

The Community Support Program in Pennsylvania: Changing Pennsylvania's Mental Health System



Sponsored by the Pennsylvania
Department of Public Welfare,
Office of Mental Health
Substance Abuse Services

For details, write to:
Community Support Program
DPW, OMHSAS
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105
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Who We Are

The Community Support Program (CSP) of Pennsylvania is a coalition of mental health consumers, family members and professionals working to help adults with serious mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders live successfully in the community. This statewide coalition links CSP nationally with regional and local Community Support Programs throughout the state.

Our Background

The CSP concept was developed in 1977 at the National Institute of Mental Health and adopted throughout the United States.

What We Believe

CSP is based on creating opportunities for people rather than fostering a life of dependency and disability. CSP embraces the concept that people who have mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders should be treated with dignity and respect; that these individuals have the same needs, aspirations, rights and responsibilities as other citizens; and that they should have access to the opportunities and supports everyone needs, as well as to mental health services.

What We Want

A mental health system that is accountable to the people it serves. A system that is accessible, effective, comprehensive and efficient.

Who We Serve

We serve the thousands of Pennsylvanians who have serious mental illness and co-occurring disorders. Each individual has unique strengths, problems and needs.

How Can You Help?

The Community Support Program in Pennsylvania welcomes consumers of mental health services, family members, mental health professionals and other interested citizens who want to achieve the goal of helping communities develop comprehensive community support services for adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring disorders. There is a statewide CSP committee as well as regional and county CSP committees developed throughout the Commonwealth. These committees strive for equal representation from consumers, family members and professionals, each group having an equal say in determining the committees' goals and activities. Membership is voluntary with members being recruited from the community.



How Can You Join?

Please call the county CSP liaison at your local county Mental Health/Mental Retardation Office, or contact the Pennsylvania OMHSAS office to find out information for your county on CSP. To schedule an educational program on mental illness or CSP, please write to:
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Community Support Program Guiding Principles

1. Consumer-Centered/Empowered:

Services are based upon the needs of the individual and incorporate self-help and other approaches that allow consumers to retain the greatest possible control over their own lives.

2. Culturally Competent: Services are sensitive and responsive to racial, ethnic, religious and gender differences of consumers and families.

3. Meet Special Needs: Services are designed to meet the needs of persons with mental illness who are also affected by such factors as old age, substance abuse, physical illness or disability, mental retardation, homelessness or involvement with the criminal justice system.

4. Community-Based/Natural Supports:

Services are provided in the least coercive manner and in the most natural settings possible. Consumers are encouraged to use the natural supports in the community and to integrate into the living, working, learning and leisure activities of the community.

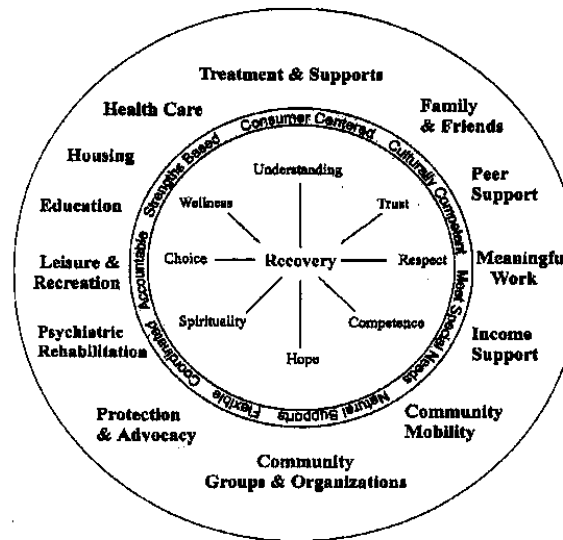
5. Flexible: Services are designed to allow people to move in and out of the system and within the system as needed.

6. Coordinated: Services and supports are coordinated on both the local system level and on an individual consumer basis in order to reduce fragmentation and to improve efficiency and effectiveness with service delivery. Coordination includes linkages with consumers, families, advocates and professionals at every level of the system of care.

7. Accountable: Service providers are accountable to the users of services and include consumers and families in planning, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluating services.

8. Strengths Based: Services build upon the assets and strengths of consumers and help people maintain a sense of identity, self-esteem and dignity.

PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM A Recovery Model for People with Mental Illness and Co-Occurring Disorders



The CSP Principles In the Wheel are placed In the middle circle to reflect how concepts of “Recovery” are embraced by these principles, while at the same time providing the cornerstones upon which our behavioral health system is based.

Description of the Wheel

For over twenty years the national Community Support Program (CSP) has had a dramatic impact on the way systems planners organized services, supports and opportunities to help mental health consumers reach their full potential in our society. The Wheel is designed to meet the needs of people with mental illness as well as those who suffer from co-occurring disorders, (mental health and substance abuse problems). The central focus of community support programs is to facilitate the recovery process and personal growth of each mental health consumer.

CSP Principles remain unchanged and are portrayed in the Wheel’s middle circle to support the recovery process and provide the bedrock for the way service system components are delivered. Essential community support system components include meaningful work, community mobility, psychiatric rehabilitation, leisure, recreation and education. While the revised CSP Wheel still prioritizes mental health consumers who have the most serious psychiatric illnesses, it is acknowledged that the model is beneficial to: a) many other consumers whose psychiatric disorders continue to disrupt their lives, and; b) consumers who have sufficiently progressed in their recovery to the point where their psychiatric condition can no longer be deemed serious.

The Road To Recovery

People can and do recover from mental illness. The center circle of our revised CSP Wheel portrays recovery as a multidimensional concept. Demonstrating respect for the consumer nurtures that person’s self-esteem. When people convey trust in the consumer, it strengthens the consumer’s confidence and motivation to assume increased responsibility for taking control of one’s own life. The eight factors listed on the Wheel are important antecedents for Recovery.