

C Consumer

&
F Family



P Partnership

T Team

Consumer and
Family Participation
in Ohio Department
of Mental Health
Workgroups

Partnering is Powerful!

Developed as an outcome of the spring 2001 Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) Program and Policy Development Strategic Planning, a Consumer and Family Partnership Team (CFPT) was established to empower consumers and families, as well as enhance the perspective of Department staff by increasing contact and collaboration with consumer groups.

The Team aims to increase consumer satisfaction and the effectiveness of program and policy development decisions through including consumers and family members as equal partners

on ODMH workgroups. Consumers and families should be involved in these groups to help

make decisions that affect their lives. With the Consumer and Family Partnership Team, consumers and families are actively planning and evaluating policies and services in Ohio's mental health system.

The Team's consumer and family involvement and support recommendations are

consistent with Governor Taft's priority to "deliver a good product to our customers." In the current environment of tight fiscal and human resources, strategic partner-

The Consumer and Family Partnership Team's efforts to recruit, educate and mentor the mental health community will ensure consumer and family voices are heard, enhance quality and foster recovery and resiliency.

ship with consumers and family members will help ODMH extend its human resource capacity to accomplish Department and system goals.

CFPT conducted pilot implementation April-June 2002 with an extended team of family and consumer members with funding support from ODMH Program and Policy Development. Consumer and Family Partnership Team funds are used to reimburse consumers and family members for mileage, meals and other expenses incurred through attendance at meetings, trainings or conferences at the request of the Ohio Department of Mental Health. The Team has doubled the number of consumers and family members participating on ODMH workgroups.

The mission of the Consumer and Family Partnership team is to promote inclusion of consumers and

family members, of all ages, as equal partners and proactive members of Ohio Department of Mental Health Workgroups.

Goals of CFPT

- Increase the pool of consumers and families identified as equal partners for ODMH workgroups.
- Increase technical assistance capacity of consumers and family members to ODMH, Boards and Agencies.
- Identify and clarify tangible supports for consumer and family participation.
- Increase internal and external communication about consumer and family participation.
- Develop strategies for mentoring to increase consumer and family participation.

G

Guiding Principles of Partnership

Provides an opportunity for consumers and family members to **Participate** on ODMH workgroups and committees.

Allows for diversity, individuality, and involvement in a way that works for the individual and the group.

Results in **Relationships** being developed.

Mutual **T**rust is built.

Non-**judgemental** exchange of information.

Rapport is **E**stablished.

Reimbursement of costs for consumers and family members is important.

Support from the administration is integral to success.

Humor Helps!

Input from consumers and family members is valued and beneficial.

Develops **P**atience with one another and the process.

Partnership Works!

The value of the Consumer and Family Partnership Team is best expressed by the consumers, families, and ODMH staff who experience it every day. The following examples illustrate how the Team is affecting just a few of the workgroups and committees in Ohio's mental health system.

Recovery Training in ODMH Behavioral Healthcare Organizations

“As a victim of (arguably) the most debilitating disease known to man, self-esteem is always a primary concern of mine and other victims of this illness. To meet with Carla Rosler, Marsha Stroud and other mental health professionals, and to see that they actually accepted what I said, even if it was directly opposed to what they had learned from a book, did wonders for my self-esteem.

I am greatly honored to be a part of this breakthrough program. It is a hands-on way for professionals to un-

derstand what it is like for someone suffering with schizophrenia.



One professional seemed very interested in my personal story of recovery. He seemed so during the teaching, and then, during the break, he pulled me aside and asked me specific questions about my experience. Even with an illness as devastating as schizophrenia, we found humor in it all. I asked the professionals, ‘Do you know what Christmas song is a schizophrenic’s favorite?’ The answer: ‘Do You Hear What I Hear?’

Being paid to participate in this program not only raises my self-esteem but also fattens my pocket book. Little did I realize, when I was on the back ward of the local psychiatric hospital, that one day I would be able to use my experience to teach others about mental illness.”

- Patrick Quinn

“I have been involved with Recovery since I went to a workshop on Emerging Best Practices in Mental Health Recovery in 1995. I believed in the things that I learned about Recovery. Therefore, I was very excited that I was chosen to be on a committee to help roll out the concept of Recovery to the Behavioral Healthcare Organizations (BHOs).

The committee (Recovery Initiative Work Group) is composed of a representative from each of the BHOs and two consumers. From the very beginning of this committee, there was a strong belief that consumer representatives should have a strong influence in how to teach Recovery in our hospitals. We organized



a mandatory six-hour training session for clinical staff and a two-hour training session for auxiliary staff such as telephone operators and housekeepers, because we want every staff member in our hospitals to understand the basic concepts of Recovery. We also made a strong recommendation that we teach the six-hour sessions with a staff person and a consumer. I have personally taught with several consumers and have always been impressed with and in awe of the personal struggles they experienced in their own Recovery.

Working side by side with consumers, I have witnessed the most amazing transformations as the consumer grows from a shy, insecure student to a confident, outgoing teacher. The first day of teaching, they were looking for me before answering questions; the second day, they were ready to take over. They want to teach, they want staff to hear what they have to say, and they want to go on the units and start talking to patients about Recovery. It is the most rewarding situation that I have ever experienced.”

- Carla Rosler

Consumer Operated Services Technical Assistance Guideline

“It has been exciting to work with the whole group. It has been a learning experience to work with so many different people with so many different experiences and ideas.

The people from ODMH and Ohio Advocates for Mental Health have been so helpful in making a useful document for people to use to start or maintain a consumer-operated agency.

Sherry Boyd and the others from ODMH have kept us on track and have been really helpful to contribute with the finished product.”



- Betty Ann Brown

“This is my first opportunity to work with Betty on a consumer/ODMH initiative. Betty is very dedicated to the work we are doing and using it as a tool to assist with her Consumer Operated Service in Dayton, Ohio.

No matter what other issues are occurring in Betty’s life, she has a positive attitude and good sense of humor and has made

this work one of her priorities. She has been able to share her personal experiences with the mental health system and use it to help other consumers who may face the same issues. Also, she is able to learn from other consumer’s experiences. If not for people like Betty, we would not be able to do the “real” work of recovery that impacts lives all over the state.”

- Sherry Boyd, ODMH Office of Consumer and Recovery Supports

Resiliency Committee

“On January 20, 2005, the Kids Resilience Work Group began regular meetings to define, and establish a more functional approach to fostering resilience in young people.

The Work Group is made up of family members, young people and parents who have committed to spending a minimum of one Saturday a month through June 2005 working on what the concepts and functions might be for a resilience-based system of service and support delivery. At the first meeting, the group began the process of developing a mission and brainstorming ideas and a philosophical foundation for their work. The belief in a “family-driven, strengths-based, and young person-focused” approach was articulated by all members of the workgroup.

The group also raised many concerns regarding how the mental health sys-

tem might be able to support system change not only within its own system but also within other child-serving systems, particularly education.

The group hopes to obtain funding to continue their work in SFY 2006.”

- Robin Gilbert, ODMH Office of Children's Services and Prevention

“It is an honor that ODMH selected me and asked me to help out changing how society is. That is pretty cool. I feel the committee listened to me and they were really interested in what I had to say. I think schools struggle to acknowledge what is happening in the classroom. Kids can see when someone is really depressed. Most teachers either don't see or don't do anything to help.”

- André Martin, Member, Kids Resilience Work Group



ODMH Interview Process for Client Rights Staff

“Before being hired by ODMH, I read in the ODMH *Connections* newsletter that the Department invites consumers and family members to participate on all department committees and workgroups. During my employment interviews I was pleased to learn that my interview team included a consumer as an equal member of the team.



This action spoke louder than mere words ever could. This action demonstrated ODMH is committed to a public mental health system that is consumer-driven, and affirmed my decision to accept employment with ODMH.”

- Diane Nutter, ODMH Office of
Consumer and Recovery Supports

“ODMH’s Consumer and Family Partnership Team has brought to the forefront our commitment to invite consumers, including youth, and family members to participate in all phases of our work. This partnership included consumer participation in recent interviews for a Client Advocacy position. The input of our consumer partner was invaluable to our selection process.



The interviews were more consumer-focused than the standard staff only interviews. This experience proved to me the value of our commitment and practice to include consumers and families in all aspects of our work.”

- Sharon Aungst, Assistant Deputy
Director, ODMH Program
and Policy Development

Planning Council

“As a member of the Planning Council, I watched the staff of ODMH, consumers, and family members working together to disseminate information, work on the block grants and review the completed work of the subcommittees. Whether it was the jail diversion survey or the 800 line, the Ohio Support Planning Council of the Ohio Department of Mental Health gives outstanding and needed services to consumers and family members. It is wonderful to see that family members, consumers, and yes, staff, advocate for and have developed an ear and voice for people who we service and see on a daily basis.

This partnership is very important. It is paramount that we have outstanding volunteers who come with their experiences to assist ODMH with its work of providing real mental health services and authentic opportunities to recover. The reason ODMH can carry out its mission is because of the pipe-

line which consists of consumers, family members and staff.”

- Gerald Johnson Evans

As the lead contact person for the Department, I’ve seen that consumer, family, and provider feedback and participation play an essential part of Ohio’s Community Planning Council. Each member brings unique experiences and perspectives on the mental

health system and when these members are present at the Planning Council meetings, a synergetic effect takes place. Members use this energy to ensure that

consumers, family members, and providers’ voices are heard. Many of the members serve on other mental health committees. What has impressed me the most are the members’ dedication to enhancing the quality of mental services in Ohio.”

- Mario DeSantis, ODMH
Office of Consumer and
Recovery Supports



Mental Health and School Success Regional Action Network

“I have really enjoyed serving as a parent representative on The Northeast Action Network (NEAN). I strongly believe in the need for a partnership between mental health services and schools. Through my child’s struggles, I have witnessed the need for training school personnel on how mental illness can impact learning and classroom success.

It has been great to meet the many people who work daily to meet the needs of children with mental illness. I’ve learned about the policy and funding issues that affect so many mental health agencies. It has been helpful to learn about resources and programs that are available to children and schools and to share them with others.

Being a part of a collaboration focused on bridging the gap between mental health services and schools

provides me with hope for a better future not just for my child, but for all children.”

- Ellen Riehm

“Ellen’s knowledge, commitment and steadfast advocacy for children and families has been of tremendous value in helping to guide the priorities of the

Northeast Action Network for School Success. Ellen strives to help school and mental health personnel understand the daily challenges faced by

students with mental illnesses and the acceptance and support they need to succeed in school.

Her voice brings the strength and wisdom of families to the table – where we all learn and grow through their experience.”

- Kay Rietz, Assistant Deputy Director,
ODMH Office of Children’s Services
and Prevention



B Blueprint for Partnership

The need to hear the voice of the customer is not unique to the mental health system. The Consumer and Family Partnership Team model can be used in almost any agency or organization. The following is a checklist of items that would be helpful to agencies or organizations seeking to implement a team of customers to provide input to a process or system.

- Form a Steering Committee with the authority and staffing to get the process launched
 - Involve the right people including consumers and family members from the start
 - Consider diversity - cross-section of ethnic, racial and cultural perspectives
- Develop a strategy to recruit consumers and family members
- Create a plan to orient, acclimate and give ongoing support to consumers and family members
- Communicate the benefits of receiving input from customers with staff or other partners
- Create a process for recording results and progress
- Develop a process for Quality Improvement/Evaluation
- Periodically update leadership and sponsors on the progress of the team
- Recognize the achievements of the collaboration to give the partners renewed energy and enthusiasm.

Who is Partnering?

The Consumer and Family Partnership Team includes a steering committee and a number of consumers and family members who serve on workgroups and committees. The Ohio Department of Mental Health would like to thank all who are sharing their time, experiences and knowledge to improve mental health services.

Steering Committee Members

Tracee Black
Kathy Coate-Ortiz
Jim Collins
Ellen Deacon
Tonya Fasone
Terre Garner
Lillian Harris
Janice Hayes
Terri McIntee
Rosemary Moran
Kay Rietz
Dora Sterling
Susan Thompson
Can Truong
Charlotte Williams

Founding Members

Linda Buntoff
Saundra Jenkins



Start Partnering!

Get involved by learning more about ODMH's Consumer and Family Partnership Team.

Contact:

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Toll Free: 877-275-6364

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www.mh.state.oh.us

Other Resources:

Communications Services for
the Deaf (CSD) of Ohio
Toll-Free Voice/TTY: 877-781-6670
TTY: 614-889-6914
Voice: 614-889-5815

National Alliance for
the Mentally Ill of Ohio
www.namiohio.org
614-224-2700

Ohio Federation for
Children's Mental Health
www.ohfederation.org
513-948-3077

It is said that to have values,
you have to live them.

Do you believe in consumer
and family-centered services?

Do you practice this core value
by recruiting consumers and
family members of all ages to
join in your workgroups,
planning sessions and retreats?

Reimbursement for expenses is
available to consumers. For
more information, call Susan
Thompson at (614) 466-4332.

Stretch and walk the talk!



Ohio Department
of Mental Health

Values



Ohio Department of Mental Health

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An Equal Opportunity
Employer and Provider