

Using Research and Evaluation to Improve Services and Operations

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Evidence Based Practices (EBPs)

- Interventions for which there is consistent, scientific evidence showing improved client/consumer outcomes.
- Evidence-based practices coupled with outcome and performance-based tracking systems can be targeted for use at the program level.

Wellness Self Management (WSM)

- Wellness Self Management consists of a series of approximately 36 curriculum-based classes, with supplemental one-on-one work, designed to help people with serious and persistent mental illness to maximize their progress toward recovery.

The Wellness Self Management Curriculum

- Learning practical facts about mental illness
- Understanding the stress-vulnerability model
- Building social supports
- Using medication effectively
- Understanding symptoms / triggers and reducing relapses
- Coping with problems and symptoms

WSM Curriculum, cont.

- Gaining a sense of mastery over one's mental illness
- Setting and making progress towards personal recovery goals
- Preparing a relapse prevention plan
- Getting needs met in the mental health system
- Spending less time dealing with one's psychiatric disorder and more time enjoying life

WSM in CUCS Transitional Housing

- 27% reduction in mean symptom severity
- 13% reduction in mean time-to-place into housing

{Relative to control subjects, with baseline scores and active substance abuse as covariates}

ReSHAPE

Recovery in Supportive
Housing:
Advancing Practices and
Effectiveness

The Goals of ReSHAPE include:

- Establishing a recovery-focused, outcomes-based design at CUCS' supportive housing sites that considers the various dimensions of helping tenants to live full and satisfying lives in the larger community.
- Implementing a rigorous program evaluation component to assess and improve this design.
- Developing curricula to provide training and technical assistance to other providers so that an outcomes-based approach and evidence-based practices can be more widely adopted.

Initial ReSHAPE Outcome Targets

- A 20% reduction in tenant reported symptom severity among MI tenants following completion of WSM classes
- A 20% reduction in psychiatric hospitalizations among MI tenants in the year following completion of WSM
- 40% of MI tenants who participate in Supportive Employment to obtain competitive employment within one year of beginning services

Supported Employment

- Supported Employment using the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) approach is a well-defined, evidence based model for helping people with mental illness to find and retain competitive employment.
- Supported Employment services are staffed by employment specialists and job developers who work with all of the participants' treatment providers and mental health services to achieve a mutually reinforcing effect.

Two Guiding Principles of Supported Employment

- Eligibility is based on the participant's choice. No one is excluded who wants to participate.
- An individualized job search starts soon after a participant expresses interest in working. There are no requirements for extensive pre-employment assessment, training, or intermediate work experiences (internships, sheltered workshops, etc.).

Supported Education: the Next Step

- An initial questionnaire found that 22% of CUCS tenants with disabilities or past homelessness want to pursue additional schooling
- Interventions providing educational supports to this population are not yet well defined, nor have they been rigorously tested
- In order to inform the selection, or design, of an effective intervention, CUCS is conducting an exploratory study of our tenants' educational experiences, aspirations, and support needs

Using Research to Guide the Organizational Change Process

- Online staff surveys were designed, drawing validated questions from the research literature
- Staff members are asked to complete these surveys at milestone points in the change process
- The surveys functioned as interim staff evaluations of the organizational change process, and allowed necessary adjustments to be made by the project management team

Using research to guide practice

What you need to know

What somebody else has already
learned

What you have to
figure out for yourself

How ReSHAPE uses research

| | External Sources | Internal Sources |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Design / Selection | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. WSM literature / consultant2. Supp. Employment literature3. Supp. Education literature / consultant | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. WSM transitional pilot2. Tenant goal survey3. Educational needs study |
| Management | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Org. change literature2. Org. change consultant | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff survey analysis2. Staff meeting feedback |
| Evaluation | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hospitalization target setting2. Employment target setting3. Education target setting | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Symptom target setting2. Employment target setting3. Symptom tracking4. Hospitalization tracking5. Employment tracking6. Education tracking |

Principles for Integrating
Research, Evaluation and an
Outcome Orientation
into an Organizational Setting:

- Senior management interest in organizational learning and knowledge management
- A genuine, long-term organizational commitment
- Participation and buy-in from staff at all levels
- Adequate resources dedicated to the effort
- Maintaining a system for continuous quality improvement
- A receptive Board of Directors

Other CUCS Research/Evaluation Initiatives

- Exploratory studies of the Manhattan street homeless population
- Study of the experience of adults without disabilities living in supported housing
- Analysis of the service needs of long-term shelter stayers in supported housing, relative to other tenants with histories of homelessness