

Advocacy Tools

Medical Records

A very important tool an Advocate can use when representing or preparing a client for a probable cause hearing, capacity hearing, conservatorship hearing or in the monitoring of a facility, is the medical record. As a non-medical staff, it is sometimes difficult to interpret the terminology used or understand the reports included.

I am sending you tools that I find helpful. If any of you have tools that you find useful and would like to share, please forward them to us so we can share them with others.

Empowerment Resources (formally Empowerment Jolts) #03

✦ Medication – Maximum dosages

This is useful when preparing for a capacity (Reise) hearing. (From DMH State Psychiatric Hospital Psychotropic Medications Guidelines)

✦ Psychotropic Medications

This is a guide to the uses, common and serious side effects of many medications. It is useful for preparing for a capacity hearing and for informing yourself when working with clients who tell you they are having serious side effects. (Adapted from information presented by Dr. Coni Kalinowski, M.D.)

✦ Laboratory Reports

This is a brief chart that I developed that explains the meaning of certain lab results. This can be an important part of a client's chart to review and understand when providing evidence that your client may for example be homeless but takes adequate care of him/herself as evidenced in the laboratory results, i.e. The patient is not anemic, is of adequate weight for their height and there is no sign of infection. (reviewed by Dr. Mary Patton, MD)

✦ **Medical Terminology**

This gives you some basics for understanding more of the "medicalese" that is written in a client's chart. All medical language is a combination of prefixes and suffixes combined with the Latin word. Most of the time if you can know the prefix or suffix and the base word you can decipher the term. Also in this piece is information on abbreviations and symbols.

✦ **Blood Tests for Medication Levels Memorandum**

This is a memorandum concerning the right of involuntary patients to give or refuse all medical diagnostic or treatment procedures unless the right has been judicially removed.