

Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

July 2014

International Association of Peer Supporters

In July, the iNAPS RTP team continued to follow up on inquiries regarding availability of RTP trainings. iNAPS' project partner, the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance has taken a lead role in handling training logistics as that organization has both the human and technical resources for this task.

The second half of an RTP training in Ohio was rescheduled for September to accommodate organizers' and participants' schedules. The RTP team continues to be in regular contact with those who participated in the first half of the course in Cincinnati.

An RTP course will be offered in mid-October after the iNAPS annual peer support conference in Atlanta. That course is filling fast with the hope of keeping enrollment to a maximum of 20. The RTP team has also been in regular contact with the Hogg Foundation in Austin, Texas. Two team members (Steve Harrington and Lisa Goodale) will attend and present at the Foundation's annual recovery conference in Austin in early September. A special meeting has been set with Foundation staff and a "team" of other stakeholders interested in bringing the RTP curriculum to all of Texas.

The iNAPS RTP team continues to learn of state officials or trainers of peer supporters who are finding the curriculum on the iNAPS website (www.inaops.org) and are using materials to improve or create continuing education offerings. Some of these officials and trainers are modifying material while others are using it in its original form. As states mature in their recognition and management of the peer workforce, it is reasonable to expect they will become more focused on continuing education and, in doing so, will find the RTP curriculum especially useful.

The series of free webinars offered by iNAPS (through the generous use of Optum's technology) has drawn many questions about continuing education credits. At this time, individuals must be referred to their official certification agency in their particular state for guidance in this area. Given the number of inquiries, however, it appears as though many states and organizations such as the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs are accepting webinars for continuing education purposes.

It was not the intent of the RTP team to have the webinars used as an implementation mechanism for the RTP project. The team has discovered, however, that the webinars have been extremely useful in introducing the curriculum to a broad audience and sparked much interest. The iNAPS RTP team expects future webinars to be more closely related to the RTP curriculum topics and the team will be more intentional in regard to pointing out this relationship to webinar participants. For example, an August 29 webinar is scheduled to cover bullying in the workplace. This topic and content are fully consistent with the RTP module entitled "Strengthening

Workplace Relationships.” The content will build on information provided in both a previous webinar on workplace relationship challenges and the RTP curriculum module.

Webinars are now being recorded and archived on the iNAPS website. This may provide an additional resource for RTP modules in the future. For example, the iNAPS RTP encourages adaption of the curriculum to suit local needs. When a trainer wishes to expand training on a particular RTP topic, a webinar related to that topic is likely to be a useful resource before, during or after the training session(s).

In July, the iNAPS RTP participated in a webinar organized by the Development Services Group, the RTP managing entity. The RTP team presented a summary of its project followed by contact information. That webinar resulted in several positive comments about the RTP project and iNAPS as an organization.

As part of its effort to collaborate with other disciplines—an effort resulting from the RTP project—a psychologist (Larry Davidson) and psychiatrist (Mark Ragins) will be featured as plenary speakers at the iNAPS annual national peer support conference. A plenary panel on self-disclosure (a result of the last RTP in-person meeting) is still being finalized but it appears likely that Andy Bernstein (a psychologist) will participate on that panel.

The size of recent newsletter leading up to the conference has made it difficult to be consistent with the Champions of Peer Support feature. The iNAPS RTP team, however, has reached out to Peggy Swarbrick (an occupational therapist) and Dan Fisher (a psychiatrist) to feature them in future newsletters.

During one recent webinar that focused on the RTP curriculum, participants were made aware that the curriculum/participant workbook is available as a free download on the iNAPS website. Participants were also offered the option of ordering a printed copy of the workbook. About six individuals have opted to order the workbook with one saying, “I don’t have that much time and ink to download the book.” It appears, however, the vast majority of those interested in the workbook are taking advantage of the free downloading opportunity.