EQUIP Competency Assessment Tools

Section 1: Foundational helping competencies
Core competencies across programs and manualised interventions

- Adult foundational helping skills (ENACT)
- Child and adolescent helping skills (WeACT)
- Group facilitation skills (GroupACT)

Section 2: Intervention-packaged competencies
Competencies packaged and tailored to manualised interventions

- Problem Management Plus (PM+)
- Thinking Health Program (THP)

Section 3: Technique-specific competencies
Competencies grouped by specific techniques that may vary across programs and manualised interventions

- Behavioural activation techniques
- Cognitive techniques
- Interpersonal techniques
- Motivational enhancement techniques
- Problem solving techniques
- Stress management & relaxation techniques

Section 1: Foundational helping competencies

ENACT – Foundational Helping Competencies for Adults

Foundational helping competencies refer to those techniques which are assumed to be universal for the delivery of any effective treatment and are therefore important for helpers to learn and feel confident in when working with clients. Foundational helping competencies typically include those that relate to building a warm, trustworthy relationship between the helper and client such as building rapport, using verbal and non-verbal communication skills, demonstrating empathy and genuineness, and working as a team to help the client feel better. To best help the client's needs, it is important that helpers build these foundational helping skills before learning more advanced skills, such as for a specific treatment. The EQUIP platform includes 15 ENACT foundational helping competencies:

1. Non-verbal communication & active listening
2. Verbal communication skills
3. Explanation and promotion of confidentiality
4. Rapport building & self-disclosure
5. Exploration & normalisation of feelings

6. Demonstration of empathy, warmth, & genuineness
7. Assessment of harm to self, harm to others, harm from others & developing collaborative response plan
8. Connection to social functioning & impact on life
9. Exploration of client's & social support network's explanation for problem (causal & explanatory models)
10. Appropriate involvement of family members & other close persons
11. Collaborative goal setting & addressing client's expectations
12. Promotion of realistic hope for change
13. Incorporation of coping mechanisms & prior solutions
14. Psychoeducation & use of local terminology
15. Elicitation of feedback when providing advice, suggestions & recommendations

WeACT – Foundational Helping Competencies for Children and Adolescents

A foundational competencies assessment tool tailored for helpers and educators delivering care to children and adolescent populations in the Child Protection, Education and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support sector. This tool offers competencies that are used in individual settings with a child, and specific items useful in group settings with a group of children. The EQUIP platform includes 13 WeACT foundational helping competencies:

1. Non-verbal communication
2. Verbal communication skills
3. Rapport & relationship building
4. Empathy, warmth & genuineness
5. Supporting the reframing of the child's negative thoughts & feelings
6. Ability to identify and understand the child's daily life problems or needs
7. Problem solving – applies problem solving techniques for the child's daily life problems
8. Safe identification of child abuse, exploitation, neglect, violence, & self-harm
9. Giving feedback to the child
10. Acknowledges and promotes child's agency in the session
11. Behaviour management – Demonstrates behaviour management skills
12. Organises group work effectively (Group)
13. Ability to be inclusive (Group)

GroupACT – Group Facilitation Competencies

This instrument captures core skills related to how facilitators work with groups, focusing on how they structure sessions, facilitate group interactions, and promote group cohesion and is intended to be used during group-based programming. The EQUIP platform includes seven GroupACT competencies:

1. Group guidelines and/or ground rules
2. Group participation
3. Fostering empathy amongst group members
4. Collaborative problem solving
5. Addressing barriers to attendance

6. Group confidentiality
7. Time management: appropriate breaks, energisers & pacing

Section 2: Intervention-packaged competencies

Problem Management Plus (PM+) Competencies

Problem Management Plus (PM+) is a manualised structured intervention that aims to improve beneficiaries' ability to solve and manage practical problems. The EQUIP platform includes competencies tailored to PM+ intervention manual and which have also been tested in Ethiopia, Jordan, New York, USA, and Nepal. There are 12 PM+ competencies that cover problem management, behavioural activation, stress management, and interpersonal techniques:

Problem management
1. Recognising solvable and unsolvable items
2. Selecting the problem
3. Defining the problem and goal
4. Brainstorming solutions
5. Choosing a solution
6. Developing an action plan for the solution
7. Reviewing managing problems

Stress management & relaxation
8. Psychoeducation
9. Introduce new technique (then practice & repeat)
10. Check in and encourage continued practice (assign homework)

Behavioural activation
11. Scheduling activities and tasks

Interpersonal
12. Strengthening social support

Thinking Healthy Program (THP) Competencies

Thinking Healthy is a manualised structured intervention that takes a psychosocial approach for managing perinatal depression, with a focus on mother and infant wellbeing. The EQUIP platform includes competencies tool tailored to Thinking Healthy manual and which have been tested in Peru. There are 10 THP competencies that cover behavioural activation, cognitive, interpersonal, and stress management competencies:

Behavioural activation
1. Mood & activity monitoring

Cognitive
1. Psychoeducation about thoughts, feelings & behaviours
2. Linking thoughts, feelings & behaviours: *Connecting thoughts & feelings with personal experience*
3. Linking thoughts, feelings & behaviours: *Connecting feelings with behaviours.*
4. Identifying more difficult & unhelpful thoughts
5. Developing new thoughts, feelings, behaviours & associations: *Creating alternative thoughts*

6. Developing new thoughts, feelings, behaviours & associations: *Differences between new & previous thoughts*
7. Keeping track of thoughts (with in-session practice)
8. Reviewing tracking thoughts/homework

Interpersonal

9. Using a role-play to build communication skills to improve relationships

Stress management

10. Introducing a new strategy (then practice and repeat)

Section 3: Technique-specific competencies

Behavioural Activation Competencies

The EQUIP Platform includes five behavioural activation competencies:

1. Psychoeducation on behavioural activation
2. Connecting mood & activities
3. Mood and activity monitoring
4. Reviewing at-home practice for mood & activity monitoring
5. Activity scheduling/behavioural scheduling
6. Review of between session practice activity/behaviour scheduling

Cognitive Competencies

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy practice is the basis for the seven Cognitive Competencies on the EQUIP platform:

1. Psychoeducation about thoughts, feelings, & behaviours
2. Linking thoughts, feelings & behaviours: *Connecting thoughts & feelings with personal experience*
3. Linking thoughts, feelings & behaviours: *Connecting feelings with behaviours.*
4. Identifying more difficult & unhelpful thoughts
5. Developing new thoughts, feelings, behaviours, & associations: *Creating alternative thoughts*
6. Developing new thoughts, feelings, behaviours, & associations: *Differences between new & previous thoughts*
7. Using thought records with in-session practice
8. Reviewing thought records/homework
9. Addressing core beliefs & assumptions

Interpersonal Competencies

Competencies within this domain aim to build clients' interpersonal and communication skills and strengthen social support. The EQUIP Platform includes seven Interpersonal Competencies:

1. Identifying interpersonal focus of distress
2. 'Sick role'
3. Assessing relationships
4. Using a role-play to build communication skills & improve relationships

5. Building communication skills: communication analysis
6. Managing problems: decision analysis
7. Strengthening social support
8. Encouraging interpersonal change between sessions

Motivational Enhancement Competencies

Competencies within this domain focus on supporting clients who struggle with substance use such as harmful drinking. The EQUIP Platform includes seven Motivational Enhancement Competencies:

1. Understanding alcohol use & self-monitoring
2. Getting buy-in and developing discrepancies
3. Eliciting change
4. Generating & strengthening commitment
5. Choosing strategies
6. Rolling with resistance
7. Relapse prevention

Problem Solving Competencies

Problem solving techniques aim to improve clients' ability to solve practical problems, especially when facing distress. The EQUIP Platform includes seven Problem Solving Competencies:

1. Recognising solvable & unsolvable problems
2. Selecting the problem
3. Defining the problem & goal
4. Brainstorming solutions
5. Choosing a solution
6. Implementing a solution
7. Evaluating outcomes of implementing a solution

Stress Management & Relaxation Competencies

Competencies in this domain focus on strategies for relaxation and managing symptoms/feelings and/or stressors that might also be affecting a person's physical body. The EQUIP platform includes four Stress Management and Relaxation Competencies:

1. Psychoeducation on stress management & relaxation
2. Identifying physical sensations & coping mechanisms
3. Introducing a new strategy (then practice & repeat)
4. Check in & encourage continued practice (assign homework)