

# Peer Roles in Supported Employment

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# Agenda

1. The value of IPS supported employment
2. How peer workers can contribute as IPS staff
3. Examples: Peer roles in employment services
4. Quality assurance and staff development

# Part 1: IPS Supported Employment

- The value of work
- The IPS model

# Work Enhances Wellness

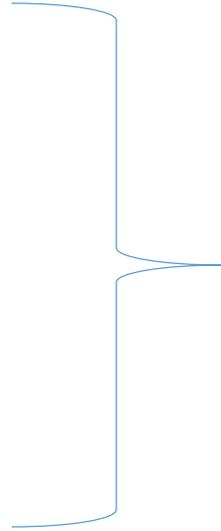


# Work Promotes Recovery

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their **health and wellness**, live a self directed life, and strive to reach their full potential

# Dimensions that support recovery

- Home
- Health
- Purpose
- Community



***Work is strongly  
linked to health,  
purpose, and  
community***

- **70% of people with mental health issues want to work**
- **IPS can help 60-70% to be competitively employed**
- **Most people work about half-time, like their jobs, and benefit in many other ways**

Bob Drake & Deborah Becker

*The IPS Employment Center  
Rockville Institute, Westat*

# Quotes from Workers

- **“When I am working, the noise in my head gets quieter.”**
- **“Working gives me a reason to get up in the morning. And that is the best medicine.”**
- **“The money is nice but I feel good telling my son that I have to go to work tomorrow.”**

- **Open to anyone who wants to work**
- **Focus on competitive employment**
- **Rapid job search**
- **Systematic job development**
- **Worker preferences guide decisions**
- **Individualized long-term supports**
- **Integrated with treatment**
- **Benefits counseling included**

# Preferences are Honored

## Peanuts

I'D HATE TO HAVE A JOB  
WHERE YOU HAD TO GET UP  
EARLY IN THE MORNING..

I'D HATE TO HAVE A JOB  
WHERE YOU STAYED IN THE  
SAME PLACE ALL DAY..

I'D HATE TO HAVE A JOB  
WHERE YOU HAD TO BE  
'NICE TO EVERYBODY..

Job supports are continuous: ongoing and time-unlimited



## Part 2: How Peer Workers Fit IPS

- What is a peer worker?
- Special attributes of a peer worker
- Peer worker competencies
- Complementary roles and responsibilities
- Advancing the team
- Challenges

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Peer Support Service Description</i>
<b>Definition</b>	Delivered by a person in recovery. Offers social support before, during, and after treatment to facilitate long-term recovery in the community
<b>Goals</b>	Assist in developing coping and problem-solving strategies for illness self-management; draw on lived experiences and empathy to promote hope, insights, skills; help engage in treatment, access community supports, establish a satisfying life

# Special Attributes of Peer Workers

- Lived experience
  - Of a mental health condition
  - Of life disruption
  - Of using behavioral health services
  - Of success in employment
- Training for Certified Peer Specialists
- CPS Code of Ethics

<http://www.gacps.org/CodeOfEthics.html>

# Peer Worker Competencies

- Generic peer characteristics and competencies
- Certification as a peer specialist
- Specific expertise in promoting employment

<http://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs/core-competencies-peer-workers>

# SAMHSA Core Competencies Set 1

- Engages people using services in collaborative and caring relationships
- Provides support
- Shares lived experiences of recovery
- Personalizes peer support

# SAMHSA Core Competencies Set 2

- Recovery planning
- Links to resources, services, and supports
- Teaches information and skills related to health, wellness, and recovery
- Helps peers to manage crises

# The value of Peer Workers

- Early engagement and relationship building
- Lived experience is shared
  - Informs practice
  - A reminder that recovery is possible
- Can impact culture to embrace recovery vision
- Knowledge: complexities of navigating systems
- The role is an employment opportunity

## Part 3: Peer worker roles in SE

- Vocational peer support
- Vocational peer mentors
- IPS fidelity reviewer
- Staff educator
- Other roles

# Vocational Peer Support

- Supporting people with psychiatric disabilities to explore, pursue and achieve vocational recovery
- Advanced specialization, which builds upon core peer support competencies and knowledge
- VPS training develops additional skills for supporting people with vocational aspirations
- Not a new role for peer workers, but a toolbox of knowledge and skill to add to the core functions

# Vocational Peer Mentors

- Supports youth and young adults
- Matched
- Individual meetings in the community
- Emotional and informational support
- Explore jobs and careers
- Coach professionalism
- Promote engagement with SE and SEd
- Model is still being developed

# Peer Role: IPS Fidelity Reviewer

- IPS SE Fidelity Scale: used by trained program reviewers to determine how closely a program adheres to the evidence-based approach
- Purpose: improve program so more people work *Better fidelity = more people working*

To obtain the scale, fidelity manual, other tools:

[www.dartmouthips.org](http://www.dartmouthips.org)

## Supported Employment Fidelity Scale

		Ratings / Anchors				
Criteria		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Staffing</b>						
1.	<p><b>Caseload:</b></p> <p>Employment specialists manage caseloads of up to 25 consumers.</p>	<p>A ratio of 81 or more consumers per employment specialist, or</p> <p>Cannot rate due to no fit</p>	<p>A ratio of 61 to 80 consumers per employment specialist</p>	<p>A ratio of 41 to 60 consumers per employment specialist</p>	<p>A ratio of 26 to 40 consumers per employment specialist</p>	<p>A ratio of 25 or fewer consumers per employment specialist</p>
2.	<p><b>Vocational services staff:</b></p> <p>Employment specialists provide only vocational services.</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management 80% or more of the time, or</p> <p>Cannot rate due to no fit</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 60% of the time</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 40% of the time</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide nonvocational services such as case management about 20% of the time</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide only vocational services</p>
3.	<p><b>Vocational generalists:</b></p> <p>Each employment specialist carries out all phases of vocational service including engagement, assessment, job development, job placement, job coaching, and follow-along supports.</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide only vocational referrals to other vendors or programs, or</p> <p>Cannot rate due to no fit</p>	<p>Employment specialists maintain caseloads but refer consumers to other programs for vocational service</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide 1 aspect of the vocational service</p>	<p>Employment specialists provide 2 or more phases of vocational service but not the entire service</p>	<p>Employment specialists carry out all phases of vocational service</p>

# Peer Reviewers on IPS Fidelity Team

- Peers can be members of fidelity review teams
- Especially valued in conducting interviews
  - Families
  - People using the service

# Other Roles for IPS Peer Workers

- SE Specialist
- IPS Supervisor
- IPS Trainer

# Part 4: QA and Staff Development

- Challenges
- Defining the peer role
- Supporting peer workers
- Workplace strategies

# Challenges

- Peer worker roles not always well defined
- Supervisors may not understand role
- Agency policies may conflict with peer role
- Teams may not welcome peer workers

# Defining the Peer Role

- Clarify role in relation to service users
- Detail expectations
  - Observable job competencies
  - Essential functions (needed for accommodations)
- Develop clear peer worker policies and practices
- Cover expenses:
  - Travel costs
  - In-person community meeting costs
  - Cell phone and email
- Support “off-hours” connections

# Supporting Peers

- Weekly supervision
- Help peer workers identify their own issues and connect with supports outside the job
- Check-in regarding their own professional development, struggles, and successes
- Help develop advocacy skills for team meetings, both for themselves and the people they support

# Strategies: Integrating Peers

- Peer position: essential (not an add-on)
- Consistent policies for peer and non-peer staff
- Neutral job titles that do not disclose peer status
- Implement a formal disclosure process for peers
- Peer positions have clear path for promotion
- Opportunities for interaction in agency life
  - Active involvement in team meetings
- Use peer input in service planning and notes
- Meet ADA requirements for accommodation

# Strategies: Training

- Training to provide understanding of roles
  - For peer workers, other staff, and service users
- Formal new employees orientation and training
- Training on confidentiality
- Training for peers on language of the workplace
- Provide training on arising topics

Gates & Akabas (2007) Developing strategies to integrate peer workers...  
Swarbrick (2014) Pillars of Peer Support: Supervision

# Strategies: Supervision

- Supervision for administrative vs peer functions
- Provide peer-specific supervision
  - Supervisor must understand the peer role
  - Refer to the CPS Code of Ethics
- Keep the focus on job performance
- Encourage setting professional goals

Gates & Akabas (2007) Developing strategies to integrate peer workers...  
Swarbrick (2014) Pillars of Peer Support: Supervision

# Summary

1. IPS SE is an effective, well-researched service
2. Peer workers contribute uniquely as IPS staff
3. Various peer roles exist within SE
4. Staff development is critical for QA

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<http://www.dartmouthips.org>

Online courses

*IPS SE: A Practical Guide*

**DARTMOUTH PRC**

*for more information*

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