

# Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

## February 2012

### National Association of Peer Specialists

February saw the NAPS' RTP project team working diligently on recovery curriculum modules. The development process is a true team effort with drafts written by Rita Cronise, Lyn Legere and Steve Harrington. Those drafts were circulated among those three plus Lisa Goodale. Comments were directed to Rita who incorporated suggestions and then created a first draft for distribution to the DSG RTP reviewers and five to eight volunteer reviewers who are NAPS "stakeholders." The latter group includes, but is not limited to, Antonio Lambert, Lyn Legere, Gladys Christian and Mike Roaleen.

Comments are received and reviewed by the module writers who use them to "refine" future drafts of other modules. Once all eight modules are written in first draft form and reviewer comments received, the team will modify the drafts to be ready for pilot testing.

The pilot testing plan has been modified to account for the greater number of hours involved (from 90 minutes to 240 minutes). Approval has been received from SAMHSA to allow interested organizations from across the U.S. to provide financial support in the form of travel and lodging expenses. This is necessary to provide true pilot testing of the curriculum. Originally, the NAPS' team had planned on pilot testing at peer specialist conferences in 90-minute workshop formats. But the expansion of the time frames for the modules made this plan unworkable for meaningful pilot testing. As a result, the NAPS' team expects to partner with organizations hiring and/or training peer specialists to accommodate the expanded time frame.

Although details regarding pilot testing have yet to be worked out, the response from various organizations has been extremely enthusiastic. The clear perception is that bringing in two facilitators for a 40-hour training for only the expense of travel and lodging is indeed a "good deal." Two organizations report that employers of peer specialists have expressed keen interest in such additional training as the employers believe such training is necessary for peer specialists to perform their jobs adequately. The process by which curriculum topics were identified and modules created is also an attractive feature.

Despite the first-year effort to marshal and evaluate resources, the NAPS' team continues to receive and/or made aware of extremely valuable resources for the curriculum development process. The team has found these resources much too valuable to ignore. This means the modules are "flexible" and pilot testing is also likely to bring about significant changes. The team believes, however, these changes will result in a most practical and relevant curriculum. Flexibility, especially at this point of curriculum development, is welcomed.

Rita, working closely with DBSA information technology staff, has developed a draft of the new NAPS website. This website is designed to make access to peer support and RTP information "user friendly." NAPS' members have been invited to review and comment on the draft. Initial comments have been very favorable but details regarding accessing resources via links and other

technology must still be worked out. The new website is expected to be published and operational within the next month.

In addition to these activities, the NAPS' team has made arrangements to participate in the American Association of Community Psychiatrists' Winter Conference in Tempe, Arizona. The presentation will include a panel discussion of the RTP project. The team has also begun making plans and arrangements for the NAMI National Conference in Seattle, Washington where an RTP panel will present about the project. Antonio Lambert will represent NAPS and Steve Harrington will be on site for additional consultation, if necessary.

Plans for the NAPS annual peer specialist conference are underway and a session about the RTP project will be offered. The conference is scheduled for Sept. 6-8 in Philadelphia. The event may be an opportunity for a "train-the-trainer" session specifically for the RTP curriculum.

Although the NAPS RTP recovery curriculum is more challenging than first perceived, it continues to be an exciting endeavor. Enthusiasm among the profession fuels the effort and challenges the NAPS' team to produce the best curriculum possible. Bill Anthony, former director and founder of Boston University's Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, was provided general information about the NAPS's curriculum. He expressed great interest and was especially grateful to see that recovery relationships would play a prominent role in the curriculum. In addition, staff of the Center has asked to review the recovery relationships module.

In March, the NAPS' team will focus primarily on continuing curriculum development. By the end of the month, the team expects to have completed, in draft form, the remaining modules. Also, Lyn Legere will be planning a wellness session and activity for the NAPS conference in September. The team also expects to have a better idea of pilot testing format and locations.

Conference calls have been scheduled for March with Larry Fricks, Ike Powell, Peter Ashenden and Daniel O'Brien-Mazza regarding the RTP project.