APA Recovery to Practice Curriculum

13. Peer Delivered Services
Peer Delivered Services

Value of Peer Delivered Services

- People with Serious Mental Illnesses consistently report that receiving services from others with similar illnesses is one of the most helpful services they receive.

Characteristics

- Peer providers can be current or former users of mental health services.
- Peer providers have recovered sufficiently to be able to help others with similar issues.
Models of Peer Delivered Services

- Peer led self help interventions that can involve sharing experiences, offering information, e.g., in a mutual support education group, or teaching others how to develop a recovery plan
- Telephone services such as a “warm” line
- Peer operated and managed services
- Traditional mental health services such as case management delivered by peer providers within the mental health system
- Peer support programs, either in a traditional mental health service, or in an agency outside the mental health system – this is the most common
Peer Delivered Services

What do Peer Support Providers Do?

Anything that can help! Examples include:

- Listening
- Sharing own experiences and offering support, hope, encouragement, mentoring
- Providing information and education about how to stay well, recognize signs of distress
- Modeling behaviors to take responsibility for wellness and stay healthy
- Practical advice about housing, medications, schooling, employment, government entitlement programs
Peer Delivered Services

Benefits for Recipients of Peer Services
- More engaged and more involved in treatment
- Longer community tenure between hospitalization and fewer days in hospital
- Symptom stability, self-esteem, empowerment, coping skills, social support
- Facilitation of community integration

Benefits for Peer Providers
- Increased confidence in their abilities
- Increased ability to cope with their own illness
- Increased self esteem, sense of empowerment and hope
Peer Delivered Services

Implementation Considerations

- Personal Concerns
  - Confidentiality
  - Role Identity and Boundaries
  - Dual Relationships

Administrative Concerns

- Not Standard
- Adequate Compensation
- Cultural and Gender Issues
- Environment of Acceptance
- Adequate Supervision
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