

Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

February 2013

National Association of Peer Specialists

February was primarily occupied with two endeavors: 1) refining the recovery curriculum based on lessons learned from the Cincinnati pilot and 2) managing the logistics of the upcoming pilot in New York City.

Using the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) model, the recovery curriculum is now much more participatory. Modifications have been reviewed by the NAPS RTP team's core reviewers and Rita Cronise has attended a formal AVP training to learn even more about that model. In addition, she has been working with an AVP trainer extensively to create a curriculum that has proven success in other settings but, until this project, has never been used in mental health settings.

Using the modified modules as a basis, Rita has been in frequent contact with key RTP team members (primarily those who will be delivering the curriculum in New York) to help them understand the AVP model. Rita and Steve teamed up in an unrelated training project in Ohio where Rita was able to demonstrate many of the AVP model components. The AVP approach appeared to have contributed to an extremely successful training and won high praise of all who attended.

Based on the unrelated training, there is reason for considerable optimism that the AVP model of delivering curricula in mental health and substance use disorder peer trainings will mean a new way of "doing business." In addition to gaining new knowledge and skills, participants quickly became a cohesive learning community.

The multi-cultural awareness module was reviewed again by Maria Respro-Toro to ensure that modifications did not interfere or conflict with the purposes of that module. Also, a person has volunteered to review all modules to ensure they do not offend or conflict with philosophies of peer supporters from the addictions field. Although this curriculum is targeted to peer specialists working in the mental health field, the two are quickly coming together and the NAPS RTP team is expecting that the curriculum will apply readily to these fields.

Community Access staff has been working with the NAPS RTP team to manage logistics for the New York City Pilot. Although some issues remain from weather issues, it appears as though logistics have been handled and the pilot will result in adequate participation. One staff member of Community Access participated in an AVP training and is excited to use the AVP model for this pilot.

In March, the New York City pilot will be conducted and new lessons are certain to be learned. In addition, the team continues to work with Hawaii state officials to prepare for a pilot in that state in late April or early May.

Because of the nature and quantity of material, the NAPS RTP team is investigating further pilot sites that can economically accommodate multi-week formats. For example, conducting sessions once or twice a week for four or eight weeks hold the promise of a different (and hopefully better) learning experience. Sites in Michigan and New York have been identified and appear to be good prospects.