

Goal Setting with your Clients

NC Positive Charge Initiative ★ www.NCcommunityAIDSfund.org

Resources for Access Coordinators – Tools

December 2011



Goal setting can be a useful way to target a single thing a client wants to accomplish and perhaps faces a number of barriers to achieving. This will allow you and your client to identify and break down the barriers your client may face and to identify the strengths the client has that will allow them to achieve their goal. Unlike a care plan that may include many goals, this activity is meant to look at one goal at a time, but look at it in depth. Help your client complete the plan to achieve their goal, but let them do the work - then it will be meaningful.

Goal The client should identify a goal that is meaningful to them - that fulfills their needs, not yours.

- ➔ Improve my health, Eat healthier, or Cut back on cigarettes
- ➔ Start going to doctor again
- ➔ Attend AA meetings 3 times a week, Attend counseling every week

Why do you want to achieve this goal? What is your motivation? Help your client think about why it's important to them that they achieve this goal. It might be to improve themselves or they may be doing it for someone else.

- ➔ For myself, my family, children, parents, or partner
- ➔ For my church, card group, neighbors that depend on me
- ➔ To be a role model
- ➔ To be the best I can be

Understanding why we want to achieve something helps us stay motivated when faced with challenges – especially if we want to achieve a goal that will benefit someone other than ourselves. It also reminds us we are not alone.

This can help start the discussion about what resources your client has to achieve their goal.

What has kept you from achieving your goal? It's important to understand the barriers that have prevented your client from achieve his or her goal so that you can address those. But it's also important not to dwell on what your client feels he or she may have done wrong in the past, so use this as a way to empower your client to problem solve these barriers.

- ➔ Are there financial challenges that have prevented them from achieving this goal?
- ➔ Is your client scared or nervous? Do they think people will judge them?
- ➔ Are there logistical barriers like transportation, child care, or time off from work?
- ➔ Does your client know how to make the appointment, where to go, and what to bring?
- ➔ Has your client tried to accomplish this goal before? Could they not achieve it? Did they achieve it for a while and then stopped their progress or relapsed?

What resources do you have to help you achieve your goal? Everyone has special skills and resources, sometimes we just have to be creative in finding them. Help your client think about skills or talents they have, support systems that could help them, resources in their neighborhood or family.

- ➔ Does your client go to choir every week, then they can get to an appointment on time too.
- ➔ Is there a bus stop in the neighborhood? That can make transportation easier.
- ➔ Do they like to explore town? Then going to a new clinic might not be a challenge.
- ➔ Do they have a positive attitude?

These are all resources that may help your client achieve the goal. Wanting to make a change is a resource itself!

What steps are you going to take to achieve your goal? Now that you have talked about why your client wants to do this, what the challenges might be, and what strengths they have that will allow them to achieve it, it's important to have a plan. Be specific as to what the client will do, what other people (Access Coordinator, case manager, family...) will do, and when it will be done. By breaking down a big goal into little steps, it will be easier to achieve. Going to the doctor for the first time may seem really hard, but making an appointment or checking the bus schedule isn't. As your client completes steps along the way, they will be reassured that they can achieve their goal, step by step. The plan will also remind him or her that others are supporting them and helping them achieve their goal – they are not in this alone.

- ➔ What is the first small step you are going to take toward your goal?
- ➔ What do you need to do to accomplish this goal?
- ➔ What are you going to do? What can someone else help you do?
- ➔ When are you going to do these things?
- ➔ Are you going to check in with someone (case manager, Access Coordinator, medical care provider, family member) when you achieve a step or need help?

Use these tips and questions to help you get the conversation going if your client can't think of any strengths, barriers, or motivations, but it's important to let your client create the plan, your role is to guide and support them.

A few more things to keep in mind:

- ★ Help your client think of all of the strengths, talents, assets, skills, and knowledge they have that will help them achieve this goal - empower your client.
- ★ If your client has tried to accomplish this goal before and not been successful, they might be discouraged from trying it again. Have a positive attitude with your client, don't focus on their past challenges but help them see the possibility of achieving their goal.
- ★ By breaking down a big goal into little steps it will make the tasks easier and your client more likely to succeed.
- ★ Check in with your client after the plan is in action, support them when they fall behind, celebrate with them when they succeed.
- ★ Help them remember why this goal is important to them and all the support they have to achieve it.

Name:

Date:

Goal:

Why do you want to achieve this goal?
What is your motivation?

What has kept you from achieving your goal?

What resources do you have to help you achieve your goal?

What steps are you going to take to achieve your goal?

Name: Julie Johnson - SAMPLE

Date: 11-11-10

Goal: Start going to the doctor

| Why do you want to achieve this goal? What is your motivation? | What has kept you from achieving your goal? | What resources do you have to help you achieve your goal? | What steps are you going to take to achieve your goal? |
|--|--|---|--|
| <i>Improve my health Live longer Take care of my children See my child graduate from high school Be a good example to my family Prove to myself that I can do it</i> | <i>Don't currently have a doctor Scared of hospitals Busy taking care of my family Transportation Money Don't know where to start Scared to know if my health is good or bad</i> | <i>Support and love from my family Bus stop near my house I have friends who go the doctor, I can talk with them about it Access Coordinator can help me find a doctor I want to do this I have a home and food to eat each night Neighbors can check on my children when I have an appointment</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Access Coordinator will help my find a doctor2. I will call and make my first appointment3. I will ask my case manager for a bus ticket4. Access Coordinator will call me one week before to remind me of my appointment5. I will ask a friend how to get to the clinic6. I will write down my questions for my doctor before I go7. Access Coordinator will meet me at the clinic8. After my appointment I will check in with my Access Coordinator in case I have any questions9. I will ask my case manager for help getting prescriptions, if I need any10. I will write down the time of my next appointment on my calendar and will tell my Access Coordinator11. I will call my Access Coordinator or doctor if I have any questions12. My Access Coordinator will remind me 1 week before my next appointment and will meet me at the clinic |