

# Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

## May 2013

### InterNational Association of Peer Supporters

In May, the iNAPS RTP team conducted its second in a series of one-hour webinars in collaboration with OptumHealth. The content of the webinar, entitled “Trauma-Informed Peer Support,” was drawn directly from the iNAPS RTP curriculum with no editing or input from OptumHealth staff. OptumHealth graciously allows us to use their webinar system and technical staff for this series.

After useful consultation with DSG staff, the purpose of the webinars (to provide an overview of the iNAPS RTP curriculum to inform participants of the project, its basic content and obtain content suggestions) was made clear in promotion and during the webinar itself. About 100 “call ins” were reported by OptumHealth and it is apparent that, in many cases, multiple peer supporters are participating at a single site (and recorded as a single call in). About 90 certificates of participation were mailed to participants who completed a short quiz after the webinar.

By all accounts, participants are finding the webinar series useful and the series is generating considerable interest in the RTP project and the full curriculum. The series has also generated considerable interest in the organization and memberships have seen a significant increase.

Rita Cronise, Noelle Pollet and two “resident” facilitators have conducted a multi-week pilot of the recovery curriculum. That pilot has led to some modifications in presentation format (such as providing a complete workbook with all handouts and the pre-course work). The content continues to appear “solid” as participants report high satisfaction with the knowledge gained and skills developed for their practices.

Again, with the wise counsel of DSG staff and RTP Director Larry Davidson, additional focus has been placed on the peer-developed curriculum content with less emphasis on the delivery method. While the collaborative learning method is indeed exciting and obviously appreciated by participants, we have become mindful not to let the method overshadow content. During debriefings of activities, the key question, “What does this mean for your practice?” is vital. With that prompt, participants are readily able to identify the knowledge and skills gained and developed to fulfill the purposes of the RTP project.

During the New York (state) pilot, it was especially helpful to have observations Chacku Mathai, a DSG consultant, and Dan O’Brien-Mazza, national director of peer support for the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. Both have expressed particular interest in this curriculum and its development. They have offered extremely meaningful suggestions throughout the curriculum development process.

This month, the iNAPS RTP team began establishing a plan to handle the logistics for offering both an RTP pilot and facilitator training in conjunction with the national peer support conference in Anaheim, California in late August. Our primary collaborator will be Project Return of Commerce, California, directed by Keris Myrick.

This month, plans were finalized and participants identified for a “retreat format” pilot near Grand Rapids, Michigan. Drawing on peer specialists from the county, 12 participants have asked to participate. The pilot will be offered during two weekends in a country, lakeside setting. Meals and refreshment breaks will be offered as well as opportunities for fishing, nature walks, boating, canoeing and after-session social time at a bonfire. There will be NO cost to participants but they will be responsible for travel to and from the pilot site.

The primary collaborator for this pilot is the Recovery Academy of Grand Rapids. This recovery education program is entirely peer run and managed and enlists the services of expert peer facilitators to offer a variety of recovery programs including Wellness Recovery Action Planning, support groups, Pathways to Recovery, art therapy, building self-esteem, and other offerings that focus on peers’ expressed desires.

Working in collaboration with the Bringing Recovery Support to Scale Technical Assistance Center (BRSS TACS), plans were made to participate in a free webinar for 11 states involved in a policy academy. The focus of the webinar, set for June 7, will be implementing peer support programs. The RTP project will be featured as a way of providing quality continuing education to working peer specialists in those states.

In May, Steve Harrington made presentations at peer support events in Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky. The audiences were comprised of peers, peer supporters, and peer program administrators. The RTP project was described to these groups (approximately 500 people total) and they were referred to several websites for additional information.

Information about all RTP disciplines’ projects and progress was gathered from websites but time constraints have delayed the creation of one-page description of each discipline’s initiative and the RTP project as a whole. It is expected that June will see completion of drafts for review by each discipline. When completed, those one-page descriptions will be distributed to RTP representatives from each discipline for information dissemination to a broad audience.

As a faculty member of Boston University’s Global Leadership Institute, Steve will be presenting information about the RTP project to seven leadership teams from other countries. Presentation planning was performed in May with the event scheduled for June 10-14 in Boston.

In May, Steve also worked with a team organizing an August international mental health summit in Melbourne, Australia. The RTP project will be discussed during a keynote address to approximately 1,000 participants from several countries. A paper for publication in a professional journal will also be written by Steve and will include RTP project descriptions.