OpenNotes and Psychotherapy: “Looking Under the Hood!”

Stephen O’Neill, LICSW, BCD, JD

OpenNotes Program
Harvard Medical School
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

2017
No Conflicts

..........to report
Goals

- Share early impressions from several years of national experience with fully open medical records
- Notes as (narrative) therapy for behavioral health and mental illness
- OpenNotes as a movement...........transparency, trust and partnership!
About the OpenNotes movement

- Began in 2010 with 105 volunteer primary care doctors and 19,000 of their patients in Boston, rural Pennsylvania, and the Seattle inner city in Washington state.

- The doctors invited the patients to read their notes via electronic portals

- Now, more than 17 million patients in the USA, thousands of doctors, nurses, therapists, trainees, physician assistants, case managers, and other clinicians are sharing notes

What's going on?
Three Principal Questions

- Would OpenNotes help patients become more engaged in their care?
- Would OpenNotes be the straw that breaks the therapist’s back?
- After 1 year, would patients and therapists want to continue?
1. BIDMC Psychiatry Department- 3/1/14 start
   Opt-in Model: 10 patients apiece

2. BIDMC Social Work Department- 4/1/14 start
   a.) Opt-out Model: All patients in
      unless specifically excluded or
   b.) Ramp-up Model: Start with smaller
      cohort and build up
15 Psychiatrists/Therapists In Psychiatry Department

24 Social Work Staff agreed to pilot; pediatric therapists and fellows excluded; staff turn over; or no eligible patients = 19 started

440 patients at start; Currently better than 3000 participating in open therapy notes
Issues:

- Domestic Violence and Safety Exclusions
- Who is ‘note’ intended for?
- Obsessive patients (“I’ve spent my whole life learning not to double think.”; “When I go to my mechanic, I don’t want to look under the hood. Same here!”)
- Paranoid patients (“I’d be petrified to look. I’m not gonna do it.”)
- Patients “in denial” and ‘premature’ info
- Language…….. Altering language and/or patients “reading at home alone with no place to process”
Looking Under the Hood

“It’s just upset.”

SIPRESS
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“Ruining Psychotherapy” (NYTimes, Washington Post, etc public comments after articles)

- Destroying the privacy expectations and the fiduciary relationship whereby patients entrust us with their ‘secrets’, especially if already agreed to under informed consent (ie- monitoring)
- “Helpful only for high functioning, well educated patients”
- “Will need to hide our diagnostic impressions”
“I’ve written my diagnosis on this piece of paper. I’m going to slide it over to you, and I want you to tell me if you’re interested.”
94% of patients agreed that opening up therapy notes is a good idea!

87% of patients want to continue having notes available

Few patients said reading notes made them feel
  ▪ Judged (11%)
  ▪ Worried (8%)
  ▪ Offended (3%)

Patients were thrilled…

They want the notes

They share them

They report important benefits

They are not scared stiff

Thread them

Patients with ‘adverse effects’ tended to clarify these concerns as underlying concerns such as privacy or already existing issues; or misinterpreted questions when asked.

Biggest issue, as in medicine, seems to be whether there is concordance between what the therapist says in session and what they write in the note.

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Privacy vs Confidentiality

18% shared notes with others (20-42% in medicine), mostly family
Patients reported important clinical benefits

59% felt more *in control* of their care
Patients reported important clinical benefits

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- 54% reported feeling better at self-care
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- 48% reported *better remembering* what working on in therapy
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- 47% felt more engaged in their therapy
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- 54% reported feeling better at self-care
- 48% reported better remembering what working on in therapy
- 47% felt more engaged in their therapy
- 55% felt better able to trust their therapist
87% of patients wanted to continue to be able to see their visit notes online.

68% of patients said availability of open notes would affect their future choice of a therapist.

Not one therapist or patient asked to stop, and almost all have since joined.

And now..................
Trust

...and the best possible outcomes
& Thanks!

www.myopennotes.org

Contact:
myopennotes@bidmc.harvard.edu