

Workforce Education and Training Consumer Employment Strategies

Recovery Education Center:

The Center will host a wide variety of programs and activities, including wellness recovery education and employment training and supports for our diverse consumer community. This Center can house several new program components, including:

- *Leadership Training Network: Ongoing Training, Professional Development and Peer Support Program for persons employed in Self-Help and other mental health organizations*
- *Consumer Employment Mentorship Program*
- *College Access Program: Provides outreach, assistance with applications, scholarships, choosing classes, and on-campus peer support.*
- *Training and Professional Development: training and mentoring to prepare consumers as trainers focusing on facilitation and presentation skills.*
- *Empowerment and Self-Advocacy: Introduction to recovery options and employment and education opportunities.*

Expand BestNow! Training Program

Expand current training programs to maximize access to this essential consumer-run training. Maintain the wellness and empowerment approach and expand the range of tools for consumer employment and education.

- *Expand funding and staffing to create 2 – 4 trainings per year.*
- *Build capacity for ongoing supports and expanded Employment and Educational Supports staffed by peers, such as the College Access Peer Support Program.*

College Access Program:

This College Access Peer Support Program will be initiated at one or several community college campuses, and eventually grow to serve all of the community colleges and universities. The program will link clients to educational opportunities by:

- *Providing direct information on what classes, programs and supports are available,*
- *Developing a welcoming community of peer support and inclusion on campus,*
- *Offering mentoring and peer support meetings on campus.*
- *The College Access Coordinators are person in mental health recovery who have completed or are completing their studies at the campus where they serve as program staff. They will also provide in-service training on mental health recovery to the college campus community.*

Leadership Training Network

This Leadership Training Network is designed to empower consumers to build their skills to be effective employees as they increase their personal and professional development. In addition to

providing ongoing training opportunities for employed consumers, the Network will facilitate team-building and the exchange of recovery/employment supports.

Mentorship Project

The Mentorship Project provides support to new consumer employees at programs and organizations by providing trained mentors who have both employment and recovery experience. This project is part of the set of strategies that includes Training for Supervisors and Orientation for New Employees.

Recovery Facilitation Train

Through a professional training, practice and mentoring program, we will expand the pool of consumer and family member trainer and facilitators, so that all public mental health trainings can include presenters who speak from personal experience. These trainers will be work in collaboration with the BHCS Training Director, available for a wide variety of events such as new employee orientations.

Empowerment & Self-Advocacy

Provide entry level Empowerment, Recovery and Self-Advocacy training to educate the consumer community and open the door to possible careers in Behavioral Healthcare. The presentation will be made by RFT Trainers and will introduce clients to the growing network of employment and education services and supports.

Consumer Employment Liaison (Manager)

The Consumer Employment Liaison will provide leadership for consumer employment and will coordinate and advance the implementation of the Consumer Employment Strategic Plan as a member of the ACBHCS WE&T Leadership Team. This role will enable a regionalized approach, linking all of the organizations and programs in their efforts to increase and support consumer employment.

- *Promotes educational opportunities for consumers and collaborates to provide leadership to the College Access Program*
- *Works with management team on policies and program design regarding consumer employment*
- *Serves as a liaison to the Human Resources office to assist in the development of hiring policies and practices*
- *Links BHCS with Self-Help and Contract Agencies in the development of best practices (to promote wellness workplace culture)*
- *Develops Training and Education options for consumer-providers*
- *Develops content for website to help persons in recovery connect with Internship and employment opportunities*
- *Develops Training for Supervisors in collaboration with Training Director*
- *Works with the Consumer Employment Opportunities Committee to champion implementation of the Consumer Employment Strategic Plan, including efforts to Develop Career Ladders*

- *Liaison with self-help and community organizations, BHCS Programs and with consumers who are employed.*

Consumer Employment Strategic Plan

The development and implementation of a Consumer Employment Strategic Plan ensures a thoughtful, coordinated approach to integrating multiple initiatives, trainings and supports to develop and retain a well-prepared and integrated consumer (and family) workforce. The plan ensures that needed strategies will be developed as part of our Wellness Recovery, Exit Strategies and Consumer Education & Employment initiatives.

Training for Supervisors

Develop new training modules for Supervisors on specific strategies to effectively support consumer employees. This BHCS-sanctioned training will target supervisors in all programs that hire consumers and will include: effective orientations for new staff, offering and determining reasonable accommodations, strengths-based approaches to developing employees' skills, and will clarify the line between vocational and clinical supervision approaches.

Orientation for New Employees

By developing a clear standard for new staff orientations, consumer-providers will be better prepared to become acclimated and integrate with the team. The Orientation will include a checklist, identifying items to be addressed during first day, first week, and first month. The orientation will encourage supervisors to offer new staff an onsite buddy or mentor.

Recovery Training and Dialogues for All Staff

System-wide training for all staff to promote and encourage practice of recovery principles and to deepen staff understanding about the value of peer support and hiring new staff with lived experience. The Dialogue Process will provide opportunities to address concerns and barriers to including consumers as colleagues. Recovery Facilitation Trainers will provide leadership in this process.

Consumer-Run Employment Services: The Way Out

Many of the clients, who have progressed in recovery, need supports to learn how to transition off benefits and to find, get and keep the job of their choice. This program will help persons in recovery (previously unserved by ACVP) determine whether employment in Behavioral Healthcare is a good choice for them. Career Exploration would be made available to help people identify their skills, interests and goals through informal classes.

Benefits Counseling and Transitions Training

A consumer-run training program will teach persons in recovery how to transition off of benefits, and how to best utilize Benefits Counselors services. The consumer-providers working in this program will monitor client access to Benefits Counselors and ensure that the benefits are used to fully support consumers' growth and recovery. Adding benefits counseling staff at both county and community-based programs is a top priority to ensure access to this essential recovery service to the full client community.