Program Implementation

Cutting-edge Approaches for Persons with Complex Needs

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Expansion of peer support programs is a critical part of the solution to the nation's behavioral workforce shortage.

OK Video | Example

- MHA's Oklahoma affiliate provides a great example with their peer-run drop-in center for people experiencing homelessness

- Anyone 18 or older is welcome to participate (as long as they are respectful of others); participants can socialize, relax and take advantage of personal growth and development opportunities

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Video: Mental Health Association of Oklahoma

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Other Examples in Peer Support Programming

The **MHA affiliate in Westchester, NY**, staffs an Intensive and Sustained Engagement Team (INSET), which provides a set of supports and peer services to individuals who meet Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) criteria or for those who have been court ordered to have AOT

In Massachusetts, the **Kiva Centers** is an indigenous-led, peer-run, and trauma-informed organization with drop-in spaces that connect people with resources and a community built around shared experiences ranging from trauma, mental health or substance use conditions

Indiana has a **Discovery Café** initiative that provides a place for young people ages 13-17 who may be facing mental health, substance use, or other challenges where they can join their peers for a wide range of activities that provide fun and inclusive support for overall well-being, as well as recovery support

Oregon's **YouthLine** crisis line is staffed by trained youth volunteers who are supervised by behavioral health professionals and serves more than 30,000 young people across the country

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State Approaches to Peer Support Programming

Georgia offers background check waivers to allow justice-involved peers to work in clinical settings

In **Rhode Island and Texas, peer supervisors can be more experienced peer specialists**; this is extremely important since most states require clinical supervision but clinicians don't necessarily have training in peer supports

New York is a leading state for peer support, in part due to leadership of the **Alliance for Rights and Recovery, a grassroots organization** based in Albany, and **significant state funding**

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III. Implementation: N Street Village example

1. **Peer design, peer leadership, peer employment**
2. **PSH, Trauma-informed Community, integrated care, holistic healing**
3. Therapeutic community programs—**community as the change agent**
    a. Non-traditional as well as peer-led programs
4. Positive and **healthy relationships, individual and group support all in one location**
    a. Shelter, housing, re-entry, medical respite, wrap-around services (including vocational programs, art and theater, and full-service holistic integrated integrative care)
    b. Community jobs and volunteering
5. **Purpose, meaning, belonging, connection** (atop Maslow's Hierarchy)
    a. Staff and clients/residents
    b. Creation of community norms and values, even within staff culture
    c. Creation of a culture of "mutuality with safe boundaries" (staff as advocates and professional supports—who hug)

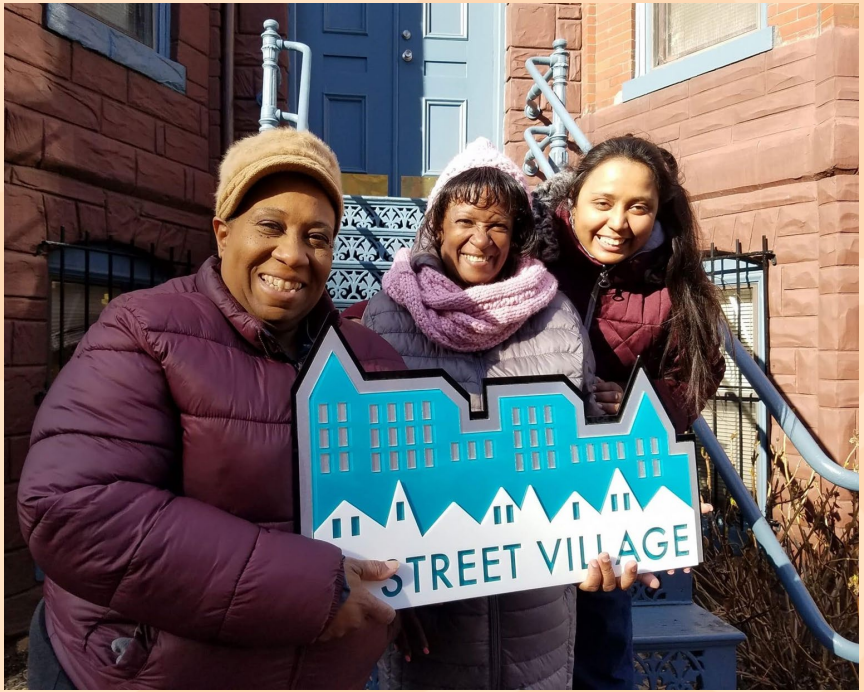
VI. Implementation Challenges

1. Continual need for **resource replenishment**
    a. Owning property was a plus for financial health
    b. Two-thirds **reliant on charitable funding – not a** scalable or **sustainable model** for long-term solutions
2. **Social health problems**: housing, food, income insecurity, etc.
    a. Neither **private sector nor govt can solve alone**
3. **Radical collaboration** by broad range of stakeholders is **necessary**
    a. EX. Collective Impact Project on HSS in DC 2013—led to creation of Mayor's Cabinet with Lived Experience Leaders, Advocates, NGOs, and all City Agency Heads; led to 5-year citywide strategy and progress on housing/HSS programs – particularly for the most vulnerable (those with complex needs)
4. **Minimal or no funding for experimentation**, innovation, "R & D"
5. **Minimal or no funding for third-party evaluation** (EVP vs. Promising Practice)

Peers in Action:

N Street Village

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcpwVl7joEY



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