Touring for Client Care
A Guide to "How and Why" We Tour

Understanding Safety, Quality, and Ethical Care Through Informed Touring

WHY WE TOUR

- **To ensure safety and quality** through directly observing and better understanding how programs and schools prioritize safety and deliver quality care to clients.
- **To vet ethics** by thoughtfully evaluating programs in alignment with our professional values and client needs, recognizing the limitations of external observation.
- **To manage expectations** through sharing our impressions with families, helping them shape informed expectations.
- **To build relationships,** fostering collaborative, professional relationships that enhance communication and coordination around client care.
- **To provide informed referrals** by developing nuanced knowledge of program environments, philosophies and methodologies, supporting more informed and individualized referrals.

HOW WE TOUR

Preparation

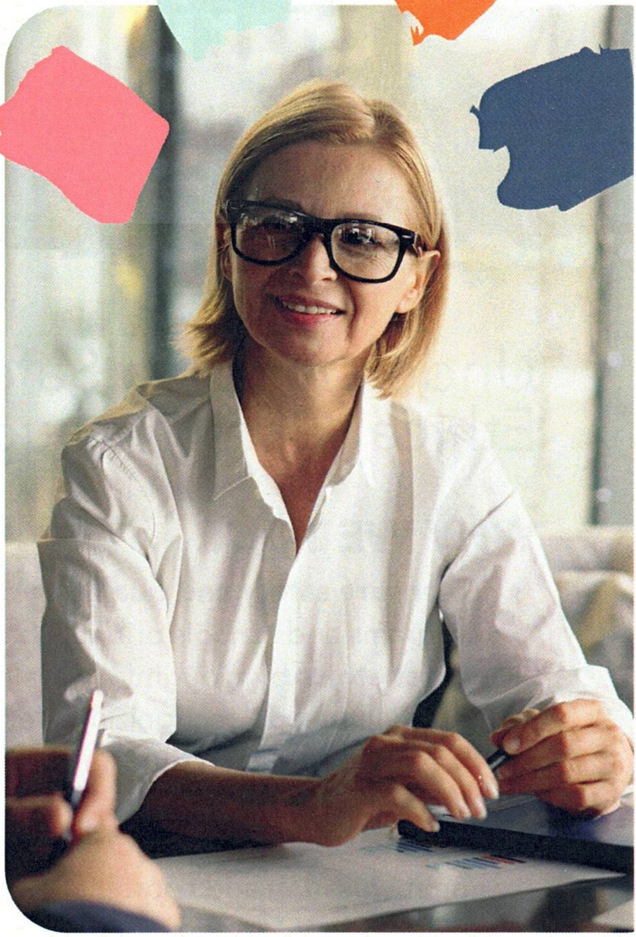
- Identify goals and topics of interest for the visit using structured templates.
- Gather relevant program and database information in advance.
- Review relevant virtual tour materials (e.g., TCA Virtual Tour Template).
- Collaborate with program marketing and admissions teams for logistical and background information.
- Research publicly available outcomes data or alumni perspectives.
- Understand relevant legislation and licensing requirements.

Vetting

- Prepare a set of thoughtful questions and focus areas for each visit.
- Treat virtual tours as useful context, while recognizing the value of on-site observation for a fuller picture.
- Revisit program fit in the context of each individual client's needs
- Maintain an ongoing process of observation and engagement with programs.

DURING THE VISIT

Observation and Inquiry



- Observe programming, staff-client interactions and overall program culture.
- Be attentive to the overall 'feel' of the environment.
- Ask questions related to clinical, academic, residential, leadership, medical, safety protocols/practices and staff training domains.
- Inquire about what is being emphasized during the visit and what may not be shown.
- Ask "How do you evaluate client progress and your program's effectiveness?" to understand internal quality assurance practices.
- Recognize that tours are often structured for visitors and reflect only a specific moment in time.
- Continue to ask meaningful, practical questions, even of familiar programs.
- Review how a program presents its culture and expectations across departments and stakeholders.
- Understand the structure and cadence of internal communication and communication between program, family and consultant.

Considerations

- Acknowledge differences between first-time, follow-up or post-leadership-change visits.
- Consider appropriate tour frequency based on program type and professional relationship.
- Focus on building professional rapport to support more candid and meaningful visits.

Methods for Vetting Tours

- **Use Standardized Templates:** Use structured tools to organize tour information consistently.
- **Seek Out Specialized Tours:** Consider tours that focus on one aspect of a program (e.g., clinical, academic, residential) for deeper exploration.
- **Use Resources Efficiently:** Maximize use of time and financial resources by planning tours strategically.
- **Take a Collaborative Approach:** Seek input from colleagues to broaden perspective and validate impressions.
- **Try Varying Tour Types:** Differentiate between exploratory, relationship-building and in-depth vetting tours.
- **Research Licensing:** Understand what regulatory bodies assess to better interpret the program's compliance and oversight landscape.