

Effective Utilization of Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) Professionals:

Part 1 of 4 - PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Department of Human Services/Division of Mental Health
Illinois Mental Health Collaborative for Access and Choice

Tuesday, October 25, 2011
9:00-11:00 am
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Welcome to Part 1 of a 4 Part Training Series

- Today's Session:
 - Preparation and Planning
- Future Sessions:
 - Complex Relationships
 - Professional Training
 - Program Sustainability



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MEET THE PRESENTERS

- **Nanette Larson, BA, CRSS**
 - Department of Human Services/Division of Mental Health
 - Director of Recovery Support Services
- **Bryce Goff, MA, CRSS**
 - Illinois Mental Health Collaborative for Access and Choice
 - Director of Recovery and Resilience
- **Trenda Hedges, BS, CRSS**
 - Illinois Mental Health Collaborative for Access and Choice
 - Peer and Family Support Specialist

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OBJECTIVES

Participants will learn:

- The value of hiring CRSS professionals
- Ensuring CRSS professionals are part of the organization's vision
- Examples of job titles and responsibilities

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OBJECTIVES (cont'd)

Participants will also learn:

- How to advertise for hiring CRSS professionals
- Examples of interview questions
- Examples of potential reasonable accommodations

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CRSS: What is it?

- A credential for professionals who are trained to use their unique mental health or combined mental health and substance use recovery experiences to:
 - help others recover
 - improve human service systems
- A credential that means a professional has the knowledge, skills and experience that meet acceptable standards of the recovery support profession

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The Value of Hiring CRSS Professionals

- CRSS professionals provide the following minimum qualifications to your team:
 - 100 hours of mental health recovery education
 - 1 year of full-time (or 2000 hours) supervised mental health recovery support work experience
 - CRSS Exam completion
 - Commitment to the CRSS Code of Ethics

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The Value of Hiring CRSS Professionals

- CRSS professionals have demonstrated their competence in:
 - Mentoring
 - Advocacy
 - Recovery Support
 - Professional Responsibility



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The Value of Hiring CRSS Professionals

- CRSS professionals will enhance your organization through:
 - Visionary Service
 - Increased Reimbursement
 - Exceptional Engagement Skills
 - Enriching Inclusion

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CRSS: A New Vision for A New Day

As long as there have been mental illnesses, there has been recovery, but today is a Brand New Day in the mental health system.

- *The Expectation is Recovery! All persons with mental illnesses can recover and participate fully in a life in the community.*
- DHS/DMH Vision Statement
- *Science has shown that having hope plays an integral role in an individual's recovery.*
- President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health

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The CRSS Credential and Your Center's Vision

Strategic Planning Questions

- How can CRSS professionals help you to better fulfill your vision?
- Where would CRSS professionals fit best within your organization's structure?

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Organizational Considerations

- How will CRSS professionals formally link to executive management to aid in the transformation of the organization toward a recovery-focused entity.
- Where will CRSS professionals be assigned?
 - Areas in which they will most likely be welcomed into the organization's culture?
 - Creates a positive climate

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Organizational Considerations


- If there are multiple CRSS positions, should they be placed together or spaced out over the organization's structure?
- Which supervisors or programs are best prepared to effectively utilize the competencies of CRSS professionals?



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Advancement and Career Path

- Consider what career paths may be available
- Consider opportunities for advancement
- Ensure career path is at least comparable to other entry level staff



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Recovery Support Job Titles

PRINCIPLES:

- The title should communicate the role
- Different job functions = Different job titles
- If we have a clear idea of what the employee will be doing, then we will know what to call them

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Recovery Support Job Titles

Examples of Titles Mismatched with Duties

Title	Duties
Engagement Specialist	Provides administrative support including data entry and filing
Recovery Support Specialist	Waters plants and assists with scheduling appointments
Consumer Advocate	Ensures consumer compliance with treatment plans and medications

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Recovery Support Job Titles

Examples of Titles Appropriately Matched with Duties

Title	Duties
Engagement Specialist	Provides recovery support for individuals who are not willing to engage with traditional mental health services. Links individuals to natural support resources and mental health services as appropriate.
Recovery Support Specialist	Utilizes self-disclosed recovery experience to assist others in learning about recovery and developing tools for wellness.
Consumer Advocate	Facilitates better communication between individuals and the organization to improve consumer satisfaction and organizational responsiveness.

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Recovery Support Job Titles

Examples:

- Director of Recovery Support Services
- Peer Mentor; Peer Advocate
- Consumer Advocate; Recovery Advocate
- Engagement Specialist; Recovery Specialist
- Case Management Aide; Recovery Manager
- Peer Support Specialist

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Recovery Support Position Responsibilities

Things to Consider

- Adequately define job duties
- Design a comprehensive job description
- Clearly list position responsibilities
- Hire a qualified individual

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Recovery Support Position Responsibilities

Examples of Responsibilities

- Conduct training for new and current employees
- Review and participate in development, revision, amendment to agency policies and procedures
- Lead / co-lead peer support groups

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Recovery Support Position Responsibilities

Examples of Responsibilities (cont'd)

- Facilitate Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Classes
- Conduct Consumer Satisfaction Surveys
- Advocate for consumers and family members

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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

- Qualifications must go beyond having personal recovery experience. Merely “hiring consumers” is known as tokenism and is inappropriate and ineffective.
- Qualifications are based on a combination of:
 - Education
 - Work Experience
 - Lived Experience
 - Competencies, or specific skill sets

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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Consider shaping the position's qualification around the four domains of the CRSS Credential

- Advocacy
- Professional Responsibility
- Mentoring
- Recovery Support



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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Advocacy

- Promoting individual choice & self-determination
- Advocating within the human service system
- Helping others to learn self-advocacy

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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Professional Responsibility

- Experience in suicide prevention concepts & techniques
- Decompression and de-escalation techniques
- Adept at documentation

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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Mentoring

- Role modeling a lifestyle of recovery
- Teaching and modeling life skills
- Experience in practicing active listening

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graph TD; LE[Lead By Example] --- M[Mentor]; LE --- TE[Teamwork]; LE --- W[Win]; M --- MO[Motivate]; M --- CO[Coach]; TE --- VI[Vision]; W --- VI;
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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Recovery Support

- Experience using a strengths based approach to helping others to recover
- Assisting individuals in developing problem solving skills
- Promoting shared decision making

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Recovery Support Position Qualifications

Examples based on education / experience:

- Requires the minimum of a high school diploma or a G.E.D. and 100 clock hours of additional education in social work, psychology, or other related health or human services field
- Requires 2 years of related work experience

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Advertising the Position

Effective announcements include the following:

- Job Summary
- Essential Duties and Responsibilities
- Education and Experience Requirements
- Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Requirements

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Advertising the Position

Job Summary:


- Assist individuals with mental health disabilities throughout the process of recovery.
- Support and mentor individuals as the individual determines and progresses towards their personal recovery goals.
- Empower individuals in advocacy efforts and will role-model professional responsibility at all times.

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Advertising the Position

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide individual and group peer supportive services
- Share personal experiences as appropriate
- Serve as an advocate to individuals in recovery



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Advertising the Position

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist individuals in identifying their support systems
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with DHS/Division of Mental Health, area mental health agencies and advocacy organizations.
- Meet with the treatment team 1x monthly to ensure recovery plans are consumer driven

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Advertising the Position

Education and Experience Requirements:

- This position requires having obtained a CRSS credential or obtaining a CRSS within one year of hire date.
- Lived recovery experience from a mental illness is valued.
- Applicants must possess certification as a WRAP Facilitator

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Advertising the Position

Education and Experience Requirements:

- Applicants with 2+ years experience in positions providing peer supportive services are preferred.
- Expertise in establishing and maintaining working relationships with community stakeholders is a plus.
- Requires 2 years of related work and / or volunteer experience

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Advertising the Position

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Requirements:

- Knowledge of community supports and education opportunities
- Basic computer knowledge and ability to access online resources
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills

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Advertising the Position

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Requirements:


- Program development skills
- Ability to work independently and in partnership with others
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

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Advertising the Position

Avoid using terms such as:

- Consumer
- Patient
- Mental Health Diagnosis: Schizophrenia, Bipolar, etc.
- Symptoms



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Interviewing Applicants

- Employers may **not** ask applicants or employees about their personal health history, including mental health history
- Interview questions **should** focus on the applicant's:
 - Skills, abilities, qualifications and credential
- Interview questions **MUST NOT** focus on the applicant's...
 - potential mental health history, symptoms, diagnosis or treatment

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Sample Interview Questions

- What role do you tend to play on a team?
- How have you handled disagreements with a supervisor?
- What is your understanding of the following skills. How have you put them into practice:
 - Advocacy
 - Recovery
 - Mentoring
 - Professional Responsibility



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Interview Questions

- What do you think about the following statement?
"Anyone with a mental illness can recover."
- Can you tell me about a time when you used a personal life experience to help someone through a challenging time?
- What questions do you have for me about the position or our organization?

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Reasonable Accommodations

- Not all CRSS professionals will require an accommodation and we should not assume that they will
- It is up to the employee to initiate the request for an accommodation
- Organizations frequently make accommodations for their employees around a wide array of employee needs. They are not unique to persons with lived recovery experience.
- Accommodations help organizations to get the best possible productivity from their employees

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Reasonable Accommodations

Examples of Potential Accommodations:

- Flexible scheduling
- Changes in supervision or training
- Modifying job duties



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Reasonable Accommodations

Examples of Potential Accommodations (cont'd):

- Modifying work space
- Using assistive technology
- Using the support of an Employment Specialist



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Stay Tuned

- Coming up next:
 - Question and Response Time
- Future Webinar Training Sessions:
 - Complex Relationships
 - Professional Training
 - Program Sustainability



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WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

- **Illinois Certification Board d/b/a IAODAPCA, Inc.**
 - www.iaodapca.org
- **Collaborative Website: CRSS Section**
 - www.illinoismentalhealthcollaborative.com/consumers/consumer_crss.htm
- **Americans with Disabilities Act**
 - www.ada.gov
- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**
 - www.eeoc.gov
- **Job Accommodation Network**
 - www.jan.wvu.edu

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DHS/DMH Recovery Support Specialists

- **Region 1 (Chicago/Cook County)**
 - Virginia.Goldrick@illinois.gov - (773) 794-5680
 - Marty.Hines@illinois.gov - (708) 612-4236
- **Region 2/Rockford**
 - Eldon.Wigget@illinois.gov - (815) 987-7033
- **Region 2/Elgin**
 - Patricia.Lindquist@illinois.gov - (847) 742- 1040 x 2985

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DHS/DMH Recovery Support Specialists (cont'd)

- **Region 3/Peoria**
 - Thomas.Troe@illinois.gov - (309) 693-5231
- **Region 4/Springfield**
 - Patrick.Hayes@illinois.gov - (217) 786-7626
- **Region 5/Metro East**
 - Cindy.Mayhew@illinois.gov - (618) 474-3813
- **Region 5/South**
 - Rhonda.Keck@illinois.gov - (618) 833-5161, x 2515

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Guidelines for Question and Response Time

Presenters and Participants are asked to:

- Use person-first language
- Spell out and define acronyms
- Hear and validate diverse experiences
- Keep questions and comments relevant to today's topic
- Limit to one comment or question per person, then pass to the next person
- Reduce background noise
- Say "Thank You" to indicate that you are finished with your question or comment

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