



UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration for People with Psychiatric Disabilities Awarded Additional Five-Year Grant Funding

The University of Pennsylvania, the National Mental Health Consumers Self-Help Clearinghouse, and Horizon House, Inc. are pleased to announce that the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research has awarded an additional five years of funding to support the UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration, providing support for ongoing research and knowledge translation activities that enhance opportunities for people with psychiatric disabilities to participate more fully in community life.

The three partners in the UPenn Collaborative have worked closely together over the past five years in completing a broad range of research activities that have helped to define the key ingredients of a community integration approach and provide information about effective policies, programs, and practices that help people with psychiatric disabilities access and contribute to community life. The new grant provides additional support for research and training activities designed to better articulate and disseminate the principles and programs of community participation.

There are eight new research initiatives, undertaken either by the UPenn Collaborative partners or cooperating agencies. The research projects focus upon assessing:

- The impact of supported education programs in advancing the academic and career opportunities of consumers with serious mental illnesses to be undertaken in collaboration with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey;
- The effectiveness of an internet-based support group and education program to improve the parenting skills of mothers with psychiatric disabilities;
- The outcomes achieved and costs incurred in a Medicaid managed care program that encourages consumers with mental illnesses to choose their own services, in partnership with the Clearinghouse, Magellan, and the Delaware County (PA) MH office;
- The improvement in functioning among African-Americans with psychiatric disabilities when they are provided with an intensive course ‘inoculating’ them from racial prejudice;

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This resource can help you learn how to increase community integration in your own work and daily activities.

Guide to Voting Rights of People with Psychiatric Disabilities. This booklet can explain the rights of voters with psychiatric disabilities.

The Advance Self-Advocacy Plan: An Easy-to-Use, Practical New Tool for Creating a Mental Health Crisis Plan or Psychiatric Advance Directive

Initiative to Target Child Custody Laws that List a Mental Illness or Disability as Grounds for Not Providing Reasonable Efforts to Reunify a Family

This 2-page document is the first in a series of resource sheets about this important problem.

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Surveys Still Need Participants!

Certified Peer Specialists are still needed for our online job survey.



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- The community living and employment needs of individuals with psychiatric disabilities who are released from prisons and jails and returned to community settings;
- The improvements expected in functioning when persons with psychiatric disabilities in Independent Living Centers are provided with specialized services of peer specialists, collaboratively developed with Liberty Resources, an ILC in Philadelphia;
- The relationship of neighborhood life and proximity to community resources to community participation for people with psychiatric disabilities; and
- The reliability of three measures of community integration, so that they can be used in the Center's – and others' – future community participation research.

A number of research-to-practice initiatives are also planned, including journal publications, conference presentations, training programs, and online courses – all designed to improve access to the Center's research findings. Additional training projects include: exposing independent living center staff to mental health and community integration issues (in partnership with Independent Living Resource Utilization); infusing community integration principles into consumer-operated programs (with the Clearinghouse); developing performance based contracting for supported employment (for the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health); conducting two new 'systematic reviews of the literature on recreational services and transportation interventions (with the assistance of the Boston University RTC on Psychiatric Rehabilitation); and helping states assess the costs of community integration programming (a project of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law).

"We're looking forward to an exciting and productive five years," said the UPenn Collaborative's Director, Mark Salzer, Ph.D. "The University's Department of Psychiatry and its Center for Mental Health Policy and Services Research (CMHPSR) have provided a wonderful base for our collaborative relationships with consumer, provider, and other research and advocacy organizations. We'll be working over the next five years with many of the outside groups that contributed to our success in the past, and have added a few new local and national partners as well – all designed to enrich the quality and relevance of the research agenda."

"Community participation is really the 'next step' that many mental health programs – in both consumer-run and traditionally-operated environments – need to insure that individuals with psychiatric disabilities have the opportunity to actively participate in community life – to work, , to go to school, to be parents, and to meet their responsibilities as citizens. We're hopeful that our research can demonstrate how effective community participation programs can be, both for people with psychiatric disabilities and their communities."

The award from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is one of approximately forty Rehabilitation Research and Training programs around the country that focus on helping people with a variety of disabling conditions to resume their lives. The award is especially welcome in an environment of contracting government commitment to research activities, and is a recognition of the excellence of the UPenn Collaborative's work over the past five years.

As part of the nation's response to President Bush's New Freedom Initiative in 2001 – promoting an emphasis on improved opportunities for everyone with a disability to participate more actively in community life – this award highlights the importance of extending those opportunities to people with psychiatric disabilities as well.



NEW RESOURCES FROM THE UPENN COLLABORATIVE!

Philadelphia DBH/MRS Tools for Transformation Series: Community Integration

This document is the first in a series of resource packets produced by the DBH/MRS to provide tools and a greater understanding of key recovery concepts for persons in recovery, family members, service providers and DBH/MRS staff, as part of the Philadelphia DBH/MRS Recovery Transformation. This resource packet includes: information for persons in recovery and providers about community integration; a checklist for providers to see how many of their own practices support community integration; and a checklist for people in recovery to assess whether their own activities are supportive of community integration and whether their provider is promoting community integration. To learn more about community integration and to download this document developed by Philadelphia DBH and the UPenn Collaborative visit http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=203.

“Vote: It’s Your Right.” Guide to Voting Rights of People with Psychiatric Disabilities

Voting is a fundamental right in American society - the foundation of our democracy. This booklet created by the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law and the National Disability Rights Network with support from the UPENN Collaborative, explains the rights of voters with psychiatric disabilities. It can be a resource for people with psychiatric disabilities, advocates, family members, service providers, election officials, state and local mental health providers and aging authorities, state legislators and others. Download a free copy at http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=204.

Introducing the Advance Self-Advocacy Plan: An Easy-to-Use, Practical New Tool for Creating a Mental Health Crisis Plan or Psychiatric Advance Directive

The Advance Self-Advocacy Plan (ASAP) is designed to make psychiatric advance planning accessible to more people who have concerns about their future mental health care. To better understand and address planning obstacles, the Advance Self-Advocacy Plan (ASAP) Guidebook and Planning Sheets were developed with extensive input from consumers who have been hospitalized for psychiatric care and also from providers of mental health services. The result is a practical and user-friendly tool that can be used by people with mental health challenges to create their own, customized plans which keep them “in the driver’s seat” of their psychiatric care and personal life... even during a crisis. Click the Link Below for Free Downloads of The ASAP Guidebook & The ASAP Document Planning Sheets http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=200.

The UPenn Collaborative is Targeting Child Custody Laws that List a Mental Illness or Disability as Grounds for Not Providing Reasonable Efforts to Reunify a Family

The UPenn Collaborative has been working to educate legislators around the country about the importance of keeping families together. The Collaborative is targeting state laws – in Alaska, Arizona, California, Kentucky and North Dakota, as well as in Puerto Rico – that list mental illness as one of the grounds for not providing “reasonable efforts” to reunify a family. This is the first document in a series of resource sheets about this important problem. *For more information, or to inquire about specific custody issues, visit* http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=194.



UPENN COLLABORATIVE INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS SERIES:

Featuring the Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Mental Health Vocational Task Force

This task force has developed a trailblazing initiative titled, “Developing Careers, Autonomy and Prosperity: Building the capacity of the Kingston community to improve the educational outcomes for people experiencing mental health problems and mental illness”. The goals of the initiative are to: 1) increase awareness about the importance of education in the lives and careers of individuals experiencing mental illnesses; 2) disseminate information about best practices in educational support for persons with mental illnesses, and 3) engage the local community in dialogue and strategic planning for improving the educational outcomes for people living with mental illnesses in the region. To learn more about this innovative community integration program visit http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=196

Online Job Survey is Looking for Feedback from Certified Peer Specialists!

The UPenn Collaborative and the National Mental Health Consumers’ Self-Help Clearinghouse (www.mhselfhelp.org) are looking for Certified Peer Specialists to complete this survey to help gather information about paid employment in which a Certified Peer Specialist designation is a requirement for the position. Our purpose is to pull together and disseminate information about the variety of jobs that CPS are doing in order to inform the development of new paid CPS positions nationwide.

The survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. It is voluntary and anonymous. We will not ask for any identifying or contact information. The information you provide may be edited for clarity and length. We thank you in advance for your time and assistance. If you are a Certified Peer Specialist and you have not already completed this survey please click the link below to take the Certified Peer Specialist Job Survey.

<http://www.upennrrtc.org/news/view.php?id=45> . **This survey will no longer be available after November 30, 2008!**

The Community Integration News

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Director

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