

CFG's InWorld Solutions

A Virtual Environment for Assessment, Treatment, and Education

Definition:

InWorld is a virtual environment through which patients and clinicians interact using traditional computer terminals for assessment, treatment, and education. It is a tool to facilitate safe and productive interactions between a behavioral health clinician and a patient. InWorld is a virtual meeting space where a clinician and a patient can engage and interact with one another through their chosen virtual representations or avatars. Avatars represent the program user in movement, action, and communication, and the users can engage with a variety of therapeutic environments, objects, and physical identities.

InWorld can be accessed by the clinician and the patient within a common physical location or over long-distance, as with many telemedicine applications. Since InWorld uses voice over internet protocol (VOIP) each patient only needs a computer terminal with screen, an audio headset, mouse & keyboard and/or game controller to login and interact in the virtual environment for clinical interactions.

InWorld Features:

1. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP)
 - a. Avatars speak to one another rather than type
2. Flat screen display and standard central processing units
 - a. No specialty equipment
3. Wireless controller compatible
 - a. Equipment can be secured outside of inmate's reach
4. User friendly graphical interface
5. Recording of virtual sessions
 - a. Role playing, training, supervision
 - b. Video storage and export
6. Clinical front-end program for case management
 - a. Assessment forms
 - b. Progress notes
 - c. Goals mapping
 - d. Treatment planning
 - e. Access to patient records
 - f. Access to stored recordings



InWorld Corrections: Individual Assessment and Treatment

The application of InWorld to the correctional environment is unprecedented yet shows tremendous potential as a way of bringing much needed behavioral health and support services to incarcerated individuals. The InWorld service delivery mechanism allows the clinician the ability to provide behavioral health services through the use of advanced technology. For example InWorld can be utilized to demonstrate how an inmate will respond when placed in various real life situations that can be simulated through this technology. Also in situations necessitating increased security, mandated psychological treatment can still be delivered via InWorld.

The process of providing mental health services to a jail population presents a challenging endeavor requiring the management of issues related to level of care, assessment, crisis management, intervention and prevention. InWorld allows clinicians to quickly engage an inmate and assess their disposition in order to facilitate a treatment plan. In addition it allows the inmate to be emerged into real life situations enabling them to learn and practice coping skills. In the safety of the virtual environment, inmates are allowed to experiment with new behaviors and skills eventually leading to new patterns of better impulse control and self-mastery.

Our experience has enabled us to create InWorld Group counseling and therapy services that assist inmates in their adjustment to incarceration; plan for discharge into the community as well as to address problems that have resulted in their engagement in deleterious behaviors.

Examples of treatment in correctional settings include:

- Sessions targeting education about psychiatric disorders and psychiatric symptoms (i.e. depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder).
- Sessions for inmates who are diagnosed with personality disorders: borderline, antisocial, avoidant, dependant and histrionic. These sessions focus on impulse control, understanding the needs and rights of others, conflict resolution skills, ability to manage emotions and problem-solving skills.
- Sessions for inmates who show poor adjustment to jail life due to interpersonal problems, inadequate communication skills, or developmental delays. These sessions are often geared towards inmates who benefit from basic skill development in the areas of communication, understanding institutional rules and culture and problem-solving.
- Discharge planning-these session help inmates develop realistic plans for re-integration into the community. Practical issues such as obtaining appropriate mental health care and effectively seeking realistic employment opportunities are addressed in these sessions. Role playing for interviewing may be practiced. These sessions are consistently focused on the inmate meeting the challenges of community life, and avoiding the pitfalls associated with reintegration into the community.

InWorld Corrections: Group Applications

InWorld can be used for individual as well as group therapy. By using technology an InWorld clinician can organize a run a virtual group session where the participants are linked only by computers. These virtual groups allow a clinician to reach larger audiences without the increased security risks of physically moving inmates into a group room. Additionally, the anonymity offered by the user's avatar can make the group session far more productive.

Application of InWorld technology can be especially helpful in reaching groups that may pose security risks if they are assembled for in-person treatment groups, such as sex offenders.

InWorld Correctional Applications:

1. Assessment and initial evaluations
2. Prisoner reintegration preparation
3. Education and training
4. Suicide prevention
 - a. Through training & education
 - b. Inmates & staff
5. Crisis intervention
6. Individual therapy
7. Substance abuse
8. Anger management
9. Stress management
10. Social skills
11. Group facilitation



InWorld Clinical Benefits to a Correctional Environment:

1. Facilitates quicker rapport between inmates and clinicians therefore more efficient treatment that leads to serving more inmates with the same resources.
2. Effective communication for inmates with reduced cognitive capacity can be established and maintained throughout the clinical encounter delivering increased comprehension and retention of the clinical material.
3. InWorld sessions are recorded for therapeutic intervention, clinical supervision, safety assessment, and quality control.
4. The non-confrontational interface of InWorld enhances the possibility of increased disclosure, sharing, and effective feedback providing the essential building blocks of a successful therapeutic environment.
5. InWorld can facilitate the establishment of professional boundaries that are not easily manipulated by anti-social population.
6. Virtual function is optimal for prison locations that find it challenging to retain staff in remote locations.
7. Group therapy InWorld is enhanced by the opportunity for anonymous clinical interaction. This feature gives the inmates the opportunity to engage in confidential and clinical topics rarely addressed due to personal risk within the inmate cohort.
8. InWorld give the clinician enhanced capabilities to deliver and practice psycho-educational content prior and during group process when sensitive issues trigger aggressive behaviors.
9. InWorld offers the clinician the possibility to work as an anonymous avatar while delivering therapeutic services to inmates who have a history of staff assault or indecent exposure and/or stalking behaviors.
10. InWorld give the inmates the option to be engaged in a corrective environment resembling the outside world thus facilitating community re-integration.
11. InWorld substance abuse, stress management, anger management, social skills treatment protocols can be easily adapted and used in correctional environment.
12. Mandated or voluntary sex-offender treatment can be provided without having to assemble and/or identify inmates with sexually offensive histories.