

Peer lead Pre Treatment Programming for Consumers
with Mental Health Illness and Criminal Justice
Involvement

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Introduction

- Concern over individuals diagnosed with mental illness particularly those who have also been involved with the criminal justice system has increased (Draine, Wilson, & Pogorzelski, 2007).
- Timely service for such a vulnerable population is an essential part of facilitating their recovery and increase stability (Morgan et al., 2010).
- The goal of the project is to address the concerns of timeliness of service provision for this population through early intervention services by peer-lead groups.
- The project aims to maintain motivation, coping skills, and provide interventions for adults, and anticipate improvement and consistency in treatment.

Social Work Relevance

- Providing pre-treatment program for consumers with mental illness and criminal histories is critical in reducing, service interruption, motivation, and recidivism.
- Improving stability and success for consumers is what social work strives to achieve. Social workers must ensure the wellbeing and advocate for the continuation, expansion, and implementation of programs that address critical factors in client's lives to reduce harm and promote wellness.

Cross-cultural Relevance

- The disproportionate number of individuals of color involved with the criminal justice system is also reflected in those seeking services for mental health disorders (Pew, 2009)
- Members of disadvantaged populations, racial and ethnic minorities with mental health disorders bear a higher burden of disability from mental disorders as a result of less or poorer quality of care (New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003).
- This program aims to provide rapid treatment through early intervention to adults seeking mental health treatment.

Methods

Target Population

- The targeted participants identified are low income severely mentally ill adults with criminal backgrounds who reside in service area 6 of Los Angeles County.

Strategies used to identify and select funding

- The use of the Long Beach Foundation Center was a useful resource and in identifying several sources that matched criteria that met the needs of the program.

Funding source selected

- In reviewing the 5 identified funding sources, the California Wellness Foundation appeared to be the most appropriate potential funding source for this grant.

Methods (cont.)

Sources used for needs assessment

- Information from the data indicators from the Los Angeles County Health Survey (2011), research literature, and supervisor interviews was gathered.

Projected budget range

- In consideration of budget expenses specific measures will be considered. The funding target is set at \$109,530 to cover peer-facilitator and program director salaries, training courses, materials for members, and space usage.

Grant Proposal

Program summary

- The program will engage adults who are given lengthy appointment wait times and provide rapid peer lead services. The mode of recruitment will be primarily from Augustus Hawkins clients who are seeking services and are assessed and identified as qualifying for mental health services. The identified host agency will be Shields for Families a non-profit organization contracted by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Population served

- The group will serve 200 residents of SPA 6 specifically identified from Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health August Hawkins Mental Health Clinic.

Grant Proposal (cont.)

Program objectives

- The project has six objectives to meet these goals such as secure personnel, recruit MSW Interns, recruit peer facilitators, client identification and enrolment, intervention, and evaluation.

Program evaluation

- Client consistency and engagement will be measured by consulting with client's clinician after a 6 month treatment period by obtaining case note summaries reporting attended appointments with clinicians and psychiatrist at August F. Hawkins. Additionally client's motivation, ability to manage their symptoms and, coping abilities for their mental health illness will be measured by conducting pre and post testing. The tool selected for this measurement is the Milestones of Recovery Scale (MRS) (Fisher et al., 2009).

Lessons Learned/Implications for Social Work

- In order to increase funding possibilities for the proposed program it was necessary to house the program in a non-profit agency that provided services to the identified population for this grant.
- The grant writer learned that the screening process for funding sources can be time consuming however, using available resources and consulting facilitated the process.
- In acknowledgement of social work values and ethics, carrying out programs and requesting support for programs puts to action their capabilities and expands the vision of enhancing the overall well-being of individuals.

References

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