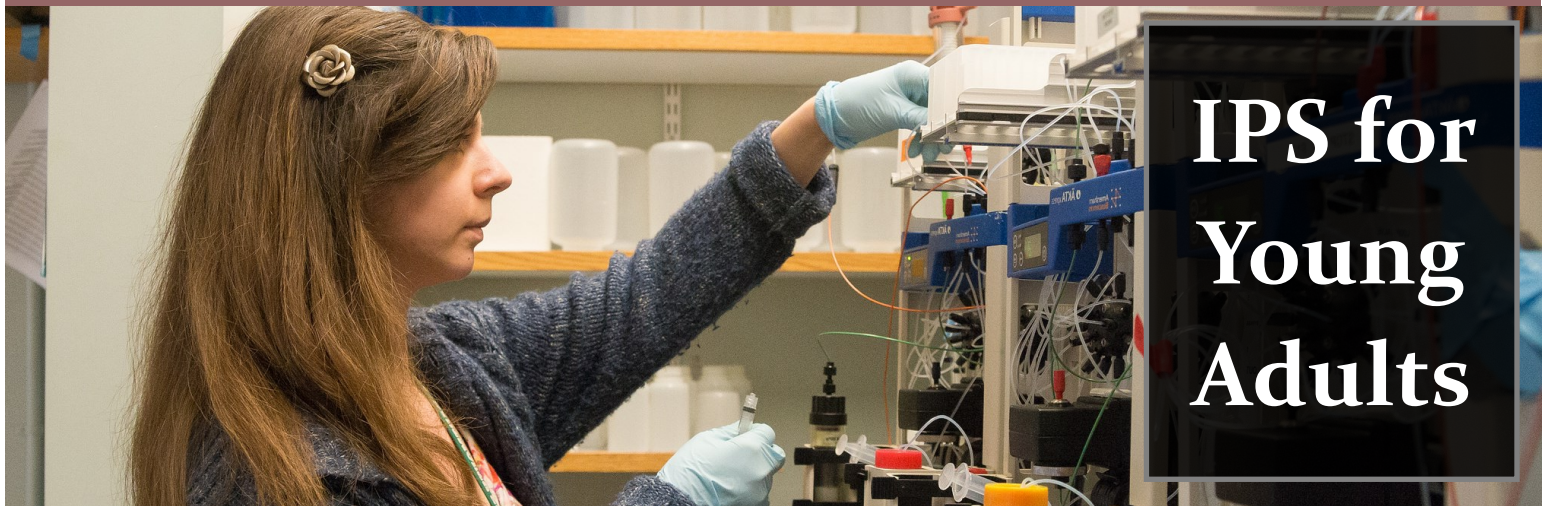


EMPLOYMENT WORKS!

TWICE-YEARLY IPS SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2015



IPS for Young Adults

Work improves life quality for youth

BY Peggy Swarbrick, Peer Advocate
Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey and Rutgers University

Helping young adults with mental and substance use disorders find employment is beneficial to their recovery. It can foster a sense of empowerment and pride that gives a continuous sense of capability and control.

It is imperative to help young adults pursue careers as part of good mental health services. If we do not, young adults will remain dependent on a fragmented and overburdened system. More importantly, they will remain vulnerable to the negative health outcomes associated with long-term unemployment.

Work can strengthen a feeling of mastery or competence and provides *purpose* and *meaning to life*. Work provides a place to meet people, a feeling of being valued or needed by others, social status and potential friendships, and evidence of *personal success*. The economic benefits that working provides allow a person to purchase resources, goods, and services, and to enjoy leisure time. Despite these positive benefits, far too many people living with mental and substance use disorders are under or unemployed.

Many well-intentioned providers, family

members, and supporters discourage young people with mental health problems from pursuing work, even though work is an important aspect of recovery. The knee-jerk reaction is to get the person on disability benefits in order to be taken care of. Work is seen as too stressful, based on the belief that it can lead to symptoms and relapse despite a lack of evidence for this fear. People are helped to get on (but rarely off) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or

“Most studies indicate that long-term unemployment (and underemployment) is associated with negative health outcomes”

Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This sends a discouraging message: “you are incapable.” Unfortunately, many come to accept this belief, despite the lack of empirical studies to support the assertion that work makes people living with mental illness sick. In fact, most studies indicate that long-term unemployment (and underemployment) is associated with negative health outcomes. A life on SSDI or SSI is generally a life of pov-

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IPS DARTMOUTH SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT CENTER

IPS stands for Individual Placement and Support and is an evidence-based practice

More than employment

IPS specialists in Iceland help young adults start careers

RIKKI Rikki is in his twenties and has been unemployed for many years. He has taken part in daily treatment at the psychiatric department of the university hospital since 2010. The employment specialist first met with Rikki in November 2013 after being informed by his case manager that Rikki was interested in working. Rikki wanted most to work with cars and said, “I had experience in driving a postal delivery truck for some time a few years ago and I always felt good when I was driving.” The employment specialist had a connection with a car dealership and the management there needed people and were more than willing to give Rikki a part-time position. Rikki soon felt comfortable at his work and his confidence quickly grew, enough that in only four weeks he told his employment specialist and case manager that he wanted more challenges and a stronger feeling that he was being treated equally in his work. The case manager and employment specialist met with his work manager and it turned out they had been protecting him, thinking it was best for him if he had easier tasks and not realizing it was the opposite. They immediately changed and Rikki felt more comfortable and valued for his work. When Rikki started working, he had been living in a halfway house since 2011. After starting work he was more ready to live on his own and get back to society. He found a new apartment and lives there independently.

After about eight months of work Rikki came to his case manager and told her that he was interested in going for a semester at the Reykjavik tech school for computer programming. He successfully completed that course and in February 2015 started to work for a travel agent and a booking office as a traveler’s assistant. Rikki has felt very comfortable at his work and finishes his assignments well. His confidence has grown immensely and he has said it has all to do with him starting work again.

JONNI IPS specialist Hlynur recounts meeting Jonni for the first time: “My colleagues on the IPS team almost sounded as though I had a reason to be nervous before meeting him.” Jonni, 24 years of age, had been very depressed and had little interest in having conversations with his psychologist or doctor, never mind employment. He hadn’t worked since 2010 and then only a summer job. Hlynur’s first meeting with Jonni included his psychiatrist, his doctor, and his mother, and turned out very differently from what Hlynur’s colleagues had thought. Jonni was a bit shy in the beginning but then the conversation turned very smooth and friendly and mainly we spoke about his hobby and best friend — music. Not only did Jonni have great interest and knowledge in music but he was also a talented music writer and recorder.

At first Hlynur visited a few recording studios where he had connections to search for work for Jonni. The studios were all unfortunately fully staffed, however, the staff was very interested in his work, talking to him and getting to know him. Hlynur saw how well Jonni felt in that environment and realized how much it would mean to him to be in such a positive workplace with a musical connection. After some thought, Hlynur went to the national broadcasting station and met with the director for radio, informed him of IPS and told him about Jonni. He immediately felt good around the director and in that environment and had a good feeling Jonni would too. The director advised he would call and set up an interview. It took close to three weeks but Hlynur and Jonni finally met the director along with the Human Resources manager. Jonni felt relaxed there and found the thought of working at a national radio station very exciting. Immediately they had an idea of how Jonni could get involved and where he could be helpful but the timing was not right. The station truly understood the idea behind IPS and could have taken him in right away but with little to do for the first two months. Instead, Jonni waited three months for the call and then met up with them again. They felt the moment was right and that he could start May 1st. It was a long wait but it was worth every minute. Since he started he has blossomed there and is working very interesting jobs that are mentally challenging and music related, which has been very enjoyable for him as well. “It has been fantastic to witness his confidence grow and he seems genuinely happy at work, finishes his assignments not only on time but usually early and does them very well,” Hlynur said. “This has been overall a very positive step for him and a learning process for everyone involved.”

Dartmouth IPS Notes

A growing trend is to help young adults with mental illness start their careers using the IPS supported employment approach. Examples are programs that serve transition-age youth or people experiencing a first episode of psychosis. Researchers and trainers from Dartmouth PRC and University of Massachusetts Medical School and colleagues from Maryland are collaborating on a 5-year study to evaluate IPS for transition-age youth.

Young adults want to try different experiences and may fluctuate in their desire to work or go to school. Employment/education specialists help them explore both options and continue to engage them during periods of uncertainty.

In this issue, Gina Chinnery from Orygen (the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, Australia) shares some techniques to engage young people in IPS. With the young adult’s permission, invite family members to some employment/education planning meetings. Family is defined by the young adult and can include friends, partners or other supporters.

As Steve Wooderson, a keynote speaker at the 2015 annual meeting in Alameda County, California reported, the signing of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in July means that the field is going to see an expansion in the vocational rehabilitation services provided to young adults with serious mental illnesses.

Including peers on teams serving young adults may help with engagement. In this issue, Emily Grossman describes how programs for people with a first episode of psychosis are incorporating peers.

In this issue’s cover story, Peggy Swarbrick shares that it is imperative to help young adults with mental illnesses pursue careers. Likewise, the IPS Learning Community is sharing ideas about working with young adults and others to support recovery through work and school.

'It's all based on the person's interests'

Maryland program offers insight into helping young adults get jobs using IPS

BY Renata Solorzano de Souza and
Marian Cooper
Cornerstone Montgomery, Inc.
Maryland

We work with young people, ages 16 to 21. We each help with employment, and if a job goal requires training or education, we provide support for that as well. People in our program have gone to university, community college, dog grooming school, beauty school, trade school, etc.; it is all based on the person's interests.

Some people know what they want to do, but others need time to explore possible careers. We talk to people about their strengths, their interests and what they enjoy. Family members often have helpful ideas about a person's skills and abilities. Sometimes we use a short interest inventory or go with the person to observe workers in different fields. Talking to workers provides opportunities to ask what they like and dislike about their positions. If the job requires training or education, it helps to meet with school advisors to learn about the requirements for degrees and certificates. When we are unsure whether an occupation is expanding or contracting, we help the person learn more by using O*NET (Occupational Information Network, www.onetonline.org), by looking at job advertisements, talking to counselors at the state Department of Rehabilitation, or school advisors. It is important for the person to make an informed choice.

The process of getting into school can be difficult. We assist with applications and deadlines. For example, people who receive Social Security Income are eligible for a tuition waiver, but to obtain the waiver they must go to the Social Security Administration offices to get verification of their benefits. We also accompany people to meetings with financial aid counselors and we help with Federal Student Aid (FASA) applications. When those options are insufficient, the Department of Rehabilitation has



IPS Supported Employment Specialists at Cornerstone Montgomery, Inc., tailor their adult program to fit the needs of the young people seeking employment.

sometimes been able to help with the costs of vocational training or college.

While someone is in school, we often help with time management skills. Some people benefit from help using a calendar. Others are overwhelmed at first with going to school and working. We help them think about how to fit classes and study time into

ing notes on what she read. Next, she would take a 30-minute break and then review her notes before she resumed reading. We do not provide tutoring, but we help people think about an individualized learning plan. Some students obtain tutoring through Disability Support Services (sometimes called Office for Student Services).

Accommodations for learning can include carrying over an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from high school to the new educational program. Specific accommodations can consist of help with note-taking, extended deadlines for projects, extra time to take tests, being able to use a calculator during tests, or being provided with a quiet place to take a test. Occasionally, a person may need to take time off during a course. One student was in the hospital but arranged to have assignments brought to her, and she talked to her professor about how she could finish the course. In other situations, people have taken incomplete grades so they could finish courses later.

Supported education is not always as linear as traditional education. Some people find that they need part-time course loads or breaks from school. They may change their minds about their majors or certificates. Employment and education specialists must be flexible and encouraging as plans change.

"[Young people] may change their minds about their majors or certificates.

Employment and education specialists must be flexible and encouraging as plans change."

their schedules. Family members can also help people remember deadlines for school. Another common support is helping people develop good study skills. An example is of one student who had problems with concentration. Reading a chapter of a textbook was daunting to her. We came up with a plan for her to read for 15 minutes while tak-

Tips for helping young adults find jobs

BY Gina Chinnery

National Vocational Services Manager
Orygen, Australia

When providing IPS to young people, there can be subtle differences from the approach used with adults, in particular, how to engage a young person in the program. I have found in my work with young people that the rapid job search principle of IPS is key to improved engagement. There is a very small window of time to develop an effective working relationship with the young person who has often had a less than ideal experience with another employment service or career counselor.

To improve engagement and outcomes in the IPS program at Orygen I use a combination of techniques depending on the individual, including:

- **Limiting the amount of paperwork and forms used during the first session.** I try to gather most information in the first session so the actions to gain work or study start within the first few weeks.
- **Ensuring discussions remain career-focused without much emphasis on mental health.**
- **Using a strength-based approach.** Focusing on what the young person *can* do over any limitations they may have.
- **Working collaboratively with young people to identify their interests and transferable skills and highlighting how these can be used effectively in identified career paths.** This may be through a variety of mediums; online skills and interest testing, mind maps or using career timelines to prompt the young person, etc.
- **Demonstrating my knowledge of**



When receiving assistance in finding employment, young adults appreciate and respond positively to being treated like an individual. Finding a career that is as unique as the young adult himself instead of any available job is often preferred.

the labor market and relevant educational opportunities early on. I find this helps with gaining credibility and trust. Many young people I have worked with have previously been given incorrect career advice and can be very cautious moving forward.

- **Explaining and demonstrating how to use technology effectively in the job search.** I spend a lot of time coaching young people on effective use of social media platforms, email, and text in their job search process.
- **Presenting myself in a professional manner when interacting with young people.** I try to model behaviors in my interactions with young people that they would use in job interviews or at work and provide feedback on how they interacted with me at the end of sessions. This can be as basic as shaking hands with a young person at reception, using professional language in my emails to a young person, or with what I wear to work each day.

Importantly, young people value being treated as individuals and having their unique career goals heard over feeling pressured into any job available in the market, which is a great strength of the IPS program with the youth population. Finally, some people feel that it is important to speak the young person's language in order to improve engagement. I've found that, for me, it is more important to just be myself and use my skills, knowledge and networks to deliver results.

For more tips on helping young adults using IPS Supported Employment, the IPS Dartmouth Supported Employment Center has recently released a Tip Sheet.

To download the Tip Sheet, visit our website and look for Resources, Programs, Program Tools, Tips for Helping Young Adults in IPS.

www.DartmouthIPS.org

2015 Annual Meeting a resounding success

BY Bob Drake

Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the annual IPS meeting in Berkeley, CA, in May of 2015. The first meeting without funding supports from Johnson & Johnson philanthropy was a huge success. It was a transitional meeting: no external funding, housing and meals on the Clark Kerr campus of the University of California, and participants paying for their own travel expenses, but many participants reported that it was the best meeting yet!

Special kudos to our hosts from Alameda County – they joined California officials in welcoming the group and described enormous progress in Alameda, which they explained is actually a state posing as a county.

Our four keynote speakers were inspirational and informative. Paolo del Vecchio, Director of the Center for Mental Health Services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), described his own commitment to employment for all and SAMSHA's recent initiative to help seven states scale up their IPS services. Mike Hogan, former mental health director in three states and lead writer of the President's New Freedom Commission report, asserted that IPS supported employment has reached a tipping point, needing only financing mechanisms, such as Medicaid waivers and Section 223, to expand opportunities widely in the U.S. Steve Wooderson, head of Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR), reported on the recent movement within the state-federal Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

to emphasize earlier intervention and to focus specifically on the goal of integrated, competitive employment. Sally Zinman, an iconic figure for several decades in the mental health consumer movement, reviewed the evolution of the consumer movement and the centrality of employment throughout its history.

Several other highlights of the meeting: several states within the learning community are expanding services rapidly. Illinois, for example, now has nearly 100 IPS program sites. In addition, some states outside of the learning community, e.g., Massachusetts, Montana, and New York, have begun to provide and spread IPS supported employment. Representatives from Europe, Australia, Canada, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs also reported on successful expansions.

Gary Bond presented an overview of different research activities, including a study within the learning community on sustainability of IPS.

Specific subgroup meetings focused on peer advocates, family advocates, training activities, development of technology tools, programs for young adults, proposals to establish credentials for IPS specialists, disclosure issues, Medicaid issues, new data collection and outcome sharing for the learning community, using media for advocacy, programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, IPS in Asian communities, and cultural awareness.

Finally, learning community members voted unanimously to continue the annual IPS meeting in the new format.

We hope to announce the dates and location for 2016 very soon!

2015 Learning Community Awards

The 2015 Annual Meeting awards ceremony celebrated those people and programs that represent the efforts of so many in support of people retuning to work as part of their recovery. The agencies and people listed below were nominated by their state IPS team. Congratulations to all of you, and thank you for your continued hard work and dedication to helping people get back to work!

Achievement Award

Ability Beyond and Vocational Rehabilitation, Connecticut

Alternative Opportunities Treatment Services and Vocational Rehabilitation, Missouri

Transformation Award

Trilogy and Vocational Rehabilitation, Illinois
Human Development Center -Employment Connection and Vocational Rehabilitation, Minnesota

Family Advocacy for IPS Award

Annie Kim, Family Advocacy Resource Center, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, California

Mary Hogden, Consumer Empowerment Department, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, California

Peer Advocacy Award

Mary Hogden, Consumer Empowerment Department, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, California

California team supports transition-age youth housing



ALAMEDA COUNTY— Members from the Fred Finch Youth Center's STAY, Supported housing for Transition-Age Youth, team from Alameda County, California are using IPS for clients experiencing first episode psychosis. The STAY team includes mental health practitioners and IPS specialists.

Peer services to bring lived experience to young adult teams in New York



Peer specialists, team members with similar experiences to those served, will help improve treatment for young adults at a New York-based program.

BY Emily Grossman

Recovery Specialist and Trainer, OnTrackNY

Treatment teams at OnTrackNY are collaborating with peer specialists to provide intensive support to people aged 16 to 30 years who are experiencing early non-affective psychosis. Teams currently include a psychiatrist or nurse practitioner, a primary clinician, a supported employment and education specialist (referred to as IPS specialists in other programs), an outreach and enrollment specialist, and a team leader; what's missing is a peer specialist. Peers must be comfortable sharing their lived experiences, including experiences with employment and education. They will have to model that it is possible to be successful despite psychosis.

We will hire young people with experience navigating the sys-

tem and getting supports for work and school. For example, when I was in school I learned that I needed to talk to the Office for Student Services about my mental health struggles so I could get extra support. Peers have that insider knowledge—they know it because they have lived it. Peers work in their communities so they will be able to help people apply for jobs and assist with other IPS services. Different types of programs provide evidence-based services to young people experiencing a first episode psychosis.

OnTrackNY is a first-episode program built on the National Institute of Mental Health Recovery After an Initial Schizophrenia Episode (RAISE) Connection program and adapted by Center for Practice Innovations at New York State Psychiatric Institute at Columbia Psychiatry.

(Continued from page 1, SWARBRICK)

erty, social isolation, social stigma, and can lead to poor health outcomes (e.g., lower life expectancy and poorer physical and emotional health status). Once on benefits, the person's primary social role is either "patient" or "consumer." The person may become frustrated, angry, and depressed without the opportunity to use and develop his or her inherent strengths, talents, and capabilities.

Well-intentioned supporters often believe they are protecting the person from becoming too stressed and/or experiencing a relapse when, in fact, inactivity, poverty, and social isolation can be far worse for mental and physical well-being.

Recovery involves developing new meaning and purpose and endorses the notion that people are capable and resilient. The

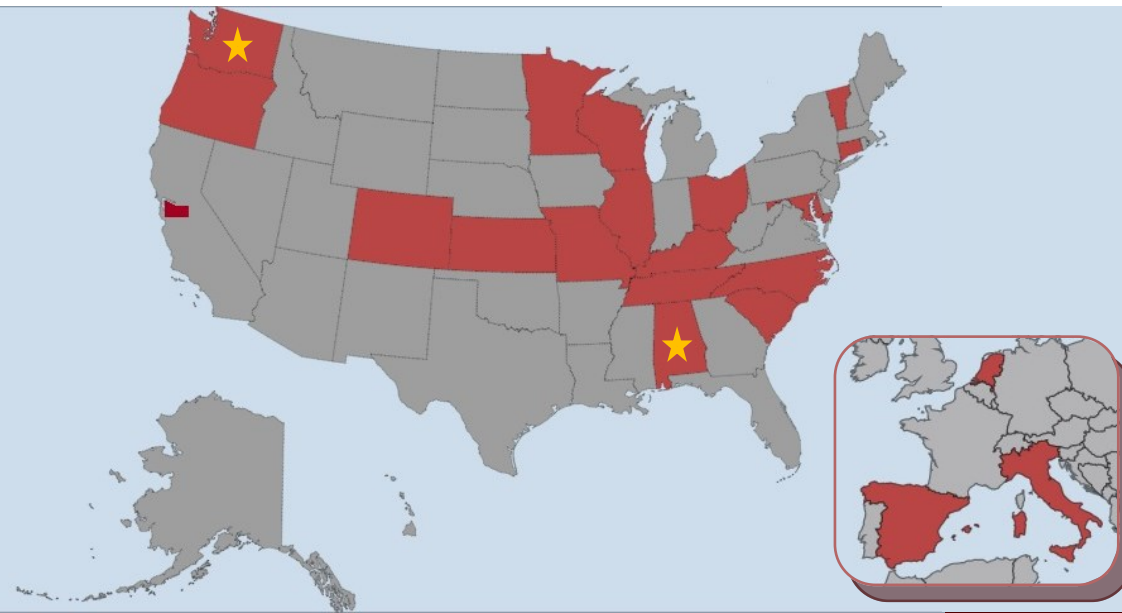
idea that work can cause people to get or remain sick is at odds with a belief in recovery. The belief that recovery is possible leads directly to the need to encourage young adults to complete their education and pursue a career.

Work can enhance a sense of self-esteem and promote self-efficacy (*control*). Promoting recovery through work means helping people realize their goals and dreams for employment and education, while focusing on long-term career development, not just placement in an entry-level job. Specific workplace or school-based supports may be needed, along with ongoing general support and connection.

While helping someone get on benefits may be necessary in some situations, benefits should be seen as a short-term and temporary support, and efforts should focus on a clear *exit plan* from the entitlement trap.

The IPS Learning Community

★ Welcome Alabama and Washington!



New study to tailor IPS for transition-age youth

BY Gary Bond

Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center

A Dartmouth research and technical assistance team comprised of Dr. Gary Bond, Debbie Becker, and Sarah Swanson is collaborating with the Transitions Research and Training Center at the University of Massachusetts to conduct a five-year research and development project to define and evaluate IPS services for transition-age youth with serious emotional disorders. The project will prepare a practice manual for employment specialists that will describe the IPS approach tailored to high school students, dropouts, and others aged 16–21. The practice manual will describe critical issues for this population, including the integration of IPS and supported education and strategies for engaging youth. For example, texting is a common mode of communication for transition-age youth; consequently, how

services can be tailored to take advantage of this mode of communication will be described. A 30-month program evaluation of two IPS programs in Maryland serving transition-age youth will be conducted as part of the project. Both agencies, Cornerstone and Way Station, participate in the IPS Learning Community. The evaluation will compare two approaches to providing IPS services to this age group: Cornerstone has an IPS program devoted exclusively to transition-age youth, while Way Station serves transition-age youth within an IPS program that also serves adults of all ages. Finally, a fidelity scale for assessing IPS programs for this age group will be developed. The project is part of a Center of Excellence grant funded by the National Institute of Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. The lead investigator for this project is Marsha Ellison from the University of Massachusetts.

Dartmouth IPS Supported Employment Center

What's New

IPS Practitioner Skills Course Registration Now Open

The Fall course begins October 5. Registration for this course opened August 21. Go to www.DartmouthIPS.org and select Training & Consultation, Online Courses.

IPS Supervisor Skills Course to be held in March

The IPS Supervisor Skills course will be offered again March 21, 2016. Registration for the course opens on February 15, 2016. Go to our website and select Training & Consultation, Online Courses.

New online course for state Vocational Rehabilitation announced

A course for state Vocational Rehabilitation counselors will begin October 12, 2015. Registration opens August 31, 2015. Go to our website and select Training & Consultation, Online Courses.

New articles and publications available for review and purchase

Updated material and publication details for new articles are available on our website.

Coming soon—updated Fidelity Manual

An updated Fidelity Manual will be available via our website in the coming months. Stay tuned!

Leadership training to be held in September

The Dartmouth Psychiatric Research Center will host a 2.5-day leadership training from September 1–3, 2015. This highly interactive training allows participants to discuss issues related to implementation and sustainability of IPS in their areas. Topics include: successful strategies for IPS implementation, effective IPS training methods, IPS fidelity reviews, and outcomes-based IPS supervision. Registration for this event is full, but another training will be held in March, 2016. For more information, visit our website.

For more information, visit our website
www.DartmouthIPS.org