

## Managing Expectations: working with client priorities

Anna Watkiss, Clinical Lead  
Tania Brown Ltd (TBL)



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## What are expectations?

- Beliefs of the process we are engaging in or how we think things will turn out
- The “mental picture” we carry
- Beliefs about the incidence of specific future events or experiences
- Not to be confused with “Hopes” (most desirable v likely outcome) – linked but distinct concepts

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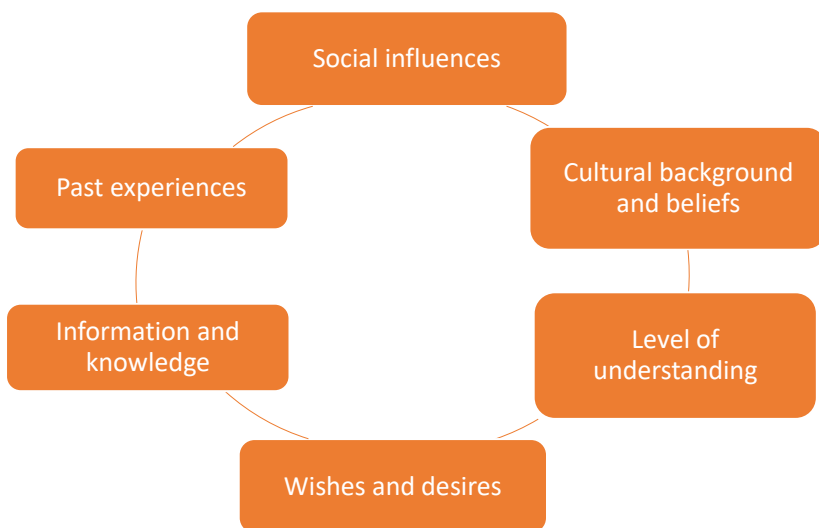
## Influence on Behaviour: Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964)

Expectations often drive actions.

For example, if someone expects to succeed in a task, they may approach it with confidence, effort, and preparation.

Similarly, if they expect failure, they might be less motivated or may not try as hard.

## How do they form?

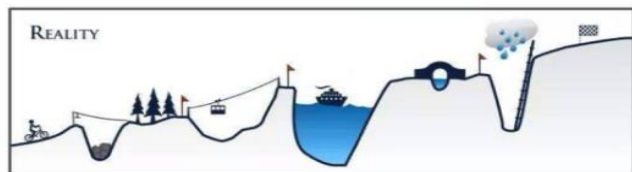


## How it feels when reality doesn't meet our expectations:

Satisfaction is primarily determined by the difference between that which is expected and what is received (El-Hadded, et al 2020).

This can result in:

- Disappointment
- Frustration
- Relief or anxiety
- Change in self-esteem or self-worth
- Impact on mental health
- Cognitive dissonance
- Lack of engagement



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## Unrealistic expectations

From Clients:

- Expecting a professional to be available immediately and always
- Expecting professionals to act without recourse to the law and regulations
- Ability to call the professional 24 hours a day for any problems
- Thinking that the professional working with them will always know or agree to the exact thing they need without exploration of options
- Thinking their needs can be met or services provided immediately
- Wanting an outcome which is unachievable (being able to eat food when on a restricted diet/wanting a level of care which is unaffordable/wanting care cut but ignoring safety/wanting money for items which are not covered by the PI trust)
- Thinking all needs/wishes can be met

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## Unrealistic expectations

From case managers and other professionals:

- Considering all clients will respond in the same way
- Thinking the client wants everything that has been recommended
- Believing the client can cope with multiple rehabilitation sessions (often overwhelming)
- Thinking the client knows the purpose of rehabilitation
- Expecting family to have the same goals as the client as the case manager/therapistsd
- That the client knows what the case manager is doing even if this is not communicated clearly to them
- That the client will do what is required for litigation, e.g. engage in an independent living trial even though they have a family

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## How to prevent fall-out



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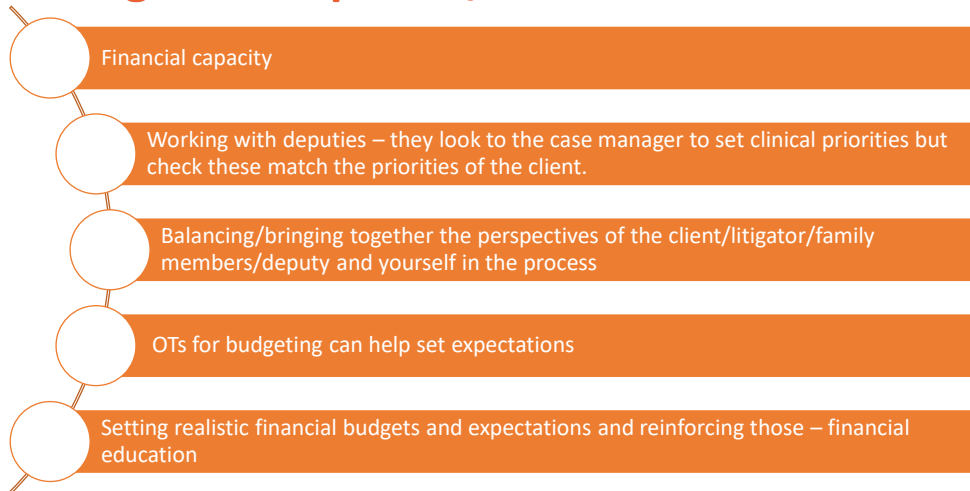
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## Setting realistic expectations

## Legal process and financial outcomes

- Managing litigation timescales
- Reminding CMs it is the solicitor's role to set expectations of the legal process, but their role to reinforce financial messaging
- Balancing real life vs. litigation vs. settlement
- The litigation can set certain expectations we need to manage – pushing to maximise claim or try scenarios – not a guarantee that will be recoverable or affordable once settlement achieved.

## Working with deputies/trusts



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## Case manager's role

- Understand client's expectations: they expect empathetic care, to be listened to, timely and accurate information delivered clearly, effective communication, professional practice, involvement in decision-making, and respect for their cultural and personal values, to feel valued and to feel like an individual.
- Actively listen to clients: encourage them to express their thoughts and feelings, and provide clear explanations about their beliefs. This builds trust, allowing clients to question and fact check their thoughts and opinions.
- Explain what you can and can't do
- Set boundaries for time available, contact times and how long you will take to reply
- Always follow through
- Set SMART goals which allows clients to understand what you are working on together and what is achievable

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## Goals and expectations

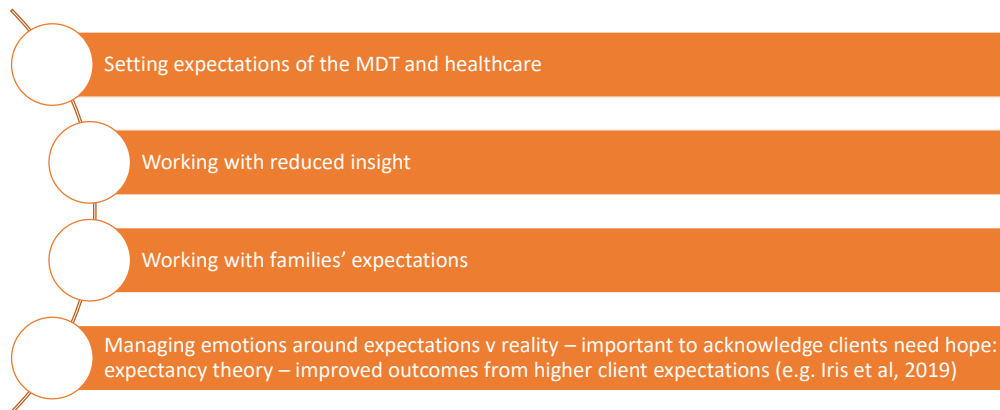
Working with expectancy theory and goal-setting (Sutton, 2024):

- Work with your clients to pinpoint goals that resonate with their deeply held values and desires. Goals high in meaning are more likely to motivate and sustain their actions.
- Ensure goals are desirable but also clearly defined. Outcomes must be highly anticipated and valued.
- Make sure clients fully understand the direct link between their efforts and goal achievement, increasing their belief in the instrumentality of their actions.
- Break the goals into manageable chunks to make the connections between the actions and outcomes more evident.
- Boost expectancy through building skills
- Identify skill gaps that might hinder goal achievement, then work on strategies to develop them, boosting the client's success expectancy.
- Focus on positive reinforcement and past successes to boost the client's self-efficacy in achieving their goals.

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## Rehabilitation outcomes



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## Talk to your client!

Ask your client what they expect to happen, reflect on what has happened before and discuss a range of possible outcomes to revise current expectations. Start any new involvement with a review of expectations:

- What were your expectations of...?
- Can you tell me about your experiences so far and whether these have met those expectations?
- What do you hope the litigation/case manager/rehabilitation will achieve?
- How do you think things will be when your case settles?

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## Any questions?

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# Reading list



## Research re Healthcare client expectations:

- El-Haddad C, Hegazi I, Hu W. Understanding Patient Expectations of Health Care: A Qualitative Study. J Patient Exp. 2020.
- Iris F. Groeneveld, Paulien H. Goossens, Inke van Braak, Stéphanie van der Pas, Jorit J.L. Meesters, Radha D. Rambaran Mishre, Henk J. Arwert, Thea P.M. Vliet Vlielan. Patients' outcome expectations and their fulfilment in multidisciplinary stroke rehabilitation, Annals of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine, Volume 62, Issue 1, 2019.
- Laferton JA, Kube T, Salzmann S, Auer CJ, Shedden-Mora MC. Patients' expectations regarding medical treatment: a critical review of concepts and their assessment. Front Psychol. 2017;8:233
- Lateef F. Patient expectations and the paradigm shift of care in emergency medicine. J Emerg Trauma Shock. 2011 Apr;4(2):163-7.

## Websites:

- Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation by Jeremy Sutton, PhD, Feb 2024
- How to manage the expectations vs reality trap in 6 steps – CALM APP
- Managing expectations – MIND Mental health
- Meeting Patient Expectations & Ensuring Quality Care As A Nurse, A Begum.  
<https://www.nurses.co.uk/blog/meeting-patient-expectations--and--ensuring-quality-care-as-a-nurse/>

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kind & honest

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listen, learn & act

we will be  
fair & inclusive

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Anna Watkiss  
[annawatkiss@taniabrown.com](mailto:annawatkiss@taniabrown.com)

07501 479205



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