

DAP Notes

APSU Writing Center Handout

DAP (Data/Assessment/Plan) Notes

DAP notes provide a structured way for therapists to streamline documentation, especially when managing large caseloads. They offer a clear, concise summary of the client's progress by breaking down key aspects of each session into three sections: Data, Assessment, and Plan.

Data (D)

This section captures information from the session without any interpretation. It should include:

- The reason for the visit
- The client's presentation and appearance
- The client's mental status
- Reports of current symptoms or important events since the last session
- Results of any screenings or assessments
- Interventions applied during the session
- Client responses to the interventions

Example: The client arrived on time, appearing slightly anxious, and reported increased stress due to work, with more frequent headaches. They engaged in a guided relaxation exercise and discussed recent anxiety triggers at work.

Assessment (A)

Use clinical judgment to evaluate the client's progress. This section should address:

- How the client is progressing

- How the client's status aligns with their treatment goals
- The client's responses to the session and interventions
- Any changes to the client's diagnosis

Example: The client is showing progress in identifying stress triggers but continues to experience physical symptoms of anxiety. No changes to the diagnosis of Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) are needed.

Plan (P)

Outline the next steps for treatment. This section should include:

- The date, time, and location of the next scheduled session
- Any homework assigned to the client
- Referrals provided to the client
- Planned consultations or contact with third parties
- Adjustments to the treatment plan based on the client's progress
- Additional steps for the client or clinician to take

Example: Assigned a daily stress log for tracking anxiety triggers and coping strategies, with a focus on guided relaxation. The next session is scheduled for October 24, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

References

Simple Practice. (2023, November 1). *How to Write DAP Notes (With Example)*. Simple

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