

Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

September 2013

International Association of Peer Supporters

Curriculum Development

In September, the iNAPS RTP team virtually completed workbooks for all eight modules of the RTP recovery curriculum. The workbooks have seen reviews by the core iNAPS RTP team and are ready for review by a larger group. Because of the extensive review process used throughout the project and lessons learned through the pilots, it is expected that the workbooks will see little revision.

The team opted to create the workbooks to address several issues that arose during pilot testing. Those issues are: 1) the length of timeframe for delivering all modules, 2) the desire among participants to have key information readily available before, during and after the sessions, 3) the desire to use a variety of instructional resources and 4) the desire to preserve the power of engagement during in-person sessions.

Using workbooks that would be mandatory reading and completing prior to in-person sessions will allow participants to gain important knowledge prior to in-person portions of the each module. Although some participants may not complete the workbooks prior to the in-person experiences, they will still gain considerable information and skill development. But those who are able to complete the workbooks will find the in-person experiences much richer. Experience during the pilots with a pre-course workbook for the first module demonstrated that, by and large, participants were sufficiently motivated to complete such workbooks.

We expect that the in-person experiences will be better focused and will reduce the time away from work that many participants and potential participants have found a barrier during pilots. We also expect the workbooks will respond to participants' expressed desire to have key resources available before and after the training. We estimate participants will spend approximately eight hours completing the workbooks, 24 hours with the in-person experiences and an additional eight hours with the eight archived RTP webinars currently nearing completion. This format results in a total of 40 hours of training.

The workbooks are expected to be fully finalized no later than the end of October. The facilitator guide for the curriculum will likewise be completed by the end of that month.

RTP In-Person Meeting

Two members of the iNAPS RTP team participated in the two-day, in-person RTP meeting at SAMHSA headquarters in Rockville, MD. To prepare for the meeting, the team created a powerpoint presentation and provided handout materials for distribution for all participants.

During the meeting, Steve Harrington provided an overview of the results of the pilots, lessons learned and how the team responded to needs and desires through curriculum and curriculum-delivery modifications. He also identified ways in which the RTP project has benefitted the peer support profession and the potential for building on work already accomplished.

Webinars

In September, a webinar (the sixth in the series) entitled “Multi-Cultural Awareness for Peer Supporters” was presented by Denise Camp. This webinar was recorded and will be archived as a resource for the RTP recovery curriculum and people interested in the topic. Previous webinars will be archived but will require recording and planning for recording has begun.

Implementation Planning

To disseminate and evaluate the recovery curriculum, the iNAPS RTP team reviewed many options. Of particular concern is quality control. To address this concern, the iNAPS RTP team is planning to create an “endorsed facilitator” status/credential. This endorsement would be granted to individuals who know the curriculum through participation at some level and have also completed a train the facilitator training.

Instead of a single implementation strategy, a variety of endeavors will likely work best to implement the curriculum. Those strategies include:

- A train the facilitator training dedicated to those who have participated in the pilots and expressed interest in becoming an “authorized” facilitator. It is possible that pilot sites will select representatives who will participate in this training and then bring it back to others so as to make this approach cost effective. Staff from the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA, an iNAPS partner in the RTP project) are expected to lead this initiative.
- A train the facilitator training dedicated for those who participated in the Grand Rapids, MI pilot. This was a bit of an unusual group as they had considerable experience as peer supporters and facilitating as well. The group was particularly enthusiastic, most participants expressed a desire to facilitate the curriculum and participants are well-placed to bring the curriculum to a large group of peer supporters in Michigan.
- Offering train the facilitator sessions at state peer support conferences.
- Collaborating with key, well-respected training organizations with a national presence and state officials to perform train the facilitator trainings.
- Contacting state and other officials to obtain endorsement of the recovery curriculum for continuing education credits to facilitate adoption of the curriculum.

Networking

Steve Harrington attended several events where he explained the RTP project to groups. A total of 350 people heard Harrington detail the RTP project with emphasis on the iNAPS portion of the project. This effort created a broader awareness and understanding that offers the promise of future collaborations that may be used during the implementation phase of the project.

Harrington also discussed the project with key individuals such as Lori Ashcraft of the Recovery Opportunity Center and Matthew Federici of the Copeland Center, both of which have a national presence. Through a series of conversations with a variety of respected individuals, options for spreading the word about the project with an eye to implementation were explored.

Networking with key individuals and organizations began when the RTP project started about four years ago. But those efforts have increased as the curriculum approaches implementation. Building relationships and exploring opportunities for collaboration are likely to be very important during the implementation phase.

During October, the RTP team will be completing the workbooks and facilitator guide. The team will also be scheduling a train the facilitator training in Grand Rapids. During that training, outcome data, such as “how did the RTP training affect your practice if at all?” will be obtained. Implementation strategies for Michigan and beyond will also be explored so endorsed facilitators will be able to use their training and experience to implement the curriculum broadly. An action plan is expected to result.