

Recovery to Practice Monthly Report

October 2011

National Association of Peer Specialists

Significant progress was made this month on the recovery curriculum and information dissemination. The NAPS RTP team was represented at the Alternatives conference in Orlando and during a panel discussion and during informal times during the conference, considerable interest in the project was expressed by peers and peer specialists. In addition to learning about the project, many asked about ways to keep abreast of progress and offer input along the way.

To facilitate the desire for ongoing information and ways to provide input, NAPS has been moving forward with a substantial upgrade of its website. Although the website (www.naops.org) has been updated and upgraded over the last six months, that work resulted in a more user-friendly access to RTP information.

NAPS has entered into an agreement with the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (NAPS' RTP partner) to share technical expertise and systems so the NAPS website will be able to expand even more and become more interactive. In addition to RTP information, NAPS will be able to archive supporting documents, link visitors to other websites for more information, and respond in a timely fashion to inquiries and comments.

In regard to curriculum development, a series of meetings have been conducted with Lyn Legere, the NAPS RTP wellness curriculum consultant. Lyn has begun drafting the curriculum based on discussions that detailed the preferred approach and focusing on the most meaningful roles peer specialists can play in wellness promotion and the specific topics required to enable peer specialists to practice in a wellness/recovery manner.

The RTP team has begun drafting a basic recovery module. It was decided by the team that a basic recovery and recovery practice module was necessary to ensure that learners start with a common, fundamental understanding of recovery concepts and recovery practice. The module will be highly participatory with group discussions. The "instructor" will act more as a facilitator than a formal "teacher" of material. This approach is expected to be most effective—especially for this module—due to the breadth and depth of experiences and knowledge of learners. This experience and knowledge means learners offer not only individual knowledge but group wisdom will be tapped to foster synergistic learning.

Although the RTP team is still considering implementation issues regarding facilitation quality, the team is fully supportive of a process that ensures high-quality presentation/facilitation of the curriculum. Major implementation issues are expected to be resolved soon but it is expected that implementation will evolve as the recovery curriculum is developed and pilot tested.

In addition to these tasks, the NAPS RTP team completed the annual RTP report and plan for Year 3 of the project. The team has also provided information about the project to the health/psychology writer for the New York Times.

Requests for information about the NAPS RTP project have subsided (at least for the moment). This is likely due to the recent information dissemination efforts made by the team and improvements to the NAPS website.

In November, the NAPS RTP team will continue development of the wellness and recovery modules with drafts expected to be ready by the end of the month. Also, work on the relationships and conflicts in the workplace modules will begin in earnest. The team is mindful of the need to produce relatively well-refined curriculum drafts for pilot testing. Fortunately, the NAPS RTP team continues to receive requests from peer specialist programs across the country to participate as pilot testing sites. The team will judiciously select sites based on a well-defined set of factors that is currently being refined.