

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The final phase of therapy/counselling is the culmination of the therapeutic process and, if done carefully, can help clients consolidate the benefits of treatment. This topic is not well researched in the literature, especially in the field of addiction medicine.

**Objectives:** The objective of the research was to map how the final phase of therapy/counselling in individual addiction treatment is conducted, from the perspective of therapists/counsellors. Furthermore, to find out how they approach it, what importance they attach to it and what role the therapeutic relationship plays. The objective was also to discover what topics emerge at the end of treatment and what emotions clients and therapists experience at this stage.

**Methods:** Data were collected using a grounded theory qualitative research method. Six outpatient therapists/counsellors working with addicted clients participated in the research and were interviewed in semi-structured interviews.

**Results:** Therapists/counsellors approach to the final phase of treatment with an addicted client individually each time, yet indicators of client readiness for termination were identified and may vary. Some of the methods that therapists/counsellors use were also identified and the duration of this phase was indicated. Successful cases of termination are usually based on mutual compliance between client and therapist/counsellor, regardless of who initiates the termination. Some specific issues arise for addicted clients at this stage. Therapists and clients experience positive, negative but also mixed emotions at the end. It has been noted that with some addicted clients, termination can be more complicated.

**Conclusion:** Through interviews with therapists/counsellors, a comprehensive view of the final phase of therapy/counselling with addicted clients from beginning to end was obtained.

**Keywords:** psychotherapy, psychotherapy termination, termination phase, addiction treatment, therapist's perspective