

Training Equips Staff to Help Clients Make Healthy Life Changes



People with disabilities can find it difficult to eat healthy, manage their weight, and be physically active; obesity rates for adults with disabilities are 56% higher than for adults without disabilities (2008 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

Creative Care for Reaching Independence (CCRI) provides person-centered services to people with disabilities, including those diagnosed with a serious or persistent mental illness and, in 2013, began partnering with PartnerSHIP 4 Health (PS4H) in order to address this reality.

PS4H offered CCRI staff training opportunities in motivational interviewing and healthy food preparation. PS4H also provided ARHMS workers with training and resources related to tobacco use and cessation strategies, including smoking cessation resources and intervention strategies. Staff members use this training to identify clients who struggle with tobacco addiction. “Our use of the smoking cessation resources has helped multiple clients take active steps towards quitting tobacco,” shared Jamie Skrove, Director CCRI Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARHMS) Director.

“During this time, PS4H provided training and tools to help motivate and activate our clients in improving their overall health; more specifically in areas surrounding diabetes, weight management and smoking cessation,” states Skrove.

The enhanced staff capacity to motivate and activate clients spurred change at the organizational level revealing the commitment of CCRI to provide their clients the opportunities to learn about and engage in healthy living strategies. The ARHMS department revised the measurable client outcomes within their Quality Assurance plan. The revised plan tracks client involvement in ARHMS groups and/or creation of a specific exercise, weight management, or smoking cessation goal. The organizational goal was to have 75% of their client base achieve this measure. In at least one quarter CCRI surpassed this goal as 89% of their base population met the outcome measures. Skrove noted that “Even though there are multiple factors in this equation, I don’t think our outcomes would have been this successful if it were not for PS4H equipping our staff with the tools and resources to support our clients in engaging and reaching wellness goals. We hear such great feedback from both clients and practitioners on the materials and resources provided by PS4H and we are fortunate to have our services enhanced in this way!”



CCRI clients now have both the organizational support and the staff support to consider, adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle behaviors.



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