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MHSA Workforce Education and Training (WET) STATE LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Workforce Education and Training component provides an opportunity for the State of California and each of the counties to develop **consumer-driven services and supports** by employing consumers at all levels, using clients as trainers for the new and existing mental health workforce, and modeling consumer leadership in planning, implementation and evaluation of new programs.¹

The CNMHC recommends the following actions as vital to the process that will achieve the transformation of the mental health system called for in the MHSA:

1. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) identify the **employment of consumers as a major statewide priority** that be documented in the Counties' **Workforce Education and Training (WET)** Plans. The implementation of each County's Consumer Employment Plan will be tracked over time, building on the baseline established with a revised Needs Assessment Tool.
 - a. **Consumer Employment Development Plan:** Each County shall develop and implement a Consumer Employment Plan that outlines the process of
 - A) Preparing the existing workforce to welcome consumers as colleagues
 - B) Training Programs for Consumer-Providers, Advocates, Self-Help Specialists, and Managers
 - C) Creating Positions/Hiring Plans, with a wide range of positions
 - D) Providing Ongoing Supports, including peer support
 - b. **Needs Assessment Tool:** The Needs Assessment Tool shall be updated with clear categories for the Consumer and Family Employees, (including but not limited to): Executive/Management level (Policy and Planning), Direct Service Management, Clinical/Skilled Service Providers (CPRP), Peer Recovery Specialists, Advocates, Trainers, Self-Help staff, as well as volunteer and Part-time/Entry-level positions.
 - c. **Self-Help Programs:** The DMH's 5-Year Education and Development Plan include the employing of consumers in consumer-operated programs, as well as County and Contractor operated programs, including such specialty positions as Executive Directors, Program Managers and Patients' Rights Advocates.
2. To fulfill the intent of 5822 (g) and (h), that all statewide mental health organizations, such as the **Department of Mental Health and the Planning Council, hire staff that have consumer experience at all levels.**

¹"Consumers are the primary authors and decision-makers in developing policies affecting local, state, and national mental health service delivery. All meetings and preliminary discussions about the scope of policy design efforts involve consumers. Consumers outnumber government staff, contractors and secondary stakeholders (non-recipients of mental health services) and are the first and primary stakeholder." Principles of Consumer-Driven Care, CMHS Draft p.2

3. The Department of Mental Health and/or the Planning Council form a **Consumer Employment Planning, Oversight and Evaluation Committee** with regional representatives to implement the hiring of consumers in the workforce. This committee will be staffed by consumers contracted by the Department of Mental Health and/or the Planning Council and employed by the California Network of Mental Health Clients. The composition of the committee should include representatives of CNMHC and consumers with experience in consumer workforce development at the local and state level who represent the diversity of clients in California.

a. **Planning:** Identify and Promote best practice models in consumer employment, such as full-time benefited positions for consumer employees.

b. **Oversight and Evaluation:**

For future **review of counties' CSS and Integrated MHSA Plan**, The Consumer Employment Committee will develop Quality Improvement criteria that will be used to assess the county's actual employment of consumers that includes accounting for the supports that were provided, the retention rates, and adherence to the approved Consumer Employment Development Plans.

4. Client as Trainers/Consultants: an expanded CNMHC Consultant Pool will organize **consumer trainers** to address transformation issues for mental health staff development and re-training. Topics will include, but not be limited to: Client Culture, Consumer Empowerment, Peer Support, The Impact of Traumatic Treatment, Consumer Choice, Alliance Not Compliance (Partnering with Consumers), History of the C/S/X Movement, etc. Use this CNMHC pool to contract with CiMH, the Planning Council, regional Workforce Development groups (such as Bay Area Workforce Collaborative) and other training entities identified in the Training and Education development process and Trainings for staff of Community Services and Supports. Increase client involvement in evaluating training quality; Work with Performance Measures committee to develop statewide measures of training.

5. The Department of Mental Health, either directly or through California Institute for Mental Health, **contract with the CNMHC** to provide technical assistance to counties to fulfill its requirements of employing consumers in the mental health workforce. The CNMHC will collaborate with such groups as Mental Health Managers in Recovery, (MHMiR) who have experience and expertise on this issue. Technical assistance shall include:

- A) Preparing the existing workforce to welcome consumer employees
- B) Training consumers to work in mental health;
- C) Developing positions for and hiring the consumer workers;
- D) Ongoing supports for consumers after they are hired.

6. DMH provide requirements for each County to add or increase **Consumers in Management** and on County Leadership Teams by 2010. The Leadership Training that is available to potential mental health directors be made available to consumer leaders with management potential. CNMHC and the Mental Health Managers in Recovery work with DMH and the Planning Council and/or CiMH in developing guidelines and training for this goal.

7. In addition to creating designated consumer positions, mental health organizations will include the following in **outreach or recruitment** for all mental health positions: "***past and present clients encouraged to apply.***" Demonstrate that our mental health communities values consumer experience.

8. **Statewide Consumer Employment website** be developed based on the model of the Bay Area MHWE site. <http://www.mhwee.org>

9. DMH contract for the development of model practices, policies and guidelines for innovative use of **reasonable accommodations**. Research will include study of application of accommodations beneficial to mental health clients and best practices in the process of requesting and negotiating such accommodations.

10. The Department of Rehabilitation revise and expand their practices and policies **to enhance their capacity to effectively serve mental health clients**. Hire client consultants to assist with training and policy reform to include consumer-providers and employment supports that are designed to increase the well-being of clients while they are seeking and adapting to employment.