

Questions Asked During the Live Webinar Broadcast on 6/26/14

Q: How will we shift the whole industry and treatment centers to having all of these resources with very limited funds?

A: It is more of a paradigm shift than an actual shift in the industry. In many instances it is just bringing these resources together, sometimes within an organization and sometimes from outside. There is no intent to have any programs try and develop all of these needed resources and, in a lot of cases, especially in rural areas, this is not even possible. Many organizations already do more multi-disciplinary collaboration than may be immediately evident. It is our hope the webinar may have helped individuals in those organizations increase their awareness and perhaps be more intentional about accessing resources more fully.

Q: Is the confidentiality form the same as release of information form?

A: Yes. While the form may vary in what it looks like, all of them need to include the regulations within the 42CFR for consent for release.

Q: What is the difference between a recovery peer and a sponsor? Is recovery peer a new word used to replace sponsor?

A: No it is not a replacement word for sponsor. There is a clear delineation between the two roles. The peer recovery specialist is a paid professional that works with those in early recovery to assist them with accessing needed resources within the community. While many of these recovery specialists/coaches are themselves in recovery, it is not a replacement for the 12 step program concept of sponsor. A sponsor within the anonymous fellowship is driven by the traditions of that program and is not seen as a work related position and assists the individual with their recovery within the scope and traditions of the 12 step program.

Q: Do you find recovery coaches becoming more popular as sponsors?

A: This is not something that I have personally experienced in my work being done. Sponsors are prevalent throughout the anonymous fellowships, much more so than recovery coaches at this point.

Q: I notice on the "working with multidisciplinary team" slide that there is not a spiritual care provider listed. As a hospice bereavement counselor, and former healthcare chaplain, I would think a spiritual care counselor/chaplain would be indispensable to a multidisciplinary team. Your thoughts, please. Thank you!

A: I should have said that the list was not an all inclusive list and your point is well taken that a spiritual care counselor certainly can and is often part of the multidisciplinary team.

Q: How much sobriety do you think a person should have before they can become a recovery coach?

A: This will vary from state to state and even within those states. Many places are looking for "solid recovery" and individuals who have dealt with many of the issues of early recovery and the needed changes that will and can occur in that time period. We are looking typically for people who have their own strong personal recovery plan in place and understand the disease of addiction and the role of support in recovery. One to two years of continuous sobriety seems to be fairly common. There are also individuals who are recovery coaches who are not in addiction recovery but have some other shared life experience, sometimes as a family member.

Q: Is there any current research that looks at the role of recovery peers in the treatment process?

A: I would highly recommend Bill White's article "***Sponsor, Recovery Coach, Addiction Counselor: The Importance of Role Clarity and Role Integrity***" from 2006. It clearly outlines and gives support to each role in recovery.

Q: Can you recommend a reputable place to acquire recovery coaches?

A: It will vary depending on where you live. Many organizations are hiring their own personnel. However, there are some independent peer recovery specialists that contract with and work with various organizations. You could contact your state addiction affiliate and they may be able to connect you with peer recovery specialists in your particular area. There are certifications available for recovery coach or peer recovery support specialist. We would encourage you to research the requirements for a certification someone has since they vary greatly. You should feel comfortable that someone you considered hiring has been adequately trained.