Wyoming Peer Specialist: Sample Job Description

For local program use--Sample

This document contains sample job descriptions for Certified Peer Specialists. Centers are free to modify to meet local needs.

Qualifications/Expectations

A person who is or has been a recipient of mental health services for severe and persistent mental illness holds the position. Because of their life experience with mental illness and mental health services and demonstration of self-sufficiency, the peer specialists provide expertise that professional training cannot replicate. Peer specialists are fully integrated team members who provide highly individualized services in the community and promote client self-determination and decision-making. Peer specialists also provide essential expertise and consultation to the entire team to promote a culture in which each client's point of view and preferences are recognized, understood, respected, and integrated into treatment, rehabilitation, and community self-help activities. Peer specialists, having experienced a severe mental illness, may assist the other members of the team in understanding the clients' perspective and subjective experience.

Principle Duties and Responsibilities

- Carry out duties as a member of the team, under the direction of the team leader. Specific job responsibilities will vary depending on the education and experience of the individual peer specialist and the client needs.
- Participate with the team in reviewing and documenting the comprehensive assessment of psychiatric history (onset, course, and effect of illness, past treatment and responses, risk behaviors, and accomplishments), mental status, and diagnosis; physical health and dental health; use of drugs and alcohol; education and employment; social development and functioning; activities of daily living (self-care, living situation, nutrition, money management); and family structure and relationships. Provide input concerning the recovery plan and progress.
- Consult with community agencies and organizations, including consumer run programs such as self-help groups and consumer drop-in centers. Facilitate client participation in consumer self-help programs and activities.
- Document client progress to maintain a permanent record of client activity according to the agency's established methods and procedures.
- Participate in daily staff organizational meetings and treatment planning review meetings.
- Maintain client confidentiality.
- Obtain and maintain Wyoming Peer Specialist Certification. Utilize a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) and other resources.
- Assist with the client’s participation in developing the recovery plan, and help the client understand the diagnoses and plan components.

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Structuring Time and Employment

- Provide work-related supportive services, such as assistance securing necessary clothing and grooming supplies, transportation.
- Perform mentoring, problem solving. Offer encouragement on and off the job site.
- Assist and support clients in obtaining adequate financial support (help to gain employment and apply for entitlements).

Activities of Daily Living Services

- Provide ongoing assessment, problem solving, side-by-side services, skill teaching, support (prompts, assignments, encouragement), and environmental adaptations to assist clients with activities of daily living.
- Assist and support clients to carry out personal hygiene and grooming tasks.
- Provide nutrition education, meal planning, grocery shopping, and food preparation.
- Assist clients to find and maintain a safe and affordable place to live--apartment hunting, finding a roommate, landlord negotiations, cleaning, furnishing and decorating, and procuring necessities (telephone, furniture, utility hook-up).
- Assist and support clients to perform household activities, including house cleaning and laundry.
- Teach money-management skills (budgeting and paying bills) and assist clients in accessing financial services such as bank checking and savings accounts.
- Assist clients to locate needed financial resources such as identifying appropriate Payee and referring issues to Case Manager or others in the team when needed.
- Help clients to access reliable transportation (obtain a driver's license and car and car insurance, arrange for cabs, use public transportation, find rides).
- Assist and support clients to have and effectively use a personal primary care physician and dentist, and eye doctor if they wear glasses.

Social and Interpersonal Relationships and Leisure Time

- Assist clients to plan and carry out leisure time activities on evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- Provide side-by-side support and encouragement to help clients socialize (going with a client to community activities, including activities offered by consumer-run peer support organizations). Provide guidance for locating and utilizing other community-based resources.
- Organize and lead individual and group social and recreational activities to help clients structure their time, increase social experiences, and provide opportunities to practice social skills.
- Assist consumers who have experienced social stigmatization with their sense of acceptance and affiliation.

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Support

- Provide practical help and mentoring, advocacy, coordination, side-by-side individualized support, problem solving and direct assistance to help clients obtain the necessities of daily living.
- On an individual basis these may include medical and dental health care; legal advocacy and link with legal services; financial support such as entitlements (SSI, SSDI, veterans' benefits) and housing subsidies (HUD Section 8); money management assistance, such as access to payee services if required, and transportation.
- Promote the client's self advocacy skills.

SAMPLE Minimum qualifications:

Any combination of training and experience which would enable the applicant to obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities for this position which may include the following:

- Current or former recipient of mental health which may include co-occurring substance abuse treatment
- Willingness to utilize a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) in daily life
- Ability to use or learn computer software (Microsoft Word, Excel, and email programs)
- Hold a valid Wyoming driver's license (good driving record)
- Able to work some weekend/evening hours
- Work may include visits to consumer homes
- Some in-state travel may be required
- Applicants should have personal attributes suited to working in a team environment and providing services to persons with severe and persistent mental illnesses
- Able to advocate for the consumer; adept in teaching coping/life skills; comfortable sharing own experiences in appropriate ways; ability to keep bounderies and to form appropriate professional relationships with clients; and perform a wide variety of tasks to assist consumer's wellness
- Positive attitude
- Knowledge of community resources, coping skills, and advocacy techniques
- Knowledge of recovery-oriented treatment programs
- Must be empathetic
- Must maintain patient confidentiality in accordance with Center policy

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