

## Community Integration News

Spring 2009

***Now Available! Results from a National Survey of Certified Peer Specialist Job Titles and Job Descriptions: Evidence of a Versatile Behavioral Health Workforce***

Peer-delivered services have been around for decades, in self-help/mutual-aid groups, stand-alone programs, and, more rarely, in counselor roles within traditional programs. The emergence of Medicaid funding for peer support services provided by “Certified Peer Specialists” (CPS) has generated great interest, and people in recovery, providers, administrators, and funders now seek to discover the varied roles and responsibilities that peers can play within the mental health system. Providers and systems are increasingly valuing the benefits of peer support: CPSs generate new levels of client motivation, and systems are excited about designating CPS training and new paid roles. CPSs are emerging as an important member of the behavioral health workforce.

A new research report written by Edward B. Schwenk, a Certified Peer Specialist at Creative Health Services, and Eugene Brusilovskiy and Mark Salzer, PhD from the UPenn Collaborative, presents the job titles and job descriptions that were provided by 275 respondents to a brief online survey of certified peer specialists (CPS) working in paid positions in the United States. The goal is to give peers and other stakeholders a sense of the wide variety of job titles used by the CPS workforce and the variation in descriptions of their job responsibilities, in their own words. To download this report visit: [http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool\\_id=213](http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=213)

### Newsletter Spotlight

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#### Contact Information

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#### **Community Integration Quote**

*“Community integration means weaving together into the whole even the parts that are uncomfortable and don’t seem to fit, even the parts that are complied and painful.”*  
- Lisa Koon

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## New Community Integration Tools and Resources

### *Learn More About Recreation and Leisure Activities for Older Adults with Psychiatric Disabilities*

Older adults with psychiatric disabilities benefit, both physically and psychologically, from leisure and recreation activities. Increasing age and mental health need not prevent an older adult from engaging in enjoyable activities that enhance independence. Download this CI Tool to learn about special tips and resources to help older adults with psychiatric disabilities get involved in leisure and recreational activities in their community. [http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool\\_id=208](http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=208)

*Key Resources to Help You Take Action in Your Community* - The UPenn Collaborative currently offers more than twenty Community Integration (CI) Tools that address a variety of topics and help you to get involved. For a complete list of CI Tools, please visit: <http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/list.php?catid=6>.

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## **Promoting Community Integration: Two New Examples From The Field**

### *Parents with Psychiatric Disabilities Legal Advocacy Project and The Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project*

Parents with psychiatric disabilities are particularly vulnerable to loss of custody of their children and termination of their parental rights. The Parents with Psychiatric Disabilities Legal Advocacy Project (PPDLA) and The Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project were created to improve legal advocacy for parents and, in turn, promote positive outcomes for families affected by psychiatric disabilities. To learn more about this initiative visit: [http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool\\_id=209](http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=209)

### *The 'Creating Homes' Initiative of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities*

The *Creating Homes Initiative (CHI)*, an innovative state and community partnership, works with local communities to expand decent, safe, affordable, permanent housing for people with mental illnesses or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. To learn more about this initiative visit: [http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool\\_id=212](http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/view.php?tool_id=212)

**Help the UPenn Collaborative Identify Unique Community Integration Efforts and Promote Your Program!** Please contact Pam Cousounis ([pamelac2@mail.med.upenn.edu](mailto:pamelac2@mail.med.upenn.edu)) if you represent or know of an organization that has developed and utilized an innovative community integration (CI) initiative and would like to share this information with the UPENN Collaborative. To learn about Innovative CI programs visit <http://www.upennrrtc.org/resources/list.php?catid=17>.

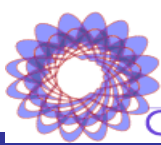
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## New Publications from the UPenn Collaborative Faculty

Wong, Y.-L. I. & Stanhope, V. (2009) "Conceptualizing community: A comparison of neighborhood characteristics of supportive housing for persons with psychiatric and developmental disabilities." *Social Science and Medicine*, 68(8), 1376-1387.

Lee, S., Wong, Y.-L. I., & Rothbard, A. B. (2009) "Factors associated with departure from supported independent living programs for persons with serious mental illness." *Psychiatric Services*, 60(3), 367-373.

For more Research Papers and Reports from the UPenn Collaborative visit: <http://www.upennrrtc.org/project/products/index.php>.



## *UPenn Collaborators...News and Selected Highlights*

### *The UPenn Collaborative Knowledge Translation Impacts*

The UPenn Collaborative is committed to assessing its impact of knowledge translation activities on mental health services and policies. The Center has consistently requested that participants at presentations and individuals who download materials from the website complete an assessment of the relevance, usefulness, and impact of their contact. The Center developed a report to provide an overview of their responses, from contacts made between April 2006 and October 2008. To learn more about the UPenn Collaborative Knowledge Translation Impacts visit: <http://www.upennrrtc.org/news/view.php?id=53>.

The positive results of the report have encouraged the Collaborative to continue balancing presentations with the development of new website resources. Throughout the spring UPenn Collaborators were involved in multiple trainings and presentations throughout the nation. Mark Salzer Ph.D., Joseph Rogers, Executive Director of the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse and Katy Kaplan, M.S.Ed. presented at the NYAPRS 5th Annual Executive Seminar on Systems Transformation in Albany, NY on April 23-24th. In May, Richard C. Baron, M.S. presented on the principles and challenges of community integration at the Veteran's Administration PRRC Conference: The Transformation Continues, in New Orleans.

On May 14th, 2009, the UPenn Collaborative, Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance and the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania held a training in Harrisburg titled: Helping Parents with Psychiatric Disabilities: Strategies for Child Welfare, Behavioral Health and Family Support Providers.

### *Free and Low-Cost Technical Assistance and Training Available*

The UPenn Collaborative provides a wide variety of free or low-cost Technical Assistance & Training Programs for organizations that want to enhance their movement toward community participation and the recovery model. For more information about how your organization can benefit from these trainings and technical assistance please contact: Katy Kaplan ([katykap@mail.med.upenn.edu](mailto:katykap@mail.med.upenn.edu) or 215-746-6713).

### *UPenn Collaborators Awards and Accomplishments*

Phyllis Solomon, Ph.D was recently awarded the University of Pennsylvania Provost's Award for Distinguished PhD Teaching and Mentoring, in recognition of her work teaching and mentoring PhD students.

Trevor Hadley, Ph.D, director of the Center for Mental Health Policy and Services Research of the University of Pennsylvania, was recently awarded the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania's (MHASP) Leadership Award for his contributions to mental health system transformation.

### *The UPenn Collaborative Working Together with the Rutgers Center for Behavioral Health Services & Criminal Justice Research*

The UPenn Collaborative is partnering with the Rutgers Center for Behavioral Health Services & Criminal Justice Research on a pilot study designed to examine the role of employment for persons with psychiatric disabilities leaving jails and prisons. This pilot will examine educational attainment, services at release, housing, social supports, and striving toward socially acceptable goals. To learn more visit [http://www.cbhs-cjr.rutgers.edu/active\\_research.html#11](http://www.cbhs-cjr.rutgers.edu/active_research.html#11)