DAP notes cheat sheet

Free template from soapnotes.xyz. Fill it in by hand or type over it.

D: DATA (the facts of the session)

What the client reported: symptoms, events, changes since last session, homework

The client's own words for mood, in quotes

What you observed: appearance, behavior, affect, speech, engagement

Scores on any measures, with the previous score

What you did: interventions, starting with a verb

Risk: that you asked about thoughts of suicide, self-harm and harming others, and the answer

Words to use: reported, stated, described, endorsed, denied, observed, presented as, demonstrated, completed, practiced

A: ASSESSMENT (your reading of the data)

Your clinical impression of how the client is doing today

Progress toward each treatment plan goal, with the evidence

How the client responded to the interventions

Any change in risk, and your reasoning

Words to use: progressing, improved, unchanged, maintained gains, minimal progress, regressed, consistent with, suggests, goal partially met

P: PLAN (what happens next)

Next session date and frequency

Between-session work

Interventions planned for next time

Referrals, coordination and follow-up, with who does what

Changes to the treatment plan, and why

Words to use: will continue, will review, will reassess, assigned, scheduled, referred, increase or decrease frequency, update treatment plan

WHERE DOES IT GO?

"I feel worse this week" -> D

Score went from 14 to 12 -> D

Taught paced breathing -> D

Denies thoughts of self-harm -> D

"Anxiety improving, uses skill with prompting" -> A

"Risk unchanged from last session" -> A

"Next session Tuesday, practice daily" -> P

Referral to a sleep clinic -> P

COMMON MISTAKES

Interpretation in Data ("client was avoidant") -> describe what you saw, interpret in Assessment

Assessment that repeats Data -> say what the data means

Plan with no date or owner -> name the next step, who and when

Data section that reads like a transcript -> summarize what matters

No goal named anywhere -> link at least one goal in Data or Assessment

CHECK BEFORE YOU SIGN

Client identifier, date, session length and type

Mood quoted, affect described

Risk asked and recorded

At least one goal named

Plan with a next step and a date

Signed with your credentials

Educational template, not medical or legal advice. Follow your employer and regulator rules.