

## **Themes from Howie the Harp Planning Panel Meetings**

Note: the following themes were taken from the planning panel discussion of September 17, 2009 and from the transcribed minutes for meetings held on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

### **I. Important Human Relations Values**

“Consumer-friendly” is the overall main approach of the Center when everyone walks in you have respect for each other. Mutual respect must exist between staff and consumers. No judgments- show kindness

Non-violence must be valued at all times.

### **II. Policies Regarding Consumer Rights**

Consumer Rights is an overall policy of the Center. All consumers have the right to obtain services that best serve them at this time. Clearly state Negotiable vs. Non-Negotiable policies (Example: the Center’s hours-when can consumers use the center)

#### Policy of Refusal

1. Consumers must know up-front which services they may and may not refuse which include;
2. Knowing up front if they have the option to refuse any services.
3. If a consumer can’t say no to a particular service, this is made known to potential clients and funders before agreements are made.
4. If Consumers has the right to say “no” to types of services and medications
5. If Consumers can refuse certain services they are still able to continue to participate in desired services and activities in order to provide stability/prolonged stabilization.

### **III. Key Values of Services**

The goal is to ultimately provide a Consumer-run Multi-service center for the homeless and severely mentally ill person and their families.

Utilize the SAMSHA mission statement/ definition of ‘consumer run’ -Consumers’ voices must be heard.

A consumer-run organization can include non-consumer staffers in specialized positions,such as bookkeeper. Conduct trainings to learn how to talk to/work with people with mental health issues. Administration and laypeople all need to be on the same page. All different parts of the center should have the same information,

1. Overall Center decisions go to a consumer-run Board of Directors.
2. Speak on a daily basis- 24-hour communication.
3. Staff and consumer work together to establish standards for service delivery
4. Has an on-going and /or exit plan that helps consumers complete services
5. Housing is part of exit plan and follow-up.

#### Follows a Harm Reduction model with harm reduction values

Staff must work with consumers by meeting consumers where they are at; it is the staff’s job to meet consumers’ needs.

Create “inclusive community”, “holistic”- address life’s needs, not limited to clinical needs

#### **IV. Grievance Process**

Peers- implemented consumer grievance process. One must be in place for consumers’ enforcement of their need to maintain their dignity. Complaints should be handled with compassion and patience, by someone who understands the consumer position.

Complaints addressed through an Ombudsman.

Provide Grievance Procedure Information available to consumers in understandable language staff should try to understand what the consumers are going through using layman terms to convey information.

Information is visible and available in the lobby of the Center

Complaints should be dealt with in a timely manner.

#### **V. Utilize Committees as a Valued Component of Center**

Consumer involvement in all activities of the Center including participation on committees

Hold General Community meetings in addition to In –house committee meetings.

Be open to the participation of the greater community as well as active members of Center to ensure community input is welcomed and recognized

Role of committees- Democratic Process followed and committees have policies to be followed

Circulate and rotate committee members through various committees/responsibilities

More comprehensive development of Life skills” through shared facilitation

“Life skill”- shared facilitation

Everyone got to feel what administration of the Center goes through as well as service components

#### Types of Committees

Leadership

Facilitators

Conflict resolution

County standards

Hospitality

Safety

Families

#### **VI. Value Family Involvement**

Recognize and value of the role family has with the consumer.

Demonstrate appreciation of the families’ situation. Create ways for families to support each other

## **VII. Core Competencies for a successful Consumer run program**

### Main Goal

To create and make available the best services that we can. Whether it is a consumer run or a blended model, these things below are very key to the values and the philosophy of the Center.

### Issue of Power

Consumer empowerment brings in issue of power. Consumers need to have the power of making decisions in their lives. Consumers need to feel they have the greatest information and knowledge to make the best decisions on how they live their lives, grow their wellness, enter recovery, and learn new skills to work.

### Blended Center vs Consumer Driven Center

Creatively set up the systems with options varying between a Center that is blended, or driven by consumers

Even in a consumer driven structure, all decision making power is not necessarily in the hands of the consumer. Different structures can be created to make decisions and you can still take the decision and create a structure where nothing is implemented without consumer input.

Have clarity that a consumer run program is set up and allowed to be consumer run. Become clearer about what we want and how it is to be structured to assure it is consumer driven.

### Components to Address

human relations pieces

hiring and recruiting process

pay scale

discipline

equipment needs

administration

financial systems solid and in place

At some point these pieces have got to come together, both services and methodology. The same values of fairness are just as critical in administration as they are in direct services of the center.

### Orientation and Training

Have an orientation with regard to what the Center will do and its approach to services

Initial and refresher trainings should be implemented to ensure this is carried on over the years and to foster accountability.

The orientation and training is for all the layers of a center starts from leadership, including staff to the person coming through the door. The same information needs to go to all of these people at the same time. At least through the development phase, everyone needs to know what's going on. To involve everyone in the process so they have a place where the center is treating them with the same respect, the same dignity

### Leadership

Hold in mind everyone has the capacity of being a leader in the capacity in which they are strong.

In a true consumer run organization both program and budget sides are run by consumers.

A truly client self help movement is client run. It is truly self help.

### Safety

Ensuring safety at the center is never at risk is a must.

With the volume of people coming in and out of the doors, security becomes an issue.

### Adequate Resources

An environment that can hold up to a certain number of people; staff that can only work with a certain number of people per day

### **Additional Comments to be incorporated**

The HIPAA rules if they were reiterated to people there wouldn't be any confusion about peoples rights being protected. Every time we go to the doctor we have to pull out how HIPAA protects your rights as you exchange information from agency to agency without signing a release or something like that.

### **Question to be addressed**

#### Directive from County

The Center serves homeless, severely mentally ill individuals. Does that mean it will be folks sent by the county who are already aware of the status of the homeless person that's mentally ill; or the person that walks in off the street that has never been diagnosed and is homeless and comes across as mentally ill?