

SJMRR Teleconference Summary

Topic: Writing for Publication

Speakers: Dr. Susan Parish, Assistant Professor of social work at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Dr. Charlie Lakin, Director of the Research and Training Center on Community Living (RTC/CL), University of Minnesota

Dr. Parish shared her thoughts on writing for publication from the perspective of both an assistant professor that is going up for tenure in the fall and a journal editor. Parish emphasized the need to start early developing publications with faculty members and working on established research projects. When considering the requirements for tenure, Parish said, “the bottom line is, faculty must publish”. She recommended having a publication pipeline – research and writing in various stages of de-

velopment – and keeping a journal of ideas for future study. Dr. Parish also shared her perspective as an editor and offered recommendations for “dos” and “don’ts” regarding submitting articles for publication.

Dr. Lakin discussed the types of questions that reviewers must consider when reviewing a paper. Does the article address a current issue in the field? Does it align with journal’s readership, interests, and guidelines? Lakin also offered recommendations for writing:

- Do work that matters – significance of topic more important than significance of results
- Do good work – attend to details, identify the limitations, attend to others research so you know what to anticipate
- Send it to the right place – make sure your article matches the journal purpose/mission
- Benefit from the review process – value and learn from reviewer and editor comments
- Work with others – foster collaborations and reach out to new colleagues.

Finally, Lakin suggested using multiple outlets to share your research. Don’t limit yourself to research journals as these are but one method of communication. Determine your target audience, objectives, and decide on your products

Book Review:

Diagnostic Manual-Intellectual Disability

An invaluable resource for any person working with individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID), the Diagnostic Manual-Intellectual Disability (DM-ID) is a thorough look at mental health issues affecting persons with intellectual disability. Mental health issues in individuals with ID are common, but they are sometimes difficult to diagnose, especially when the level of intellectual functioning declines. This peer-reviewed manual provides adapted diagnostic criteria for individuals with ID, corresponding to disorder classifications in the DSM-IV-TR. It is also important to note that the DM-ID was developed in association with the American Psychiatric Association and the editor of the DSM-IV-TR, Michael First, is an editor of this comprehensive publication.

Each clearly written chapter presents a description of the disorder, a summary of the DSM criteria, etiological information, as well as adaptations

of the diagnostic criteria for persons with ID. The adapted criteria were derived through an expert-consensus model of clinicians and researchers who specialize in dual diagnosis and each chapter provides research support for the modifications. Many chapters highlight different methods of eliciting necessary information from individuals with ID in order to make accurate diagnoses. The manual was also field tested with 900 individuals with various levels of ID, adding to its credibility.

A variety of mental health disorders are presented in the DM-ID, of particular significance are the disorders that are more difficult to diagnose in individuals with ID due to communication or memory difficulties. Some of these disorders include dementia, schizophrenia, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and personality disorders. Other important diagnoses, such as post-traumatic stress disorders and sexuality

and gender identity disorders, are described, issues that are often ignored in the ID population.

The DM-ID is a very comprehensive guide, comprising 580 pages. A shorter volume, a clinical guide, has been abridged for clinical usefulness. Both volumes facilitate a more accurate psychiatric diagnosis of individuals with ID. The full version, however, is a must have for any person entering the field of ID, as it truly draws awareness to the mental health challenges of persons with intellectual disabilities.

The DM-ID and DM-ID Clinical Guide are available from NADD press (www.thenadd.org).

Full reference information is:

Fletcher, R., Loschen, R., Stavrakaki, C., & First, M. (2007). *Diagnostic manual- Intellectual disability: A textbook of diagnosis of mental disorders in persons with intellectual disability*. Kingston, NY: NADD.