

Forensic Peer Specialist Training Program

Course Descriptions

Transitions Training: The goal of this training is to increase the access to services and enhance the effectiveness of services provided to consumers with histories of incarceration. Successful transitions from jails and prison require an understanding of the unique needs of consumers reentering communities the training provides an overview of New York State's criminal justices system, and the culture of incarceration and its impact on mental health consumers reentering the community. The training also highlights *Best Practices* in providing services.

Basic Case management Skills Training: The training is designed to introduce trainees to fundamental skills used in providing direct case management services to individuals living with mental health issues, including substance abuse and also histories of incarceration. The training includes an introduction to standard forms used in mental health treatment. The training also provides an overview of navigating city and state agencies, such as Public Assistance and Social Security Administrations. Training includes tips on engaging consumers while in the field and provides instruction on documentation and reporting.

Counseling Terminology: The training is designed to familiarize trainees to common terms and phrases used by mental health professionals. The training also orientates trainees to some mental health philosophy and models of treatment.

Relapse Prevention: This unique training addresses relapse into substance abuse both at the stand point of the consumer provider and the client. The training introduces the signs and symptoms of relapse and teaches prevention strategies. The training is a five-part-series and also covers MICA issues and provides an overview of drugs commonly used and the impact on the user both during active use and upon getting clean. This training awards nine points toward CASAC classroom hours.

Housing Options: Mental health consumers often have problems with maintaining housing and ADL skills. The training discusses housing options for mental health consumers. The training introduces supportive housing programs, residential housing and independent housing for persons with psychiatric disabilities. The training also covers housing for forensic consumers as well as HRA housing and Section 8 housing criteria.

Discharge Planning: The training is designed to teach trainees of mental health service provision to plan for the discharge of consumers from psychiatric hospitalization, out patient psychiatric treatment and mental health facilities within the jail and prison systems. The training also provides an overview of the Brad H. settlement and discharge planning from Rikers Island and NYS correctional facilities.

Spectrum Project-Clinical Impact of Doing Time: The training is facilitated by Bronx Psychiatric Hospital. The training addresses behaviors learned in prison and how engaging consumers with this background is often viewed by mental health providers.

The training teaches effective strategies for clinically treating this population. The training also seeks to reduce recidivism by addressing the stigma attached mental health consumers who have spent time in jails and prisons.

Confronting Your Forensic History: This training is conducted by graduates of the Howie The Harp Peer Advocacy's Forensic Peer Specialist Training Program. The training seeks to reduce the shame and guilt often associated with "*doing time*" and to assist trainees in understanding themselves better. The training also provides self help/self management strategies, as well as preventive steps to take if the trainee senses a relapse of any kind occurring.

Human Services Roles and Responsibilities: A 12-part series covering Team Building; Human Resources issues, sick time personal time disciplinary action and other related information. The training also provides a basic understanding the roles of the mental health team; supervision and being supervised. The training further covers conflict resolution and ethics and values in human services.

DSM IV: An introduction to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. A brief description of the most common AXIS I diagnoses' and Global Functioning Scale.

Cultural Competency: The training addresses cultural competency in the delivery of human and behavioral services. The training offers direct service mental health providers with the information and skills to address the needs of specific populations. Workshop is aimed at providing attendees with the opportunity for building knowledge, skill building and an appreciation for diversity. (Workshop includes working with Hispanic Community, as well as other minority communities).

American Disabilities Act: The training explains the Act and how to request a reasonable accommodation at the workplace for mental health consumers. The training also provides helpful tips for keeping your job if you get sick, privacy ACT' and other work related issues.

Psychiatric Rehabilitation: the goal of this training is to teach trainees the fundamental practices of this innovative treatment model. This treatment model is totally client centered and allows service recipients to partner with providers to reach their recovery goals. The training focuses on direct care and systemic levels of mental health treatment provision. The training also encourages a non-traditional and holistic treatment modality. The training prepares trainees to take the exam for the Credential for Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner (CPRP).

Ancillary Trainings and Support Groups

Men and Women Groups: Weekly support groups which are gender specific, groups are run by program staff

Writing Skills: Training is conducted by licensed professional staff member.

The training evaluates writing issues such as grammar, spelling and sentence structure in trainees.

Mid-way through the training persons struggling with writing issues, will either be referred to continuing education programs or, in minor cases, tutored at the Center by writing instructor.

From Hustling to Legitimate Work: This support group was born as a result of focus groups held by trainees and potential trainees and responds to the need for strategies for effectively live on the “outside” without re-offending. Participants support and help each other deal with living on Public Assistance and other government subsidy programs and not engage in criminal activity in order to support themselves financially. The group is facilitated by a staff member.

Computer Lab: (Will begin July 1, 2006) this training will give trainees a basic introduction to Microsoft word, Excel and the Internet. Trainees and graduates will also have access to lab in order to update resumes and search/apply for positions on-line.

Career Clubs: These groups are offered to trainees at every phase of the program pre and post employment.

****All Ancillary Trainings and Support Groups are conducted by Center’s Program Staff***