

Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

December 2012

National Association of Peer Specialists

December found the NAPS RTP team very involved in the planning and implementation of a national practice standards and links to core competencies meeting in Rockville, MD on Dec. 14.

The meeting was convened by SAMHSA and brought together peer support stakeholders from across the country for a day-long meeting to explore the development of national practice standards and identification of core competencies. As a result of the meeting, NAPS has created an action plan with implementation of the planning beginning Jan. 2, 2013.

The action plan features methods to gather data regarding peer support values, outreach, practice standards and core competencies. The methods include social media, such as facebook, Survey Monkey surveys, focus groups, and group reviews. The NAPS team has prepared to receive large amounts of data that will be organized, analyzed and then reported back to the field for comment.

The first focus group has been set for late January in Oakland, California with other such groups planned for Michigan, Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Texas. Additional focus groups may be performed. This approach has been used successfully by other national professional organizations in the course of similar work.

Because this is a grassroots endeavor, the team has decided not to seek outside funding. Instead, the team will use existing organizational resources to proceed on this project. Also, the team will be using a six-month timeline for project completion. The team will also invite other organizations to participate but it will be made clear that, as has been the experience of other professions, participation will be voluntary with no expectation of funding. A co-leader will be sought from the substance use disorder field.

Consultations with Ron Mandersheid and Anthony Stratford have been extremely valuable. Their advice include streamlining the process to act in a timely manner as developing practice standards and identifying core competencies is just a first step in advocacy in light of implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Sharpening the focus of this endeavor to include working/certified peer specialists/recovery coaches was also an important consideration.

In regard to the RTP recovery curriculum for working peer specialists, the NAPS team has continued to refine modules and presentation methods to accommodate lessons learned from the Cincinnati pilot in November. Consultations between Rita Cronise and another curriculum designer have resulted in curriculum delivery changes that have proven effective in other, very similar contexts.

The next pilot has been tentatively scheduled for Feb. 11-15, 2013 in New York City. A third pilot in Hawaii is still being planned and firm dates must be established. Several other options for pilots have arisen and offer cost-effectiveness.

The NAPS RTP continues to receive requests for access to the recovery curriculum in its draft form. Nearly all such requests are from organizations seeking to offer continuing education to already trained, certified and working peer supporters.

The development of national practice standards , identification of core competencies and the RTP recovery curriculum for peer supporters appears to be especially timely as the profession prepares for implementation of the Affordable Care Act. A substantial workforce shortage appears eminent as about 43 million Americans previously without access to medical and behavioral healthcare are expected to seek treatment. New positions will be created and some estimate that peer supporters will comprise as much as half of the behavioral healthcare field within five years. Thus, peer supporter trainings (including continuing education) take on increasing significance as the profession prepares for these changes.