

Community Support Program



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Community Support Program, an opportunity for you to get involved. The Community Support Program (CSP) is a coalition of mental health consumers, family members, and professionals working to help adults with serious mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders live successfully in the community. The CSP is organized through local or county, regional, statewide and national coalitions. Each coalition level is autonomous but is expected to promote the CSP principles. At each level the CSP is expected to advise county, state and national entities on issues and strategies for the development of Community Support Systems.

CSP Principles – the model for recovery in Pennsylvania

Consumer-Centered/Consumer-Empowered - Services are based upon the needs of the individual and incorporate self-help and other approaches that allow consumers to retain the greatest possible control over their own lives.

Culturally Competent – Services are sensitive and responsive to racial, ethnic, religious and gender differences of consumers and families.

Designed to Meet Special Needs – Services are designed to meet the needs of persons with mental illness who are also affected by such factors as old age, substance abuse, physical illness or disability, mental retardation, homelessness or involvement with the criminal justice system.

Community-Based/Natural Supports – Services are provided in the least coercive manner and in the most natural settings possible. Consumers are encouraged to use the natural

supports in the community and to integrate into the living, working, learning and leisure activities of the community.

Flexible – services are designed to allow people to move in and out of the system as needed.

Coordinated – Treatment services and supports are coordinated on both the local system level and on an individual consumer basis in order to reduce fragmentation and to improve efficiency and effectiveness with service delivery. Coordination includes linkages with consumer, families, advocates and professionals at every level of the system of care.

Accountable – Service providers are accountable to the users of services and include consumers and families in planning, development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluating services.

Strengths Based – Services build upon the assets and strengths of consumers and help people maintain a sense of identity, self-esteem and dignity.

At the national level, the CSP Principles have had a dramatic impact on the way systems planners conceptualize organizing service, supports and opportunities to help mental health consumers reach their full potential in our society. The central focus of the Community Support Program is to facilitate the recovery process and personal growth of each mental health consumer. These principles are illustrated in the CSP Wheel which can be viewed at www.dpw.state.pa.us/partnersproviders/mentalhealthsubstanceabuse/003670136.htm

CSP principles recognize that recovery is the hub of the wheel; the eight factors of recovery are the spokes of the wheel – understanding, trust, respect, competence, hope, spirituality, choice, and wellness which make up the inner circle of the wheel; the CSP

principles make up the middle circle of the wheel; and the components of the community support system make up the outer circle – treatment & supports, Family & Friends, Peer Support, meaningful work, income support, community mobility, community groups & organizations, protection & advocacy, Psychiatric Rehabilitation, leisure & recreation, education, housing, and health care.

The Community Support Program believes and promotes recovery from mental illness.

This information about the Community Support Program is taken from the above mentioned web site.

Lebanon County has a Community Support Program. We meet on the fourth Thursday of each month.

The next meeting is Thursday, September 23, 2010 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the lower level of St. Mark's United Church of Christ, 428 North Eighth Street, Lebanon. Please feel free to join us as we work to transform the mental health and community support systems into recovery focused systems. Everyone is welcome!

The Mental Health Association of Lebanon County encourages all citizens of Lebanon County to become involved in the efforts to end Mental Health Stigma in Lebanon County. The Community Support Program of Lebanon County is one way you can become involved in making life better for persons with serious mental illness.

By Shem Heller, Executive Director of the Mental Health Association of Lebanon County