Definitions

**Adaptive Skills** – Desired behaviors that are necessary for independent living in the community.

**Adverse Drug Reaction** – A secondary unpredicted and undesirable effect of a medication other than the desired therapeutic effect.

**AIMS** – An acronym for the Abnormal Involuntary Movement Scale, a standardized rating scale used to assess tardive dyskinesia.

**Akathesia** – A sense of inner discomfort resulting in motor restlessness and the inability to sit or lie still.

**Akinesia** – Decreased or absence of movement.

**Anticholinergic** – A class of medication (e.g., benztropine {Cogentin}) used to counteract the possible extrapyramidal side effects of antipsychotic medications.

**Antipsychotic** - A class of medication that primarily blocks the neurotransmitter dopamine. It is commonly used to treat psychotic behavior and agitation. This class includes the newer atypical antipsychotics. They are sometimes referred to as neuroleptics or major tranquilizers.

**Athetoid Movement** – Slow, writhing, involuntary movements of flexion, extension, pronation and supination of fingers, hands, toes, and feet.

**Baseline** - A period of time when target behaviors are measured without the intentional alteration of significant variables in the individual’s life. A baseline is obtained to provide a control phase to compare with the treatment phase.

**Central Nervous System (CNS)** – Composed of the brain and spinal system.

**Cognitive Impairment** – The impairment of a person’s ability to perceive, recognize, conceive, judge, sense, reason, and imagine. Also the loss of a person’s ability to acquire knowledge.

**Cogwheeling** – Impaired movement of the arms or wrists causing jerking motion as if moving a cog on a wheel resulting from a combination of tremors and muscle rigidity.

**Contraindicated** – Not indicated, should not be used.

**DASH II** – An acronym for The Diagnostic Assessment for the Severely Handicapped (2nd Ed.) which is a diagnostic tool.
**Desired Therapeutic Effect** – The expected outcome of the medication.

**DISCUS** - An acronym for the Dyskenisia Identification System – Condensed User Scale – A standardized rating scale used to assess tardive dyskinesia.

**Drowsiness** – a state of impaired awareness associated with the desire or inclination to sleep.

**Duration Recording** – A data collection method that records how long a behavior occurs.

**Dystonia** – Acute tonic muscle spasms of the tongue, jaw, eyes, neck, and back, often resulting in abnormal posture and body movements, which may be painful.

**Efficacy** – The degree to which the medication produces a desired therapeutic effect.

**Extrapyramidal Side Effects** – A specific type of adverse drug reaction consisting of typically reversible symptoms (e.g., akathesia, akinesia, drooling, dystonia, tremors, muscle rigidity, and shuffling gait).

**Frequency Count** – A data collection method that records the number of times a behavior occurs.

**Gastrointestinal Distress** – Abdominal or stomach discomfort including dyspepsia, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

**Half-life** – The time required for the body to metabolize half of the medication.

**Hallucinations** – False or distorted perceptions, having no basis in reality and not experienced by others. Visual and auditory hallucinations involve seeing and hearing things that are not there.

**Hypomania** - A mild degree of mania. (See mania)

**Hypotension** – Systolic blood pressure is less than 90 millimeters of mercury. Often may cause dizziness, unsteady gait, or fainting.

**Interval Recording** – A data collection method in which a behavior occurs or not during a specific interval of time.

**Mania** – A mental disorder characterized by euphoria, increased psychomotor activity, rapid speech, flight of ideas, decreased need for sleep, distractibility, grandiosity, and poor judgment.

**Medication Effect** – The person’s response to the action of the medication.
**Metabolism** – The physiochemical processes that occur to a medication once it is ingested.

**MOSES** – An acronym for the Monitoring of Side Effects Scale, an assessment tool used to identify medication side effects.

**Muscle Rigidity** – Sustained tension of the musculature.

**Neuroantomy** - The structural components of the brain.

**Neuroleptic** – A term used to refer to the older, typical antipsychotic medications.

**Neuron** – a cell specialized to transmit electrical nerve impulses and carry information from one part of the body to another.

**Neurotransmitters** - Chemicals that are secreted from one nerve ending and influence (stimulate or inhibit) another nerve.

**Oculogyric Crisis** – Tonic spasms that cause pain as the eyes roll upward, giving the appearance of rolling back into the head.

**Pill Rolling** – Fine movements of the thumb and fingers as if rolling a small pill between them.

**Psychopharmacology** – The study of the source, properties, and effects of medications on psychological disorders and related symptoms, and on brain biochemistry.

**Psychotropic** – A medication that affects mood, thinking, and behavior.

**Rating Scale** – A type of data collection method used to quantify the intensity or severity of a behavior.

**Side Effect** – A Secondary, (possibly undesirable) but generally predictable outcome of a medication.

**Sedative-Hypnotic** – A medication prescribed for sedation or sleep.

**Steady State** – The point at which the amount of medication being absorbed equals the amount being eliminated.

**Synapse** - The gap at the end of a nerve fiber across which nerve impulses pass from one neuron to the next.
**Taper** – A controlled planned decrease of medication dose.

**Tardive Dyskenisia (TD)** – Involuntary muscle movements resulting from the use of antipsychotics or certain other medications, such as Amoxapine/Asendin, Amitriptyline, and Etrafon. Abnormal movements include uncontrolled spasmodic movements (choreiform movements), and involuntary purposeless muscular protrusions (athetoid movements). Examples of these abnormal movements include tongue and jaw protrusions, lip puckering, side-to-side jaw movements, toe and ankle movements, and leg jiggling.

**Time Sampling** – A data collection method where the presence or absence of a target behavior is recorded during short uniform time intervals.

**Titration** – A planned incremental increase or decrease of a medication dose.

**Toxic Effects** – A negative response associated with exposure to excessive amounts of a medication or its active metabolite.

**Tremors** – Involuntary quivering or shaking.