Ability to deliver group-based interventions

Knowledge

An ability to draw on knowledge of the theory or model of therapy underpinning the group intervention

Ability to plan the group

An ability to estimate the likely demand for the group by identifying the number of clients who:
meet the criteria for the group (e.g. presenting difficulties, range of problems).
are likely to be receptive to a group approach.
would be able to attend the group at a specified time and on a regular basis.
An ability to ensure that there is managerial/ team support for the group (e.g. obtaining appropriate accommodation, resources and referrals)
An ability to plan the basic structure and content of the group, such as:
practicalities (e.g. setting, timing, refreshments)
outline content of sessions
roles of all staff running the group
any additional/ specific resources required for group sessions
any evaluation procedures

Ability to recruit clients to the group

An ability to specify and apply inclusion and exclusion criteria for the group.
An ability to explore collaboratively with clients the appropriateness of the group for their needs:
an ability to provide information on the content and likely effectiveness of the group intervention.
an ability to outline any alternative intervention options or services which may be more acceptable to the client
An ability to explore (and where possible address) any barriers to participation in the group, such as:
practical barriers (e.g. transport, childcare, need to take time off work etc)
social barriers (e.g. worries about the stigma of attending)
emotional barriers (e.g. social anxiety)
historical factors (e.g. previous negative experiences of groups)
An ability to negotiate individualised goals with each group member

Ability to follow the model of group therapy

An ability to implement the components of the group therapy, including:
structuring the group (e.g. ordering and timing of material, use of media, homework)
specific intervention techniques
management of group and change processes
For manualised groups, an ability to adhere to the sequence of activities outlined in the manual.
an ability to draw on knowledge of manualised activities so that they can be introduced fluently and in a timely manner

Ability to manage group process

Establishing the group

An ability to apply knowledge of group processes to establish an environment which is physically and emotionally safe, by:
discussing the 'ground rules' of the group (e.g. maintaining the confidentiality of group members, taking turns to speak, starting and ending the group on time)
"safeguarding" the ground rules by drawing attention to any occasions on which they are breached
helping all group members to participate by monitoring and attending to their emotional state
monitoring and regulating self-disclosure by both members and group leaders in order to maintain an environment where members can share

An ability to identify and manage any emotional or physical risk to group leaders, group participants.

Engaging group members

An ability to engage group members in a manner that is appropriate to their developmental stage and congruent with the therapeutic model being employed
An ability to match the content and pacing of group sessions, presentations and discussions to the characteristics of group members (e.g. attention span, cultural characteristics)
An ability to build positive rapport with individual members of the group:
an ability to monitor the impact of these individual relationships on other members of the group, and if necessary address and manage any tensions that emerge
An ability to manage the group environment in a way that helps all members to participate on a level with which they feel comfortable.
When appropriate to the model of therapy, an ability to use modelling and explicit social reinforcement to encourage the participation of group members.

Managing potential challenges to group engagement

An ability to promote and encourage regular attendance, while not stigmatising those who fail to attend sessions.
An ability to recognise when individuals form subgroups and to manage the impact of these relationships on overall group dynamics
An ability to plan for, reflect on, and manage potential challenges to the group including:
disruptive behaviour
persistent lateness/absence, or non-engagement in sessions
group members who leave the group early
members who are over voluble or who dominate the group
high levels of distress displayed by a group member
where the emotional states of individuals impact on the other members of the group, an ability to attend to this so as to ensure others do not become overwhelmed or disengaged

Ability to manage the ending of the group

An ability to prepare group members for the ending of the group by signalling the ending of the therapy at the outset and throughout group sessions, as appropriate.
An ability to draw on knowledge that the ending of the group may elicit feelings in the group member connected to other personal experiences of loss/separation.
An ability to help the group member express any feelings of anxiety, anger or disappointment that they may have about ending the group.
An ability to review the themes covered in the group, in a manner that is appropriate to the model being applied.
An ability to reflect on progress made as a result of participation, and to celebrate this in a manner that is appropriate to the model being applied

Ability to evaluate the group

An ability to review the client's goals for the group
An ability to draw on knowledge of appropriate strategies and tools for evaluation, and:
to draw on knowledge regarding the interpretation of measures
to draw on knowledge of the ways in which the reactivity of measures and self-monitoring procedures can bias report
to provide a rationale for the evaluation strategy
to feedback evaluation in a sensitive and meaningful manner

Ability to use supervision

An ability to use supervision to reflect on group processes
An ability for group leaders to reflect on their own impact on group processes