is better and that figuring out how to spend your free time and finding new ways to enjoy yourself without drinking has really made a difference. I don’t think that would have happened if you weren’t so willing to try out new things.”*

### **Discuss thoughts and feelings about ending treatment**

The Clinician should use open-ended questions to explore the client's thoughts and/or feelings about ending treatment.

*“Now that treatment is coming to an end, I'm wondering what your feeling or thoughts are about this?”*

The Clinician should reflect what the client offers, regardless of whether the client's feelings are positive or negative. Some clients will experience negative feelings at the end of treatment either because it was not helpful or because it makes termination easier. If the client is terminating early, the Clinician may want to leave the door open to come back if the client changes his or her mind.

### **Help the client prepare for the transition**

The Clinician should review the client's aftercare plans during the termination session. Some clients may find it difficult to transition from weekly treatment to not having any type of planned treatment activity in their lives. If the client anticipates that being without weekly treatment might be a problem, or the client's past history suggests a potential problem (e.g., immediate resumption of substance use after terminating treatment), the Clinician should help the client plan how to seek adequate support and structure time.

*“You have some apprehension about not having a weekly appointment over the next month. It may be good to put some extra time into planning how you can get support through this transition. Would you like to take some time to talk about this?”*

### **Help the client find additional treatment**

Some clients will transition into additional treatment after this treatment is completed. If this is the case the Clinician should make certain the client has the referral information and will be able to complete the referral without difficulty. If there are potential barriers to completing the referral, the Clinician may want to engage the client in problem solving to limit the chances of a failed referral.

### **Help the client to prepare for other goals**

Some clients will have specific goals that they want to accomplish after formal treatment is completed. The Clinician should reinforce these goals and the client's self-efficacy or perceived ability to change on his or her own.

*“You have accomplished a lot in a fairly short period of time. There may be some things you hoped to get to during our work together, or even things that you are now just considering. I am wondering, what you think is important to continue working on by yourself as we end our work together?”*

If the client has not yet achieved abstinence this may involve continuing to work toward this goal. If the client has achieved abstinence this may involve working on other lifestyle changes that will improve the quality of his or her life.

*“What other areas of your life do you think will be important to work on as you end this treatment for alcohol?”*

The Clinician can use this opportunity to discuss the client’s strengths and skills in being able to make some changes in their alcohol or drug use and talk about how the client might be able to apply these skills to making other changes in his or her life. The Clinician should try to elicit statements from the client that reflect confidence in being able to make important changes if he or she is motivated to do so.

### **Complete agency specific tasks**

Complete any agency specific paperwork with the client as needed.

### **End session**

*“I just want to let you know before we close that I really appreciate you coming in for the past 12 weeks and sharing how difficult things have been for you as a result of your cocaine use. I admire all the hard work you’ve done so far to make changes in your life. You seem to have a realistic view of how things are in your life and seem intent about continuing to work out some things we’ve talked about, especially getting a better handle on your moods. With the progress you’ve made so far I feel very optimistic that things will continue to improve for you and I wish you the best of luck in the future.”*

**APPENDIX A  
TERMINATION  
SESSION MATERIALS**



## Module 14 Session Checklist

### Termination

<b>PREPARATIONS</b>	✓
Session checklist	
Agency-specific paperwork	
<b>GETTING STARTED</b>	
Check-in	
Review previous session	
Set the agenda	
<b>DISCUSSING THE CLIENTS PROGRESS</b>	
Express appreciation	
Explore client's perceptions of change	
Provide feedback about progress	
Affirm client's efforts	
<b>PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE</b>	
Discuss aftercare plans	
Explore areas that need additional work	
<b>WRAP UP</b>	
Complete agency-specific paperwork	
Say goodbyes	