Peer Roles in Supported Employment

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Agenda

1. The value of IPS supported employment
2. How peer workers can contribute as IPS staff
3. Examples: Peer roles in employment services
4. Quality assurance and staff development
Part 1: IPS Supported Employment

• The value of work
• The IPS model
Work Enhances Wellness
Work Promotes Recovery

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.
Dimensions that support recovery

- Home
- Health
- Purpose
- Community

Work is strongly linked to health, purpose, and community
A Few Facts

- 70% of people with mental health issues want to work

- IPS can help 60-70% to be competitively employed

- Most people work about half-time, like their jobs, and benefit in many other ways

Bob Drake & Deborah Becker

The IPS Employment Center, Westat
“When I am working, the noise in my head gets quieter.”

“Working gives me a reason to get up in the morning. And that is the best medicine.”

“The money is nice but I feel good telling my son that I have to go to work tomorrow.”
IPS SE Principles

- Open to anyone who wants to work
- Focus on competitive employment
- Rapid job search
- Systematic job development
- Worker preferences guide decisions
- Individualized long-term supports
- Integrated with treatment
- Benefits counseling included
Preferences are Honored

Peanuts

I'd hate to have a job where you had to get up early in the morning...
I'd hate to have a job where you stayed in the same place all day...
I'd hate to have a job where you had to be nice to everybody.
Job supports are continuous: ongoing and time-unlimited
Part 2: How Peer Workers Fit IPS

- What is a peer worker?
- Special attributes of a peer worker
- Peer worker competencies
- Complementary roles and responsibilities
- Advancing the team
- Challenges
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Feature</strong></th>
<th><strong>Peer Support Service Description</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>Delivered by a person in recovery. Offers social support before, during, and after treatment to facilitate long-term recovery in the community</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td>Assist in developing coping and problem-solving strategies for illness self-management; draw on lived experiences and empathy to promote hope, insights, skills; help engage in treatment, access community supports, establish a satisfying life</td>
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Special Attributes of Peer Workers

• Lived experience
  • Of a mental health condition
  • Of life disruption
  • Of using behavioral health services
  • Of success in employment

• Training for Certified Peer Specialists

• CPS Code of Ethics

http://www.gacps.org/CodeOfEthics.html
Peer Worker Competencies

• Generic peer characteristics and competencies
• Certification as a peer specialist
• Specific expertise in promoting employment

http://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs/core-competencies-peer-workers
SAMHSA Core Competencies Set 1

• Engages people using services in collaborative and caring relationships
• Provides support
• Shares lived experiences of recovery
• Personalizes peer support
SAMHSA Core Competencies Set 2

• Recovery planning
• Links to resources, services, and supports
• Teaches information and skills related to health, wellness, and recovery
• Helps peers to manage crises
The value of Peer Workers

• Early engagement and relationship building

• Lived experience is shared
  • Informs practice
  • A reminder that recovery is possible

• Can impact culture to embrace recovery vision

• Knowledge: complexities of navigating systems

• The role is an employment opportunity
Part 3: Peer worker roles in SE

- Vocational peer support
- Vocational peer mentors
- IPS fidelity reviewer
- Staff educator
- Other roles
Vocational Peer Support

• Supporting people with psychiatric disabilities to explore, pursue and achieve vocational recovery
• Advanced specialization, which builds upon core peer support competencies and knowledge
• VPS training develops additional skills for supporting people with vocational aspirations
• Not a new role for peer workers, but a toolbox of knowledge and skill to add to the core functions

www.cpr.bu.edu
Vocational Peer Mentors

• Supports youth and young adults
• Matched
• Individual meetings in the community
• Emotional and informational support
• Explore jobs and careers
• Coach professionalism
• Promote engagement with SE and SEd
• Model is still being developed

http://labs.umassmed.edu/transitionsRTC/
Peer Role: IPS Fidelity Reviewer

• IPS SE Fidelity Scale: used by trained program reviewers to determine how closely a program adheres to the evidence-based approach

• Purpose: improve program so more people work  Better fidelity = more people working

To obtain the scale, fidelity manual, other tools:

www.dartmouthips.org
## Supported Employment Fidelity Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings / Anchors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Caseload:</strong> Employment specialists manage caseloads of up to 25 consumers.</td>
<td>1 A ratio of 81 or more consumers per employment specialist, or Cannot rate due to no fit</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 A ratio of 61 to 80 consumers per employment specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 A ratio of 41 to 60 consumers per employment specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 A ratio of 26 to 40 consumers per employment specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 A ratio of 25 or fewer consumers per employment specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Vocational services staff:</strong> Employment specialists provide only vocational services.</td>
<td>1 Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management 80% or more of the time, or Cannot rate due to no fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 60% of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 40% of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 20% of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Employment specialists provide only vocational services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Vocational generalists:</strong> Each employment specialist carries out all phases of vocational service including engagement, assessment, job development, job placement, job coaching, and follow-along supports.</td>
<td>1 Employment specialists provide only vocational referrals to other vendors or programs, or Cannot rate due to no fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Employment specialists maintain caseloads but refer consumers to other programs for vocational service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Employment specialists provide 1 aspect of the vocational service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Employment specialists provide 2 or more phases of vocational service but not the entire service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Employment specialists carry out all phases of vocational service</td>
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Peer Reviewers on IPS Fidelity Team

- Peers can be members of fidelity review teams

- Especially valued in conducting interviews
  - Families
  - People using the service
Other Roles for IPS Peer Workers

- SE Specialist
- IPS Supervisor
- IPS Trainer
Part 4: QA and Staff Development

- Challenges
- Defining the peer role
- Supporting peer workers
- Workplace strategies
Challenges

• Peer worker roles not always well defined
• Supervisors may not understand role
• Agency policies may conflict with peer role
• Teams may not welcome peer workers
Defining the Peer Role

- Clarify role in relation to service users
- Detail expectations
  - Observable job competencies
  - Essential functions (needed for accommodations)
- Develop clear peer worker policies and practices
- Cover expenses:
  - Travel costs
  - In-person community meeting costs
  - Cell phone and email
- Support “off-hours” connections
Supporting Peers

• Weekly supervision
• Help peer workers identify their own issues and connect with supports outside the job
• Check-in regarding their own professional development, struggles, and successes
• Help develop advocacy skills for team meetings, both for themselves and the people they support
Strategies: Integrating Peers

- Peer position: essential (not an add-on)
- Consistent policies for peer and non-peer staff
- Neutral job titles that do not disclose peer status
- Implement a formal disclosure process for peers
- Peer positions have clear path for promotion
- Opportunities for interaction in agency life
  - Active involvement in team meetings
- Use peer input in service planning and notes
- Meet ADA requirements for accommodation
Strategies: Training

- Training to provide understanding of roles
  - For peer workers, other staff, and service users
- Formal new employees orientation and training
- Training on confidentiality
- Training for peers on language of the workplace
- Provide training on arising topics

Gates & Akabas (2007) Developing strategies to integrate peer workers...
Swarbrick (2014) Pillars of Peer Support: Supervision
Strategies: Supervision

- Supervision for administrative vs peer functions
- Provide peer-specific supervision
  - Supervisor must understand the peer role
  - Refer to the CPS Code of Ethics
- Keep the focus on job performance
- Encourage setting professional goals

Gates & Akabas (2007) Developing strategies to integrate peer workers...
Swarbrick (2014) Pillars of Peer Support: Supervision
Summary

1. IPS SE is an effective, well-researched service
2. Peer workers contribute uniquely as IPS staff
3. Various peer roles exist within SE
4. Staff development is critical for QA
a special thank you to
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http://www.dartmouthips.org
Online courses
IPS SE: A Practical Guide
for more information

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