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PROMISING PRACTICES

Innovation in

Human Services

California makes a STAR program

Collaborative effort between the county and job resources turn a community concern into a community solution

Countless communities across the nation can claim familiarity with this vicious cycle: individuals who are mentally ill receive insufficient supplemental security income and end up homeless, chemically dependent, and often involved with the law. Usually their transgressions are “survival crimes,” such as petty theft or trespassing, in addition to a few more serious felony DUIs and burglaries. No matter how petty the crime, these communities find themselves confronting a big issue: how do we change this?

The County of Marin court system and Community Mental Health of California decided change was done best through collaborative efforts and formed the Support and Treatment After Release (STAR) program in 2003. Adhering to a multidisciplinary approach, the STAR program team includes case managers, peer providers, a psychiatrist, a psychiatric nurse, a therapist, a county probation officer, a police officer, and a vocational consultant. The team meets weekly to discuss housing, employment, medication management, and exactly how well the

Brought to you by the ECS
Customer Service Unit at

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Volume 1, Issue 5
December 2006

News From CARF

Promising Practices has a new look!

We've moved our e-newsletter to a friendlier and more flexible platform. We can manage our growing list of subscribers and allow subscribers options for plain text. For you, our readers, it should be easy to read, forward and print. It's the same great information that will be for you to keep and share. Let us

consumer is progressing toward his or her goals. In addition to providing housing options, employment training, and mental health support, the system provides the means for offenders to reduce or eliminate their criminal records. Supported by team members, the consumer appears weekly before a mental health court judge to report on his or her weekly achievements, demonstrating successful independence.

Integrated Community Services (ICS) is the employment point of the STAR program. A \$25,000 contract allows ICS to provide direct job placement/job coaching while assisting consumers with their application to the Department of Rehabilitation for later vocational support (continued job search, job coaching, follow-up, clothing, transportation needs, union dues, etc.). Wearing essentially two hats, ICS not only provides services, but also assesses the vocational needs of the consumer.

Continuing in the spirit of the STAR collaborative, ICS collaborates with other agencies when appropriate. Recently, ICS provided supplemental independent living skills training to a consumer who was having difficulty organizing himself to be successful on the job. In another instance, a consumer was determined to get work adjustment and work experience before direct placement. Because ICS doesn't have such a program, services were coordinated with another county agency. This agency had previously rejected this consumer, but with advocacy and a "never-say-quit" policy, the consumer has been working successfully in this program.

Of the 50 enrollees, 21 have been referred for vocational services, and 5 have either dropped out or are on hold. Of those remaining, ten have found employment. Every year, the progress of the STAR program is reviewed for funding, and the hope and vision is that it will continue to provide comprehensive and holistic services to community individuals in need.

Would you like to know more about Integrated Community Services?

Contact Donna. [Donna's email is: donna@connectics.org].

know if you have feedback on the template or content; contact [Reneé Bibby](#).

Putting Out the Good Word: Some Information about the Promising Practices Series

We are offering a series of short articles on a variety of promising practices that CARF surveyors have observed during surveys from 2004 to the present. There is no particular order that we will follow in presenting this series of short reports. The purpose is not to rate one organization over another, but to encourage U.S. and Canadian community providers to dialogue with one another and to encourage creative solutions to individual service designs and organizational business practices and thereby achieve effective and positive results in each organization's community.

Although there are indeed a number of ways to approach conformance to a standard, what makes organizations given an exemplary rating stand out is their professional and strategic response to an observed service or business need,

For more information please contact Reneé Bibby at rbibby@carf.org or (888) 281-6531.

always designed with input from their stakeholders and based on those individuals' quality expectations.

We hope you enjoy the series.

We encourage you to contact the identified representative in the article to get more information about their services.

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