

## CHAPTER SIX

### Posting and Filling Recovery Support Service Positions

#### 1. Introduction

“Development can help great people be even better—but if I had a dollar to spend, I’d spend 70 cents getting the right person in the door.”

-Paul Russell, Director, Leadership and Development, Google

One of the challenges all organizations face is how to attract the best employees available to optimize workforce performance. Jim Collins (*Good to Great*) describes this endeavor as getting “the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats.” When posting and filling recovery support positions, specific attributes to look for among candidates include lived experience with mental illness, resilience, willingness and ability to engage in self-disclosure, demonstrated passion to help others with their recovery, and an understanding of the complexities of interdisciplinary services teams.

While they are essential to the Recovery Support Service (RSS) position, a person’s recovery focus and lived experience should not be the only criteria for selection and hire. A reasonable rule of thumb is that 75% of the qualities employers look for in prospective RSS staff are the same qualities they look for in a candidate for any other position (Posting and Filling RSS Positions Breakout, 10/15/2012 Statewide CRSS Forum).

The unique role of the RSS position and its relationship to the larger agency workforce may not be readily understood, particularly when the position is new to the organization. This chapter focuses on evaluating organizational readiness for recruiting and hiring Recovery Support Services staff and successfully integrating them into the workforce. The goal is to help you identify and obtain the best matches between position roles, people, and service needs.

#### 2. Recruiting and Hiring Best Practices

“You need to have a collaborative hiring process.”

-Steve Jobs

Established best practices for recruiting begin with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, communication processes, and management structures. This is a developmental process requiring thoughtful analysis, planning, and coordination. Answering the following questions will assist you in evaluating your organization’s readiness to begin the process of posting and filling your RSS positions:

- a. Is everyone on the management team familiar with the Posting and Filling RSS Positions “Do’s and Don’ts” (Exhibit 6A)?

- b. Are all agency staff familiar with The Foundational Principles of Wellness (See Exhibit A), the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health’s Expectation of Recovery and the importance of Recovery Support Services?
- c. Have all work groups been advised and given opportunity to give input on RSS position roles within the agency (outlined in the “Roles and Responsibilities”)?
- d. Has a Communication Chart / Organizational Chart been developed which includes the RSS position?
- e. Has an analysis of the Essential Job Functions for the RSS position been conducted (see Exhibit 6B for worksheet)?
- f. Has a detailed job description been developed for the position (see Exhibit 6C for examples)?
- g. Do the essential job functions and the job description address the competencies for understanding recovery: “recovery support,” “advocacy,” “mentoring,” and “professional responsibility” (see Exhibit 6D).
- h. Do the essential job functions and the job description specifically list the “lived experience with mental illness” and “self-disclosure” requirements for the position?
- i. Have want-ads / job postings been prepared which directly reflect the essential job functions and job description?
- j. Do you have a structured interview process which takes into consideration the position’s essential job functions, job description, and CRSS competencies (see Exhibit 6E)?
- k. How do you plan to involve other staff in the interviewing and selection process?
- l. Do you have a plan in place for celebrating when the RSS reaches his or her goals similar to how you celebrate all other staff members that you want to recognize? This does not mean special incentives for RSSs. The objective is to create an environment of mutual respect and recognition for all members of the work group and enhancing the morale of all staff.

### 3. Agency Exercises

“Recently, I was asked if I was going to fire an employee who made a mistake that cost the company \$600,000. No, I replied, I just spent \$600,000 training him. Why would I want somebody to hire his experience?”

-Thomas J. Watson, Founder of IBM

No organization wants an employee to make a \$600,000 mistake. Nevertheless, new employees will inevitably stumble along the way to learning their roles and responsibilities even when given excellent training and support. The challenges and the potential for unanticipated problems are considerably greater when new employees are hired into positions without historical precedence or protocols. To assist you in the process of preparing your agency for the challenges accompanying the addition of a new RSS position into your workforce, the following questions and corresponding examples are provided below:

- a. What strengths do you currently have related to recruiting new staff?
  - i. Agency has a reputation for being a great place to work.
  - ii. Existing staff are very helpful with recruiting through word of mouth.
  - iii. Good relationships with local college and employment service personnel.
  - iv. Agency culture is supportive of new ideas and positive change.

Add your strengths to the list:

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- b. What goals do you want to accomplish related to recruiting and hiring RSS Staff?
  - i. Identify Essential Job Functions for the position by (specify date).
  - ii. Complete development of the job description by (specify date).
  - iii. Post and begin advertising job opening by (specify date).
  - iv. Recruit, interview, and hire two RSS positions by (specify date).

Your agency's goals:

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- c. What resources do you currently have that will help you reach your goals?
  - i. Supportive board and administration.
  - ii. Capable HR Department/HR Professional.
  - iii. The utilization of a well-developed job description format (see Exhibit 6C for examples).

Your agency's resources:

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d. How do you/your staff feel about your goals?

- i. Some staff are excited about the increased service and support the RSS position will provide.
- ii. Some staff are unsure if we can reach these goals in the time stated.

Your staff's feelings:

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e. What challenges do you anticipate you might encounter as you work toward your goals?

- i. Concerns have been expressed about hiring RSSs who have recently received agency service.
- ii. It may be difficult for the new RSSs to acquire enough hours and training to become CRSS certified.
- iii. Questions that there may not be adequate communication between administration and other staff about Recovery Support Services.

Your identified challenges:

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f. What strategies can you use to overcome those challenges?

- i. The first two RSSs you hire should have previously received services from a different agency than yours.
- ii. Develop a detailed work and training plan to assist the new staff with achieving their CRSS credential.
- iii. Develop a comprehensive communication plan to advise and update staff about the growth and activities of Recovery Support Services.

Strategies to overcome the challenges you have identified:

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- g. How will you chart your progress along the way as you move toward your goals?
    - i. Establish action plans with timelines for each prerequisite, posting, and hiring component.
    - ii. Monitor action plan progress and revise plans bi-weekly.

Charting your goal progress:

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- h. How will you celebrate when you reach your goals?
    - i. Issue a press release highlighting the new recovery support program and the hiring of the RSS staff.
    - ii. Hold an Open House.
    - iii. Send out “milestone announcements” through social media and other mass communication platforms about your goal achievement.

NOTES:

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“Very often, gleams of light come in a few minutes' sleeplessness, in a second perhaps; you must fix them. To entrust them to the relaxed brain is like writing on water; there is every chance that on the morrow there will be no slightest trace left of any happening.”

-Antonin Sertillanges, French philosopher

## EXHIBIT 6A

### Posting and Filling Recovery Support Specialist Positions “Dos and Don’ts”

Often a misunderstood and confusing role when first introduced – it is very important to work out as many details as possible before recruiting/posting for these positions.

1. **DON’T** have job tasks to be performed by the new RSS positions listed as “other duties as assigned.”
2. **DO** ensure job postings and ads carefully reflect the roles and responsibilities listed in the job description.
3. **DON’T** recruit individuals currently receiving services from your agency when first starting an RSS Program.
4. **DO** consult the DMH Recovery Support Specialists for potential referrals and advice.
5. **DON’T** exclude consumer advisory groups as a valued resource for program development feedback.
6. **DO** advise and acknowledge with potential RSS staff that:
  - It may be difficult to completely avoid past relationships, associations, and stereotyping.
  - The negative impact of self-stigma could be more intense in “familiar treatment surroundings”.
  - In most instances employees must seek mental health services outside of the agency they work.
  - The “former client – now self-disclosing agency employee” may raise legal / confidentiality concerns with other staff.
7. **DON’T** limit the screening and interviewing processes to one person.
8. **DO** involve individuals with lived experience in the interviewing processes.
9. **DON’T** make the decision to hire someone in an RSS role based on a belief that it will be “therapeutic” for him or her.
10. **DO** explore in interviews the candidate’s need to disclose versus the benefits of the disclosure for others.
11. **DON’T** overlook the importance of interpersonal skills, documentation capabilities (writing/computer skills), passion, and genuineness when evaluating candidates.

12. **DO** invest in on-going training, and consider other approaches such as job-shadowing and internships as potential recruiting, orientation, and training techniques.
  
13. **ADD YOUR OWN** (as you discuss your implementation plans with various leadership, staff and individual receiving services):

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## EXHIBIT 6B

### Worksheet for Identifying Primary Duties and Essential Job Functions for RSSs

The primary job duties of RSSs are those that are critical to the work that needs to be accomplished and represent the key reason why the position exists. The essential functions are the physical and mental demands an RSS must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to successfully accomplish the primary duties that have been established.

Essential job functions for RSSs may vary from agency to agency because of differences in organizational structure, the array of services offered, and recovery orientation. To begin the process of identifying the primary duties and essential job functions for RSSs within your agency, complete the following worksheet:

Purpose: Summarize in two to three sentences the main purpose for RSSs within your agency:

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Physical Demands: List all anticipated physical demands of the RSS role and the number of hours or expected percentage of work time involved, including time (or percentage of work time) spent standing, walking, bending, crouching, reaching, sitting, moving inanimate objects or people, reading, keyboarding, seeing (including colors), hearing, speaking, and using stairs. With respect to moving objects by pushing, lifting or carrying, the amount of weight or force required should also be specified:

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## EXHIBIT 6C

### Job Description Examples Sample Job Description – Long (Agency and Function Specific) Format

#### JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Recovery Support Specialist

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: Outpatient/Recovery Services

#### RATIONALE:

The Recovery Support Specialist (RSS) shall provide recovery-oriented, person-centered, and trauma informed services; serve as an advocate; provide information and support for individuals in emergency, outpatient and walk-in settings. The RSS shall perform a wide range of tasks to assist individuals (receiving services) in the recovery process and to reclaim their lives from mental illness. The RSS will possess the skills to maintain a high level of professionalism, ethics, and positive interactions. In addition, the RSS will help to increase wellness and recovery education and stigma reduction through the state of Illinois, in targeted communities, and at HRC. The RSS will when applicable promote or educate on the components of Wellness and Recovery Action Planning (WRAP), Whole Health Action Management (WHAM), Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), and help to increase Online Recovery Academy and CRSS Library (ORACL) activity. The RSS will complete other duties as assigned as related to recovery support services and other state and federal grant deliverables.

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Recovery Services Supervisor

POSITIONS SUPERVISED: None

SALARY SCHEDULE/PAY GRADE LEVEL: III

EXEMPT/NON-EXEMPT STATUS: Non-Exempt

EEO CATEGORY: 9.0

SAFETY SENSITIVE POSITION: No

DRIVING IS ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: No

#### BASIC DUTIES:

- Willingness to self-disclose personal experience as a consumer of mental health services and/or dual diagnosis services.
- Participate in statewide events/summits/trainings/activities that support the education/development/promotion of WHAM, WRAP, MHFA, and Recovery Support and Consumer Provider Services
- Commitment and ability to practice within the domains and ethics of the CRSS (certified recovery support specialist)
- Communicate with members of the outpatient team when appropriate and needed for appropriate consumer care
- Support for choice by the persons receiving services (individuals)
- Educate individuals on wellness and recovery supports
- Educate individuals on how to make treatment work for them and their choices in the recovery process

- Advocate for individuals using professionalism and non-adversarial approaches
- Be aware of and take appropriate action with high-risk indicators/suicidal and homicidal ideations.
- Willingness, ability, and commitment to serving as a role model for Recovery.
- Travel required
- Facilitate group and individual sessions
- Avoid dual relationships when possible and appropriate for the best interest of the individuals
- Utilize Relias learning when applicable and for annual training
- Comply with rule 132, collaborative and CARF documentation
- Awareness of Recovery planning needs and development.

**DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Lived experience as a consumer of mental health or substance abuse services
- GED or higher education.
- Public speaking and communication skills
- Experience either as a consumer of or facilitator of groups
- Ability to utilize computer for service documentation.
- Teaching skills, non-judgmental personality, and empathic listening skills.
- Valid driver license / current automobile liability insurance including uninsured motorist coverage.
- Current CRSS or desire to pursue CRSS state certification.
- WRAP Certification or Desire to pursue WRAP Certificate
- Ability to pass pre-employment background checks.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Sit, 76-100% of the time.
2. Stand, walk, 11-40% of the time.
3. Climb stairs, stoop, kneel, bend, reach in front of body, 11-40% of the time.
4. Lift up to 25 pounds.
5. Ordinary speech and hearing, 76-100% of the time.
6. Visual acuity of 20" or less or 20" or more.
7. Simultaneous use of Hand, Wrist, Fingers, 76-100% of the time.

**JOB HAZARDS:**

1. Ergonomics: This job may involve repetitive motion and/or keyboard related activities. Ergonomic procedures are required.
2. Blood Borne Pathogens: This job may involve exposure to blood borne pathogens. Universal precautions are required.

Initial Review by Employee:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RATINGS**

**1 = SUPERIOR**

Employee shows initiative, independence and creativity in task performance, which is above expectations for the job assignment.

**2 = ABOVE STANDARD**

Employee exceeds the expectations for the job assignment. Job tasks are completed in a timely and complete manner requiring no follow-up or retraining by supervisor.

**3 = AT STANDARD**

Employee meets the expectations for the job assignment. Tasks are completed in a timely and complete manner requiring no follow-up or retraining by supervisor.

**4 = BELOW STANDARD**

Employee's performance falls below the agency expectation for the job assignment. Occasional reminders, direction and retraining by supervisor needed in order for employee to complete assigned tasks.

**5 = UNACCEPTABLE**

Employee consistently requires frequent reminders and monitoring by supervisor in order to complete assigned tasks. Individuals/members of community may express dissatisfaction with conduct or services provided by employee. Performance is well below agency standard even after training.

**DUTIES**

**RATING**

I. SERVICE RECIPIENT RELATED

A. Essential Functions:

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Assists individuals (receiving services transition from an inpatient/crisis setting to an outpatient setting by offering hope, navigating through the process of starting services, and providing ongoing peer support. | _____ |
| 2. Helps individuals build self-esteem through social learning.                                                                                                                                                            | _____ |
| 3. Facilitates consumer self-direction and empowerment utilizing person-driven approaches.                                                                                                                                 | _____ |
| 4. Advocates on the consumer's behalf within HRC and the community as necessary to assist the consumer in the recovery independent living process.                                                                         | _____ |
| 5. Assists individuals in articulating their personal goals for recovery and determining objectives/steps needed to reach their goals.                                                                                     | _____ |
| 6. Facilitates peer support groups and individuals' utilization of Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAP).                                                                                                                  | _____ |

- 7. Coordinates with first responders, clinicians, and emergency room personnel to provide hospitalization alternatives. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Improves access and “stand by” options by providing “Open Hours” in the Living Room while HRC is open. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Assists IPS with Job Club, transportation support, and instruction/ assistance (Work Net, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Educates local groups on how to use MHFA action plan and increasing mental health literacy. \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. Provides transportation when necessary for the individuals to become re-established in the community and with HRC. \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. Assists individuals with the development and/or maintenance of relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and significant others in the community. \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. Assists individuals in acquisition, development and maintenance of vocational skills. \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Helps individuals to recognize and utilize their own strengths, skills, talents, and abilities to increase the consumer’s independence and self-sufficiency in the community. \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Shares own story of recovery to assist individuals in reaching their own recovery goals. \_\_\_\_\_

II. PROGRAM/POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 1. Follows agency policies and procedures related to service provision confidentiality and agency operations. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Adheres to the IL Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act, the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, and CARF. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Documents accurately and in a timely manner consumer progress through progress notes, treatment plans, and follow-up contacts according to agency policy and procedure, including Rule 132. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Is responsible for the maintenance of documentation consistent with agency, state, federal, third party payer and CARF requirements. \_\_\_\_\_

III. PUBLIC RELATIONS/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1. Represents the Agency in the community in a positive and professional manner. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Provides community educational programs on various mental health issues. \_\_\_\_\_

IV. SKILL DEVELOPMENT

1. Maintains professional competency in the area under his/her responsibility through appropriate readings and attendance at workshops and conferences. \_\_\_\_\_

V. LEADERSHIP/RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR

1. Performs duties as assigned by the supervisor in a timely manner. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Maintains consultation with the supervisor regarding duties and client issues. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Seeks supervision for those cases with difficult diagnosis or unresolved treatment issues. \_\_\_\_\_

VI. OUTCOME OF PRIOR PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES/TRAINING NEEDS:

Previous Performance Objectives/Training Needs (from last performance evaluation)

	Performance Objective/Training Needs	Progress Made	Comments
1.			
2.			
3.			

Current Performance Objectives/Training Needs (Must be MEASURABLE)

	Broad Goals	Measurable Action Steps to Reach Goal	Timeframe/Completion Date

1.			
2.			
3.			

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
 Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

## Sample Job Description – Short (Non-Specific) Format

The Recovery Support Specialist utilizes his or her own lived experience to provide support, promote recovery, and reduce stigma. This is a (circle one) salaried exempt / nonexempt employee of **XYZ AGENCY, Any town, Illinois**.

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This job description is not intended to be all-inclusive. Employee will also perform other reasonably related duties as assigned by immediate supervisor.

#### Enhance Individual Recovery and Resiliency:

- Assists participants in identifying strengths, recovery and wellness goals, and barriers; and determining recovery and wellness interventions based on his or her life goals.
- Recognizes and reports progress participants make toward meeting objectives.
- Utilizes specific interventions necessary to support participants in meeting their recovery and wellness goals.

#### Utilize Specific Training to Develop Skills and Curriculum:

- Leads and teaches participants to facilitate Recovery Dialogues.
- Supports participants in creating a Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) or **XYZ AGENCY's** Peer- to-Peer plan.
- Assists participants going through crisis by developing an appropriate plan of action that will ensure the safety and comfort of those involved.
- Utilizes and teaches techniques for problem solving, identifying and combating negative self-talk, identifying and overcoming fears in both one-on-one and group settings.
- Promotes participants' use of self-directed recovery tools.
- Supports participants in building social skills in the community that will enhance job acquisition and tenure.
- Works with **XYZ AGENCY, Any town, Illinois** staff in identifying program environments that are conducive to recovery.

#### Apply Unique Recovery Experience:

- Shares personal story of recovery with individuals.
- Models effective coping techniques, self-help strategies, and self-care.

#### Inform Participants of Community Information Related to Recovery:

- Provides and advocates for effective recovery based services.

- Continues to develop and share recovery-oriented material with other RSSs.
- Attends relevant seminars, meetings, and in-service trainings whenever possible and apply this information to current RSS techniques.
- Informs participants about community and natural supports and how to utilize these in the recovery process.
- Supports participants in developing empowerment skill through self-advocacy to combat stigma.

**EDUCATION / EXPERIENCE / SKILLS**

- Obtained or seeking Certified Recovery Support Specialist licensure valid in Illinois.
- A Bachelor’s degree in allied health profession is preferred but not required.
- Training in the Illinois Certified Recovery Support Professional Performance Domains: Advocacy, Professional Responsibility, Mentoring, and Recovery Support.
- A work history in mental health service delivery is desirable.
- Experience working with adults preferred.
- Acts within ethical standards and demonstrates healthy boundaries.
- Demonstrated written and oral communication skills.
- Intermediate level of skills in use of Microsoft Office components of Word, PowerPoint and Excel.
- Demonstrated skills in areas of customer service and team leadership.
- Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.

I have read this position description. I understand my responsibilities and will fulfill them to the best of my ability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**XYZ AGENCY, Any town, Illinois** reserves the right to revise or change job duties and responsibilities as the need arises. This job description does not constitute a written or implied contract of employment.

**XYZ AGENCY, Any town, Illinois** makes all hiring and employment decisions without regard to race, creed, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital or parental status, religion, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, sexual identity. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential position functions. Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations should contact the Executive Director.

## **Exhibit 6D**

### **Recovery Competencies**

#### Advocacy

- Define system-level advocacy
- Explain why self-advocacy is the foundation of recovery.
- Identify the individual's support systems.
- Promote the principles of individual choice and self-determination.
- Explain how and why individuals should establish and Advanced Directive.
- Explain how to advocate within the mental health system.
- Define consumer-driven recovery.
- Use "person-centered" language that focuses on the individual, not the diagnosis.
- Demonstrate non-judgmental behavior.

#### Professional Responsibility

- Explain the ten fundamental concepts of recovery as defined in the National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery, which is published by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- Define the concept of a wellness-focused approach to consumer recovery.
- Explain the fundamental concepts related to cultural competency.
- Understand the concept of accountability.
- Explain basic federal, state, employer regulations regarding confidentiality.
- Explain what, where, when and how to accurately complete all required documentation activities.
- Explain the concept of decompensation.
- Identify the individual's risk indicators, including individual stressors, triggers and indicators of escalating symptoms.
- Explain basic de-escalation techniques.
- Explain basic suicide prevention concepts and techniques.
- Identify indicators that the individual may be experiencing abuse and/or neglect.
- Identify and respond appropriately to personal stressors, triggers, and indicators.

#### Mentoring

- Explain the concept of mentoring.
- Explain the concept of role-modeling behaviors.
- Define social learning.
- Define self-advocacy.
- Define life skills.
- Understand basic adult learning principles and techniques.
- Use adult learning techniques to teach life skills.
- Explain the concept of healthy, interdependent relationships.

- Use active listening skills.
- Use empathetic listening skills.
- Demonstrate non-judgmental behavior.
- Demonstrate consistency by supporting individuals during ordinary and extraordinary times.
- Promote the development of Advance Directives.

### Recovery Support

- Explain the ten fundamental concepts of recovery as defined in the National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery, which is published by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- Explain the concept of a strength-based approach to recovery.
- Promote self-determination and individual choice-driven recovery.
- Use active and empathetic listening skills with individuals.
- Use Motivational Interviewing skills with individuals.
- State the stages of change.
- State the stages of recovery.
- Identify the individual's current stage of change and/or recovery.
- Help the individual develop problem solving skills by working together to identify and discuss options, alternatives, and possible consequences.
- Explain the typical process that should be followed to access and/or participate in community mental health and related services.
- Identify circumstance when it is appropriate to request assistance from other professionals to help meet the individual's recovery goals.
- Identify the individual's strengths, resiliencies, and challenges to recovery.
- Promote the individual's empowerment by assuring that they are informed of their options and participate in all decision-making that will affect their lives.
- Help the individual request appropriate referrals and/or access needed resources.

## EXHIBIT 6E

### Interviewing a Candidate for a Recovery Support Specialist Position

1. Philosophical Fit / Understanding of Recovery
  - a. In Illinois, the vision statement for the Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health says, “The Expectation is Recovery! All persons with mental illnesses can recover and participate fully in a life in the community.”
    - i. What do you think about the statement that ALL persons with mental illnesses can recover?
    - ii. What does mental health recovery mean to you?
2. CRSS Competency: Recovery Support
  - a. In this position, we are looking for people who are able to use their lived mental health recovery experience to help others in the process of recovery.
    - i. Please share with me a time you were able to use your recovery experience to help support another person in their recovery journey.
  - b. When sharing a piece of our recovery story with others, we’ve found that it helps to have certain boundaries around what we share, with whom and how much.
    - i. How do you know where to draw the line in sharing, for the good of the person you are working with, and for yourself?
3. CRSS Competency: Advocacy
  - a. How would you define advocacy?
    - i. Note to the interviewer: look for the person’s understanding of progression from “advocating for” to “helping people learn to advocate for themselves.” If that insight is not reflected in their response, segue to the next question by talking about that process.
  - b. Please share with me a time when you were able to help a person learn to advocate for themselves.
4. CRSS Competency: Mentoring
  - a. What does mentoring mean to you, and why is it important in recovery?
  - b. Tell me about an opportunity you’ve had to mentor someone in recovery. What was the experience like for you and the person you were mentoring?
5. CRSS Competency: Professional Responsibility
  - a. There are many aspects of professional responsibility in the field of peer support. One of those is in regard to (choose the one most relevant in your center, such as suicide prevention or reporting of abuse).
    - i. Share with me a time when you helped a person who expressed thoughts of suicide. How did you help? How did you know when to reach out to get assistance from another professional?

## 6. Additional Questions

- a. What role do you tend to play when you're on a team?
- b. How have you handled disagreements with a supervisor in the past?
- c. What questions do you have for me?
  - i. Note to the interviewer: In balance with their responses to the questions above, this is one of the most important moments in the interview. Intelligent questions, especially those that derive from experience working in the field or from personal recovery experience, are a good sign.
- d. If time allows, it is good to introduce the candidate to others at the agency, which will give the interviewer a feel for how the applicant interacts with others. As appropriate, you may be able to ask others later for their impressions of the candidate as well.

### Interview Questions to Encourage Self-Disclosure

- What would you like to tell me about yourself?
- What are some of your goals?
- Are you a self-empowered person?
- Can you tell me a little about how you feel about Hope and Recovery?
- How would you express Hope and Recovery to someone?
- What can you tell me about WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)?
- What do you feel is outstanding about you and how would you be of value to others?
- What things do you think encourage growth and recovery?
- Can you share about a time when you advocated for yourself? How could you use this experience to help others?
- Do you think personal responsibility is important in regard to recovery? If so, why?
- In what ways do you think education is helpful in recovery?
- What are some ways consumers can learn more about mental health and recovery?
- What are some experiences you've had in life which you believe will contribute to your success as an RSS?