

Original Question: Do you allow staff therapists to use their own personal toys in session? What is your process for storage and cleaning?

ORG A:

We had this problem that got worse as we grew, for all the reasons you stated (space in the clinic, space in the Team room as toys were taking up space around computer workstations etc). So, about 6 years ago we stopped allowing clinicians to bring personal supplies/equipment/toys. To facilitate this we completed a project to identify all types of toys that the team wanted but then ran that through a committee to identify which we would actually have. Criteria was focused on toys that multiple people could/would use and to weed out toys that were in essence duplicating the function of another toy (IE Wack a Ball of one design versus Wack a ball of another, we picked one). Another reason we implemented this is that there was no checks and balances for toys brought from home in regard to infection control and safety, it put the organization at a liability.

We don't have a policy, we just made it so. As always, some clinicians struggled and pouted but we are all good now. Our "Toy Committee" still meets on a regular basis to review recommended toys to add. This has provided an opportunity for clinicians to add/replace toys while keeping our area in order and safe.

ORG B

We strongly discourage personal items being used in therapy. We don't have a policy on this. We do expect our cleaning protocols to apply to everything we use with our patients so they would apply to personal items too. Hope this helps.

ORG C

We do allow this, and we have our cleaning protocol that everything needs to be wiped between patients. They do this on the honor system.

ORG D

Funny that you pose this question. As we have been doing our JC Environment of Care Rounds, we have found toys that have therapist's names written on them. In one location I found where a therapist had taped their business card to some of those items. We have told staff that any/all toys in the clinic/hospital should be in good condition, clean, properly working, not damaged or broken, and ultimately the property of the hospital. We have made them remove business cards and take alcohol pads to wipe off their names on toys that we found in patient care areas.

Our organization has moved to a centralized computer based ordering system (infor) that track items purchase and any future recalls. Staff are not supposed to bring toys from home, that they picked up from a garage sale, or that someone donated. We have a “new product committee” that scrutinizes every new product purchased (thankfully this doesn’t include our toys, which we are still able to order mostly from Amazon).

Curious to hear what you and others are doing.

ORG E

We do have staff that bring in their own items. They know they have to be wipe able and the same cleaning process for those items needs to be followed before returning them to their spaces. We have not done an audit to verify this which I’m now thinking we should. I’d be interested in the answers you receive.

ORG F

We don’t encourage staff to use their personal toys, testing materials, and/or equipment. In those situations where they have attempted this, we have countered with purchasing specific items that they prefer to use in their therapy sessions. We have not had any push back with this and I will typically send out a generic email several times throughout the year asking for their toy wish lists. We don’t have a specific policy addressing this.

ORG G

We have allowed and are running into some of the same challenges. We do not have anything formal in place, other than the general understanding of what toys are appropriate. Storage is our issue. Your results will be helpful. Thanks