

# Views From A Crystal Ball

15 Years of Experience  
Providing Connecticut's  
Mental Health Waiver  
Services



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# Past to Present

15 years ago, CT was one of 4 states in the country with a 1915c Medicaid Waiver program for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness.

In 2013, the CT Mental Health Waiver team presented at this HCBS conference, introducing the Recovery Assistant service which emphasizes the goal of recovery.

Today, there are at least 14 states that offer waiver services for individuals who are disabled by mental illness, but we believe this number should still be higher!

In this presentation, we will review our program and share some of the changes and adjustments we have made over the past 15 years.

# Mental Health Waiver Over the Years

	Number Served	Average Age	Gender
Year 1	33	52	61% Female/ 39% Male
Year 8	720	55	53% Female/ 47% Male
Year 15	647	56	55% Female/ 45% Male

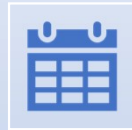
Began with 5 staff total  
Now have 16 MHW  
Community Support  
Clinicians and a  
separate team of 5  
MFP Specialized Care  
Managers

Currently serving  
583 waiver  
participants

# Waiver Services at Inception



Recovery Assistant



Community Support Program (CSP)



Supported Employment



Short Term Crisis Stabilization



Peer Support



Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) – *since removed due to duplication with other waiver services*



Transitional Case Management



Specialized Medical Equipment



Home Accessibility Adaptations



Non-Medical Transportation

# Current Waiver Services

## Rehabilitative Services

Community Support Program  
Peer Support  
Supported Employment

## Support Services

Recovery Assistant  
Transitional Case Management  
Brief Episode Stabilization  
\*Assisted Living  
\*Adult Day Program  
\*Chore Service  
\*Mental Health Counseling

## Ancillary Services

Specialized Medical Equipment  
Personal Emergency Response System  
Home Accessibility Adaptations  
\*Home Delivered Meals  
\*Interpreter Services

# What is a Recovery Assistant?

Someone who meets with the client in person to work on barriers to independence that have been identified through assessment and incorporated into their Recovery Plan.

Someone who assists a client in maintaining a home, encourages utilization of professional and natural supports, and fosters involvement in social and community activities.

Someone who provides a mix of services covered by other traditional in-home supports but with a focus on skill-building, independence and self-advocacy.

- Cleaning
- Laundry
- Meal preparation
- Shopping
- Paying bills
- Appointments
- Hygiene tasks
- Recreational/leisure activities
- Socialization
- Support/companionship

# Credentialing Requirements

- Provider:
- Accredited by CARF, Joint Commission, or other approved agency; or hold a Homemaker & Companion license by Department of Consumer Protection
- Credentialed by ABH
- Enroll as a CT Medicaid billing provider
- Provide supervision by a licensed or licensed-eligible clinician
- Re-credentialed every two years
- Staff:
- At least 18 years old
- HS diploma or GED
- Valid government ID
- Complete the RA training and pass the exam at or above 80% correct
- Complete a minimum of 6 hours of post-education training annually (including a mandatory boundaries training)

# Recovery Assistant Training Content

## Recovery

- Understand basic concepts of recovery in Mental Health
- Able to foster recovery with individuals by supporting their hopes and dreams
- Recognize limitations imposed by mental illness

## Serious Mental Illness

- Able to understand the basic definition of mental illness
- Have a working knowledge of symptoms of SMI
- Be familiar with the recovery process for individuals with SMI

## Medicaid Home & Community Based Waivers

- Basic working knowledge of the role of Medicaid in the HCBS Waiver
- Be familiar with the Mental Health Waiver services and Recovery plan
- Understand Medicaid rules



# Recovery Assistant Training Focus

## Psychiatric Rehabilitation

- Understand Levels of Assistance related to the individual's functioning
- Working knowledge of assistive techniques (prompting & cueing) and skill building concepts
- Understand how to deliver services based on Recovery Plan

## Person Centered Treatment

- Be able to consider the person first, not the illness
- Understand that the client is involved in all aspects of care
- Support the use of natural and community supports by engaging the client in their community
- See the client in the context of their culture, ethnicity, religion and gender rather than their illness solely.

## Boundaries and Ethics

- Able to create and maintain professional boundaries
- Establish working relationships with individuals that follow an ethical framework
- Seek supervision when issues of boundary crossing arise
- Maintain daily work with the concept of promoting and ensuring safety of the individual

# RA Training Results

## Training Stats

- Frequency has increased from 1x/quarter to 2x/month
- 6543 Recovery Assistants trained since inception
- 2274 currently active

## Evaluation surveys

- 98% report feeling prepared for job
- 90% report having a basic understanding of MH

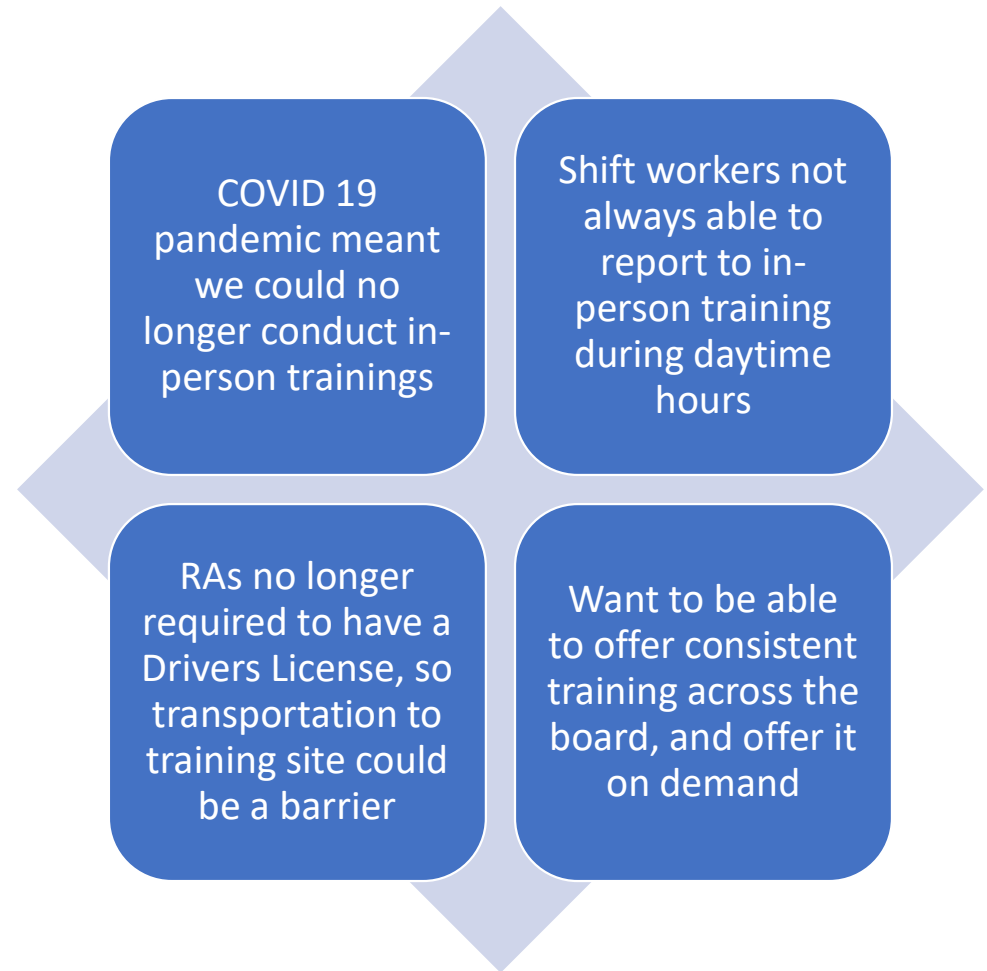
## Continuing Education requirements

- 6 hours of additional training required for each year of employment
- Topics: Boundaries & Ethics, Mental Illness, Life Skills, Verbal De-escalation, Trauma Informed Recovery, Health & Safety, Coping Skills, Cognitive Functioning, Diabetes 101, Fall Risk Prevention

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# Motives for changing the RA Training this year

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# New and Improved RA Training



Videos created by Arias Pro:



Offered on demand via TPN Health:



# What is the effect of the RA on waiver participants?

## Client Satisfaction Survey

- This year, 130 clients responded and surveyed a total of 32 provider agencies about the Community Support Professional (CSP) and Recovery Assistant (RA) services.
- The overall result was a 92% positive approval rating for RA services and 93% rating for CSP services.
- Client testimonials:
  - “Without the program I don't think I would have been successful in this sobriety. Very happy with the support from the staff.”
  - “This waiver is a godsend. You guys have made all the difference. I would be living in a dump and extremely depressed.”
  - “My RA is a wonderful person, one of the kindest people I've ever met. Helps me an awful lot. MHW has been such a huge help for me.”

## Client testimonial:

