

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST SERIES

<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Position Code</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Mental Health Recovery Support Specialist I	26921	07-01-10
Mental Health Recovery Support Specialist II	26922	07-01-10

Introduction:

This job classification series sets out requirements for the employment of individuals who are present or past consumers of mental health services involving a psychiatric illness. These individuals are personally familiar with the mental health care delivery system from the point of view of a consumer, and are willing to disclose a mental health condition and share experiences which relate to the process of recovering from mental illness and taking personal responsibility for defining and achieving wellness goals. Candidates for these positions may currently be working in the mental health field, and have an interest in peer recovery support work.

This evolving occupational area is identified with a more holistic approach to mental health care. Peer support services are consumer centered, with a focus on consumer involvement, empowerment and personal responsibility for self-help techniques to live with and overcome disability and to achieve wellness goals. This includes personal choices with regard to treatment options such as alternatives to medications with difficult side effects.

Recovery support specialists promote consumer involvement in identifying ways to effectively deal with and manage their psychiatric symptoms. By example and instruction, consumers are encouraged to adopt improved communications skills and emotional control in functioning more effectively with others and to identify a support network of trusted individuals, including family and health care providers to assist them when they detect the onset of crisis.

Recovery support specialists offer hope to consumers, demonstrating by example that improved functioning can be obtained, and life goals can be identified and achieved with effort, such as restoring and utilizing skills needed to live successfully within a community, establishing stable associations with others, adopting a healthy lifestyle, marriage, raising children, maintaining a home, completing educational goals, and finding and keeping a job.

Mary Ellen Copeland's Wellness Recovery Action Plan or WRAP is offered as a means for consumers to recognize their own activities which maintain everyday well-being such as getting enough sleep and exercise, eating the right foods and creating an appropriate environment. The plan allows consumers to track triggering events and early warning signs of the onset of illness. Consumers are encouraged to prepare personal responses when they do not feel well, and to develop a plan for supports to provide care when needed. An internet search of this topic will provide additional background information.

Recovery support specialists are involved with patient rights issues, and promote wellness and recovery approaches within the larger community-based support systems, organizing conferences, and working with policy planning issues to incorporate these programs into community-based support systems.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST I

POSITION CODE: 26921

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under direction, shares personal experiences in recovering from a mental health disability and provides advocacy and supportive services to individuals with mental illness by promoting personal responsibility and involvement in the process of recovery; assists individuals and groups with coping skills, goal setting, accepting personal responsibility for behavior control; instructs consumers in patient rights; promotes recovery programs within the health care system which is inclusive of patient and family involvement in achieving wellness goals for each individual; advocates for consumer rights within a facility setting, serving on various committees and teams.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Coordinates wellness activities such as Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP) with individuals and groups at a mental health facility. Serves as a mentor and role model for consumers and staff, and provides assistance and support for consumer support for wellness and recovery program activities.
2. Provides information concerning patient rights and responsibilities, and mental health advance directives which define each consumer's care choices in a formal document describing such matters as the kind of treatment services to be given and who to notify when in crisis, when he or she may not be able to clearly articulate needs; serves as a liaison between patients and treatment teams regarding patient issues, providing information on peer support.
3. Investigates and resolves consumer or family grievances concerning quality of care and service delivery provided; advises treatment team of issues identified and assists in the resolution of the grievance. Advises facility administration of unresolved grievances.
4. Collects analyzes and evaluates the results of consumer satisfaction surveys, using data to identify trends, and suggest needed changes in care procedures and policies.
5. Serves on facility committees which impact patient needs and issues, and works to develop and implement facility policies and procedures which address consumer needs.
6. Participates in statewide and community meetings to represent consumer concerns, identify needed resources and address quality of care issues.
7. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST I (Continued)

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Requires knowledge, skill and mental development equivalent to completion of a bachelor's degree in one of the social sciences or related area and one year of experience performing peer support work within a mental health program setting. Must be a current or former consumer of mental health services, and willing to self-identify. Requires evidence of certification as a Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS).

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires working knowledge of mental health recovery practices and techniques, and peer support services which encourage consumers to adopt wellness practices and goals.

Requires working knowledge of the mental health resources available for the care and support needs of consumers of these services.

Requires working knowledge of the policies, procedures and regulations associated with patient rights matters, care and support systems for a treatment facility.

Requires willingness and ability to articulate personal experience relevant to the obstacles faced by others in their own recovery.

Requires the ability to communicate effectively with mental health consumers, their families and care givers within a facility.

Requires skill in promoting personal responsibility techniques for recovery, and ability to implement recovery oriented goals and practices within the mental health service delivery system.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES
CLASS SPECIFICATION

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST II

POSITION CODE: 26922

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF WORK:

Under general direction, serves as the recovery support specialist within a large service delivery region, verifying the extent of inclusion of mental health service consumers and families' perspectives in regional planning processes, program development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of regional mental health services as it relates to wellness and recovery goals; shares personal experiences in recovering from a mental health disability; facilitates the growth and development of recovery support specialists based within community agencies and supports involvement in the certification of qualified peer support specialists; Identifies and addresses shortcomings in the recovery and wellness support system within the network of care providers; provides programmatic leadership to facility-based recovery support specialists within the region;

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1. Participates in regional planning initiatives to incorporate recovery perspectives and consumer/family involvement in the provision of mental health services throughout the region; monitors the provision of such services within the region.
2. Instructs consumers, family members, care providers, professional associations and planning groups through regular training sessions, conferences, and in-service sessions. Promotes and provides leadership within the region to implement the certification of workers providing peer support in recovery support services
3. Meets with recovery support specialists within the region working in facility settings or community based agencies to discuss issues and concerns, and to incorporate and address these in regional strategic recovery service plans.
4. Develops recovery services and initiatives, articulating the perspective of the regional consumers represented; serves as a member of the Recovery Services Development Group.
5. Functions as a lead to facility-based recovery support specialists, providing technical advice, expertise and support.
6. Provides expertise regarding consumer needs and expectations to hospital and region staff; provides training to staff, consumers and families on these issues; promotes development of forums and resources to address consumer groups within the region; Coordinates educational and informational presentations for consumer groups and other organizations to enhance public awareness and service provider involvement in a recovery oriented system of care.

MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST II (Continued)

7. Performs other duties as required or assigned which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Experience

Requires knowledge, skill and mental development equivalent to completion of a bachelor's degree in one of the social sciences or a related area and two years of experience performing peer support work within a mental health program setting. Must be a current or former consumer of mental health services, and willing to self-identify. Requires evidence of certification as a Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS).

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities

Requires extensive knowledge of mental health recovery practices and techniques, and peer support services which encourage consumers to adopt wellness practices and goals.

Requires working knowledge of facility and community based mental health resources available for the care and support needs of consumers of these services.

Requires working knowledge of the policies, procedures and regulations associated with patient rights matters, care and support systems within community based organizations.

Requires willingness and ability to articulate personal experience relevant to the obstacles faced by others in their own recovery.

Requires the ability to communicate effectively with mental health consumers and providers within facility and community based settings.

Requires skill in promoting personal responsibility techniques for recovery, and ability to implement recovery oriented goals and practices within the mental health service delivery system.