

# 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

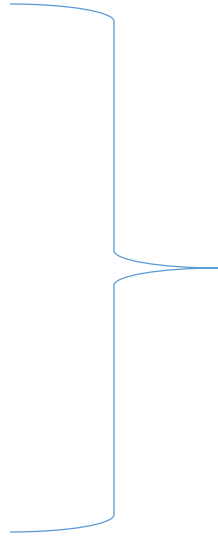


# Work Promotes Recovery

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***

- **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  
Rockville Institute, Westat*

# Quotes from Workers

- **“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.”**



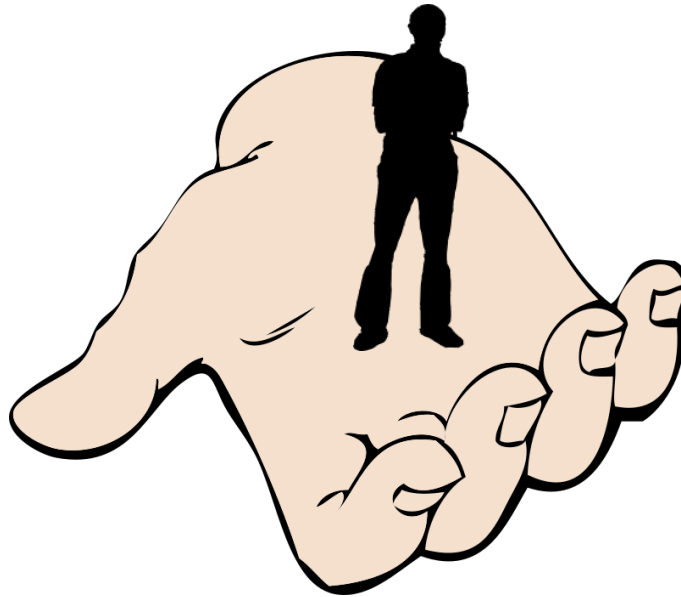
- **Open to anyone who wants to work**
- **Focus on competitive employment**
- **Rapid job search**
- **Systematic job development**
- **Worker preferences guide decisions**
- **Individualized long-term supports**
- **Integrated with treatment**
- **Benefits counseling included**

# Preferences are Honored

## Peanuts



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

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Peer Support Service Description</i>
<b>Definition</b>	Delivered by a person in recovery. Offers social support before, during, and after treatment to facilitate long-term recovery in the community
<b>Goals</b>	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

# 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

# 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

# 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](http://www.dartmouthips.org)

## Supported Employment Fidelity Scale

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

# 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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