

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE  
Behavioral Health Division Administration  
Inter-Office Communication**

**DATE:** March 5, 2013

**TO:** Supervisor Marina Dimitrijevic, Chairwoman – Milwaukee County Board

**FROM:** Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services  
*Prepared by Paula Lucey, Administrator, Behavioral Health Division*

**SUBJECT:** **Report, from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, Requesting Authorization to Allow the Planning Council to Enter into an Agreement with Horizon Healthcare, Office of Consumer Affairs, to administer the activities for the Peer Specialist Pipeline Initiative as part of the Mental Health Redesign**

**Issue**

In October 2012, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – Behavioral Health Division (BHD) received authority from the County Board (File 12-709) to enter into a professional services contract with Planning Council for Health and Human Services starting November 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013 for \$1,114,290 to provide specific programs related to the Mental Health Redesign Initiative. The programs were Peer Specialist Pipeline, Step-Down Housing Alternative, Case Management Expansion, Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Employment, and Supportive Housing Units. BHD is now returning to the Board to request authorization to allow the Planning Council to release funds for to Horizon Healthcare, Office of Consumer Affairs, for administration of the Peer Pipeline Initiative for the time frame April 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.

**Discussion**

The 2012 BHD Budget included over \$3 million for a Mental Health Redesign and Community Resource Investment, which included specific initiatives aimed at expediting the necessary groundwork for a mental health system more reliant on community resources and less reliant on inpatient care. One of the priorities for these funds and of the Mental Health Redesign Taskforce is the development of the peer specialist network. As of January 2013, there were 52 Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) in Milwaukee County. The goal of the Peer Specialist Pipeline Initiative is to improve and systematize the training, certification, ongoing professional development, and employment opportunities for CPS in order to expand and maintain this workforce that is essential to person-centered care and recovery for persons with mental illness. It is critical to develop a centralized entity information, training, and employment opportunities for CPS. BHD, in partnership with various stakeholders including the state Department of Health Services, provider organizations, advocacy groups, and Certified Peer

Specialists identified the following activities and services that would fully expend the \$200,000 allocation for the Certified Peer Specialist Pipeline Program.

**1. Four (4) Peer Specialist Training Sessions**

Provide training using an approved peer specialist curriculum to interested Milwaukee County residents with lived experience to become Certified Peer Specialists. Each session would train approximately 20 individuals. One session would be specifically dedicated to Spanish-speaking individuals and interpreters with the goal of increasing the number of bilingual Spanish speaking CPS' in Milwaukee County.

**2. Study Groups and Financial Assistance with the CPS Examination**

The peer specialist certification examination is offered three times per year for individuals that successfully complete the approved training curriculum. The peer specialist study groups would be held prior to each examination date and hosted at Our Space, Inc. Financial assistance to pay for the examination would be made available to those that completed the training, participated in the study group, and are in the greatest financial need.

**3. Peer Support and Peer Mentors**

Often times, additional supports are needed for newly employed CPS as they begin their jobs. This would create support groups to be held at various locations throughout Milwaukee such as Grand Avenue Club, NAMI, Mental Health America, etc., to allow for dialogue, problem solving, support, and mentoring from other CPS' that have encountered similar employment situations.

**4. Advanced Peer Support Worker Training**

Host a five (5) day advanced peer specialist training that includes a review of baseline skills for CPS', group facilitation skills, ethics and boundaries, documentation training, peers as evaluators of services, and dealing with conflict and grievances at work and within the role as CPS'.

**5. Peer Supervision Model**

Offer a specialized training for clinicians and/or peer supervisors who supervise CPS'. This workshop will explore: peer support - its role and who qualifies to be a peer specialist; what adjustments are needed for successful integration of peer support into existing behavioral health services; supervision styles and qualifications of peer support specialist supervisors and strategies for long term success (including theoretical frameworks within which to supervise peer support specialists); and, practical solutions to challenges and barriers using case examples and real life situations.

**6. Web-based Clearinghouse**

This is a web page that would be hosted on Mental Health America of Wisconsin's (MHA) website. It would be specifically dedicated to all peer specialist activities for Milwaukee County. The web page would be created in collaboration and with input from CPS'. The content

of the web page would include but is not limited to: training and workshops dates and locations, support group opportunities, mentorship opportunities and requests, MHA's resource guide, and other resources that would be a benefit to CPS's within the context of their job responsibilities, employment opportunities for job seekers, and a central location for employers to post job opportunities.

### **7. Employer Summit**

Building on the successful Peer Specialist Employer Summit held last September 2012, this summit would specifically train employers on the newly created Employer Tool Kit. The tool kit was developed by Access to Independence (ATI) to address concerns and strategies for hiring and employing CPS' from the employer's perspective.

### **8. Professional Development**

A Certified Peer Specialist has an annual continuing education requirement that must be met. The professional development would address the topics of, Emotional CPR, the neuroscience of addiction, recovery components, and offer CPS' scholarship opportunities to attend the annual Crisis Intervention and the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse conferences sponsored by the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point.

### **9. WRAP Train the Trainer**

The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) developed by Mary Ellen Copeland and delivered by the Copeland Institute would be brought to Milwaukee County. This would be a train the trainer model to provide CPS' a valuable tool - the WRAP, that could be used by people who are dealing with mental health and other kinds of health challenges, and by people who want to attain the highest possible level of wellness.

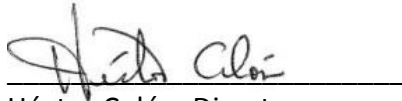
### **Fiscal Effect**

BHD will oversee this contract to ensure that Horizon Healthcare adheres to the performance measures and contract administration requirements and oversight currently included in all purchase of services contracts with the Department of Health and Human Services. The total funds allocated to the Planning Council include \$200,000 for this initiative therefore there is no tax levy impact. A fiscal note form is attached.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Director, DHHS, or his designee, to allow the Planning Council to enter into an agreement with Horizon Healthcare, Office of Consumer Affairs to act as the fiscal agent for the administration of the Peer Pipeline Initiative activities for the time period of April 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013 in the amount of \$200,000.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Héctor Colón", is written over a horizontal line.

Héctor Colón, Director  
Department of Health and Human Services

cc: County Executive Chris Abele  
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