The Impact of Employment on Recovery

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WORK IS RECOVERY

- INCREASES
  - Amount of income
  - # of hours worked
  - Management of symptoms
  - Independent living
  - Self-esteem

- DECREASES
  - Unemployment
  - Dependence on public systems
  - Hospitalizations
  - Symptoms
  - Stigma
Zero Exclusion

- Have experienced job loss(es) in the past
- Are still experiencing symptoms of mental illness
- Experience cognitive impairments (e.g., memory, problem-solving difficulties)
- **Are still using alcohol or other drugs**
- **Have a criminal history**
- Do not know how to fill out an application or talk to employers
- Do not have previous job training or work experience
Integrated Treatment & Employment

- SE/IPS is integrated with (embedded in) treatment services.
- Employment specialists work closely with treatment professionals to help people achieve their employment goals.
- Team members openly discuss and find solutions for issues that affect work and recovery, such as the following:
  - Medication side effects (e.g., drowsiness)
  - Persistent symptoms (e.g., hallucinations)
  - Cognitive difficulties (e.g., problem-solving skills)
  - Other rehabilitation needs (e.g., social skills, transportation, childcare)
Competitive Employment

- Employment specialists help participants find regular part-time or full-time jobs that pay a minimum wage or more.
- SE/IPS endorses competitive jobs for several reasons:
  - Participants like them more than sheltered work.
  - Competitive jobs reduce stigma and discrimination by enabling participants to work side-by-side with people who do not have disabilities.
  - Competitive jobs promote self-sufficiency, financial stability, and career advancement.
  - Support positive self-worth.
Rapid Job Search

- As soon as people express an interest in employment, treatment team members connect them with employment specialists.
- Within two to three weeks, specialists are helping consumers:
  - explore the job market
  - fill out applications
  - interview with potential employers.
- Specialists do not require individuals to complete pre-employment assessments, training, workshops, and intermediate work experiences.
- A rapid job-search honors participant’s desire to work.
Systematic Job Development

- Getting to know employers helps people find jobs that meet their strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences.
- Employment specialists build relationships with employers through planned in-person contacts over time that enables specialists and employers to work together to find the right fit (or match).
- Employment specialists use the job preferences of the participants and look for many different opportunities with each employer.
- Employment specialists keep themselves attuned to:
  - the quality of work environments
  - the potential for flexible hours
  - the potential for workplace adjustments that will accommodate individual strengths, skills, symptoms, and barriers including criminal history.
Time-Unlimited Support

- Follow-along services help people through their work and recovery journeys for as long as they want or need them.
- Supports are provided by employment specialists, case managers, other treatment providers, and by natural supports, including family members, friends, co-workers, and other peers.
- Examples of follow-along services include:
  - On-the-job supports (e.g., job coaching).
  - Job transitions (e.g., to new roles within a business, to new jobs at different businesses).
- The goal of time-unlimited support is to help individuals become as independent as possible.
Participant Preferences

- Employment specialists keep their attention focused on the employment goals of people they serve and do not impose their ideas or plans.
- Treatment providers along with employment specialists utilize motivational approaches to help individuals identify their personal strengths, skills, and job interests.
- Participants who find jobs that they want tend to experience a higher level of satisfaction and tend to keep their jobs longer.
- Individual preferences guide all aspects of the employment process, such as:
  - Job searches
  - Decisions to disclose personal issues to employers or not
  - Level of ongoing support from service providers
Benefits & Work Incentives Planning

- It is important for participants to know how their jobs (earned income) might impact benefits such as:
  - Medicaid
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
  - Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
  - Housing subsidies

  To help people make informed choices about their financial futures, employment specialists and other service providers learn the basics of benefits information. They also

- Help participants understand benefits requirements and available work incentives to increase income from employment

- Qualified benefits planners will:
  - calculate the impact that employment income has on benefits
  - Assist with reporting of income to different benefits providers
  - Assist with identifying and documenting available work incentives
Forensic Peer Support

- Trained Peer Specialists
- Understand the impact of the culture of incarceration on behavior
- Recognition of trauma prevalent among this population
- Serve as a credible role model to counter the stigma and discrimination
- Instill hope in the possibility of recovery
Job Duties of Forensic Peers

- Assist participants to engage in treatment
- Anticipate social and financial challenges based on personal experience
- Assist with maintaining adherence to conditions of supervision (probation & parole)
- Advise and coach on job related barriers
- Provide insight to treatment staff on participant strengths, needs and preferences
TVBH Forensic Peer Program

- Role Models for Risk Free Effective Behaviors
  - Role-playing, past experience, develop coping skills (community outings)
- Unique Communicators between Consumers and the Professional Staff
  - Lingo from “real life knowledge”
  - Similar experience (trauma)
- Identifiers and Innovators for Improved Consumer Care Procedures
  - “what worked” and “what didn’t”
- Mediators during Complaint or Grievance Resolutions
- Mentors and Teachers for Self-Advocacy Skills
COVA IPS & Peer Support

- Forensic and AOD population
- Collaboration with:
  - Community Correctional Facility
  - Special Docket Courts
  - Probation Incentive Program
  - Treatment Providers
- IPS Employment Services
  - Embedded with Employment Specialists
  - Engagement, Mentoring, Coaching, Follow Along
Funding Employment Services

- Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
  - Population and time constraints
  - Collaboration on funding services
- County Mental Health and Recovery Services Boards
  - Funds for treatment are not always sufficient
  - High cost services (crisis & hospitalization)
- Grant funding
  - Time limited for sustainability
  - Good option for start up funds
- Medicaid
  - Submitted to Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services
  - Identified a small number of beneficiaries who may be eligible for voluntary services (IPS and Peer Support)
IPS in Recovery Services

- the Center for Evidence Based Practices is responding to some Ohio Board leadership to adapt SE/IPS principles
- Pilot programs with this client population are beginning in FY17
RESOURCES

- The Center for Evidence Based Practices
  - Case Western Reserve University
  - www.centerforebp/case/edu
- Peer Support within Criminal Justice Settings: The Role of Forensic Peer Specialist
  - Davidson and Rowe (May, 2008)
- The Impact of Forensic Peer Support Specialists on Risk Reduction and Discharge Readiness
  - Short, Woods-Nyce, Cross, Hurst, Gordish and Raia (2012)