The Emerging Roles for Peer Staff in Drug Courts

SAMHSA’S GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation

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12PM-1PM EDT
Facilitator & Presenters

LaVerne Miller, Project Associate, SAMHSA’s GAINS Center for Behavioral Health & Justice Transformation

Melissa Ives, ATCC Project Director and Julienne Linberg, Recovery Coach, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Brad Price, ATCC Project Director and Marianne Cripps, Peer Recovery Specialist, 31st Judicial District, Warren County, Tennessee
Overview of SAMHSA’s GAINS Center

- Since 1995 operated by Policy Research Associates
- Provides technical assistance to SAMHSA funded programs and the field
- Focus on expanding access to community based services for adults diagnosed with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders at all points of involvement with the criminal justice system
- Special focus on fully integrating peers and peer operated programs in all program activities including planning and implementation, service delivery and evaluation
Adult Treatment Court Collaborative (ATCC)

- SAMHSA funded grant program
- 11 grantees
- Goal of the grants is to assist state and local courts offer treatment and recovery supports to justice involved individuals with behavioral health disorders
- Promotes collaboration and cooperation between treatment courts and providers
- Encourages flexibility and innovation
SAMHSA’s GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation

345 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054
PH: (518) 439-7415
FAX: (518) 439-7612

http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/
Emerging Roles for Peer Staff in Drug Courts

ATCC/JDTR Webinar
November 14, 2013
Eau Claire County
Treatment Courts Collaborative

• Four courts
  □ Drug
  □ Alternatives to Incarcerating Mothers (AIM)
  □ Mental Health
  □ Veterans

• Goals
  □ Improve public safety
  □ Improve behavioral health of participants
  □ Use justice system resources wisely
Why Incorporate Peer Staff?

- Initially
  - Seen as a way to provide support to clinical Coordinators/Case Managers
    - Provide transportation/attend appointments, monitor sobriety/compliance and maintain detailed documentation

- Eventually
  - Viewed as way to empower participants to attain long-term recovery in a very individualized manner
    - Address the priorities of the participant rather than the program
Eau Claire County Recovery Coaches

- Primary purpose: help individuals achieve and maintain recovery (AODA and/or MH)
- Two (2) contracted positions
- Grant-funded
  - Adult Treatment Courts Collaborative (SAMHSA)
    - Male/serves men
  - Treatment Alternative Program (TAP)
    - Female/serves women
Training and Orientation

- 40-hour Recovery Coach Academy
- Recovery Coach Manual
  - Details training and orientation requirements.
  - Examples:
    - Motivational Interviewing
    - Trauma-Informed Care
    - Observation at staffings and court sessions
    - Job shadowing (understand different roles in the court)
    - Meeting with judges
- Recovery Coach Certification (future)
Points of Referral

- Upon admission to a treatment court
  - Recovery Coach introduces self to participant at first court session practicable
- Upon recommendation by the Coordinator/Case Manager
- Upon subsequent request by participant
- Upon recommendation of the treatment court team
- Upon request of the treatment court team
Service Cycle

- Initial Meeting
- Intake
  - Complete paperwork
  - Introduce Recovery Capital Scale and Plan
  - Explain expectations
  - Review evaluation tools
- Regular recovery check-ins
- Monday morning phone calls
- Discharge process
Benefits of a Recovery Coach

- Focus on recovery rather than compliance
- Provide one more level of support
  - Participants often don’t have a lot of healthy people in their lives
- Model hope, health and a pro-social lifestyle
Challenges

- Different visions
  - Who is the RC serving primarily (participant or team)?

- Buy-in/Trust
  - Participants
  - Team members

- Boundaries
  - What is/is not appropriate for the Recovery Coach?
Questions to Consider

- To be (or not to be) part of the court team?
  - How will this impact the Recovery Coach’s relationship with the participant? Team members?

- Who determines what the RC does each day?
  - Who supervises/Provides direction?

- What can be kept confidential? What cannot?
  - What happens if a person discloses substance use or other rules violations? Other significant concerns?

- Is participation voluntary or mandatory?
Eau Claire County Approach

- Recovery Coaches do not:
  - Attend weekly staffings
  - Administer drug tests or report results
  - Monitor rules compliance

- Recovery Coaches do:
  - Meet with Coordinators on a weekly basis
    - Problem-solve and build trust
  - Ask participants to develop goals and tasks to promote recovery and help as requested
  - Respond to requests for assistance (e.g., transportation) from Coordinators as time allows
Lessons Learned

- Define expectations before starting program and educate team members
  - Direction
    - Who provides this? Who resolves conflicts?
  - Duties
    - What is/isn’t the responsibility of the Recovery Coach?
  - Documentation
    - How much is needed? How much is too much?
- Provide support
Contact Information

Marsha Schiszik – AIM Court Coordinator
715-839-6815
Marsha.Schiszik@co.eau-claire.wi.us

Julienne Linberg – Recovery Coach
(715) 441-8081
Julienne.Linberg@lsswis.org

Melissa Ives – Project Director
(715) 379-8119
integratedprojects@charter.net
31st Judicial District
Drug Court
Peer Recovery Specialist
What is a Peer Recovery Specialist?

• Individual with current or past lived experience
• Individual who has had experience with the criminal justice system
• Individual who can relate to both the participate and staff
• Individual who can be objective without compromising treatment or requirements
WHY HAVE A PEER SPECIALIST, ADDED VALUE?

• Drug Court staff needs to be able to relate to participants
• Drug Court staff needs to be able to close the gap between criminal justice system treatment, and participant
• Drug Court staff needs to think outside the box
Obstacles to Overcome

• Mind set of Drug Court Team
• Peer Specialist’s feelings of intimidation
• Making feel part of the Drug Court Team
• Acceptance from Participants
• Trust factor
• Hiring policy
Training of Peer Specialist

- Incorporate into position slowly
- Certification
- On the job training
- Cross train
- Incorporate into learning criminal justice system
Recruitment of Peer Specialist

- Start with your Drug Court graduates
- Look at treatment facilities
- Network with other Drug Courts
Role of Peer Specialist

- Define roles early
- Peer Specialist role is to bridge the gap between criminal justice system and participant
- Earn the trust of participant
- Maintain a professional atmosphere
Future

• Drug Court Team’s need to understand more about addiction
• Drug Court Team’s need to be able to relate to participants
• Drug Court Team’s need to think outside the box
My Personal Journey

• Mental Health
• Substance Abuse
• Criminal Justice System
• Graduate from the Drug Court Program
• Continued to work in the Recovery Community
Peer Case Management

• What Was it Like for Me?
• What were some of the challenges I faced?
• What is my relationship with my colleagues now?
Training and Knowledge

- Training
- Task
- Skills
- Resources
Job Duties

• Case management
• Supervised drug screens
• Documentation
• Facilitate “Living in Balance” peer support groups
• One on one sessions
• Referral source
• Help others embrace recovery in his/her own lives
• Role model wellness and recovery
What is my relationship like with my peers?

- Hope
- Trust
- Role model
- Empathy
- Encourage
- Service work
- Empower
- Confidentiality
- Understanding

“I’m glad drug court has Marianne, it helps because she has been where we are” Drug Court Participant