Wellness Strategies for Harm Reduction Providers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tuesday, April 27, 2021
Housekeeping

- You will be muted automatically upon entry and for the duration of the webinar.

- This webinar is being recorded and will be archived for future viewing on the National Council’s website.

- Submit your questions in the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen.

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Today’s Presenters

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Creating a Sanctuary for Harm Reductionists

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Hawai‘i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC)

Reducing harm, promoting health, creating wellness and fighting stigma in Hawai‘i and the Pacific.

Hawai‘i Health & Harm Reduction Center serves Hawai‘i communities by reducing the harm and fighting the stigma of HIV, hepatitis, homelessness, substance use, mental illness, and poverty in our community. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, drug use, and the transgender, LGBQ and the Native Hawaiian communities. We foster health, wellness, and systemic change in Hawai‘i and the Pacific through care services, advocacy, training, prevention, education, and capacity building.
CHRONIC DISEASE
HOUSELESSNESS
Hawaiʻi Health & Harm Reduction Center (H3RC)

OUR VALUES

- **HARM REDUCTION**: A non-judgmental approach to public health that meets people where they are and celebrates positive change, with the goal of minimizing the harms of actions that pose adverse social and health outcomes.

- **RESPECT**: To honor the dignity of others by recognizing difference and fostering peaceful coexistence.

- **ADVOCACY**: An uncompromising dedication to eliminating the stigmas and systemic injustices impacting the communities we serve and represent.
Hawai‘i Health & Harm Reduction Center (H3RC)

**OUR VALUES**

- **QUALITY CARE:** Individualized health care and social services that demonstrate best practices and improve desired health outcomes. In order to achieve this, services must be evidence-based, safe, effective, timely, efficient, equitable, and people-centered.

- **COMPASSION:** The motivation to alleviate suffering from a place of empathy, kindness, and receptiveness to the lived experience of others.

- **INTEGRITY:** Commitment to building relationships founded in honesty, trust, accountability, and transparency.
HHHRC at our Last In-person Event
Background
“What Would HHHRC Look Like if it’s a Sanctuary for Staff?”

• **Safe spaces**
  – Literally and figuratively
  – Expanded safety committee participation

• **Low-impact debrief and case consultation to decrease vicarious trauma**

• **Both internal and external supervision**

• **Trainings and skills building**

• **Normalize self-care and integrate fully**
Self-care Integrated into Work

- Every employee completes self-care plan and shares with supervisor
- Self-care and wellness activities are discussed each supervision
- Recent private funding has provided incentives and evaluation
- Annual wellness survey
  - Suggestions turned into events or classes
Wellness and Resilience Building @ HHHRC

- Two hours of paid wellness time per week
- Staff wellness committee develops activities
  - Virtual and in-person options
  - Incentives for those coordinating events/classes
- Grief support group and zoom memorials
- Weekly resilience strategy
- Access to headspace @ work
- Staff surveys and feedback
Wellness was easier when we could get together...
Wellness Activities on Zoom

• Trivia with prizes
• Breakout rooms with contests (again, prizes)
• Watch TV/movie (up next, Season 3 of Pose!)
• Classes – starting soon `olelo Hawai`i
• Meditation and mindfulness
• Zumba
• Yoga
Memorials, Grief and Honoring Those Who Have Died

• December 31 candlelight memorial
• International Overdose Awareness Day
• Transgender Day of Remembrance

During these three, names are read out loud

• Any staff can call a memorial
• Monthly grief group
  – New grant will expand grief work
Wellness Evaluation

• Weekly survey to see if staff used all, some or none of wellness
  – If wellness was taken, what did the person do?
• Tracking of classes/events and feedback
• Survey on what would motivate staff to take advantage of wellness
• Pre/post wellness before and after incentives
Lessons Learned

• Ask funders for resources for staff wellness and resilience – you may be surprised!

• Give paid time for wellness; do not expect staff to squeeze into already busy day

• Leadership must walk their talk and participate in wellness activities
Lessons Learned

• Flexibility is key – esp. for outreach workers and others whose hours may be different than those in office

• Wellness activities should support both individual wellness and also overall agency health, bonding and connection
Mahalo!
HARM REDUCTION

PEERS

REDUCING BURNOUT

Nicole O’Donnell, CRS
Certified Recovery Specialist
Penn Medicine
CLAUDIA'S STORY
HARM REDUCTION IN PHILADELPHIA
PREVENTING & ADDRESSING BURNOUT

PEERS

Technical Support
Being supported to do your job well with resources, information, & training

Professional Development
Respect and recognition of the role, opportunities for career development, representation

Emotional Support
Safety and emotional support in leadership and team members
BEST PRACTICE TOOLKIT

Facilitating better practice in hiring, training and integrating peers into the work force
INCLUDING PEERS IN DECISION MAKING

Including peers in decision making processes that affect them, bringing their voice as a respected element in the workplace.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Training, Supportive Supervision, Empower to Grow
PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

PLEASE JOIN UNIVERSITY OF PENN & ANGELS IN MOTION IN A SUPPORT GROUP FOR PEER SUPPORTERS

Help for the helpers!!!

https://www.facebook.com/PeerRecoverySpecialistsPHL
FOCUS GROUPS

Further assessing the needs of the peer support workforce and how they can best be supported
FOCUS GROUPS

Collect information about what peers identify their needs are to feel supported:

Question 1
What resources would be helpful in your workplace?

Answer 1

Question 2
What trainings would empower you to help your population?

Answer 2

Question 3
Is a support group helpful to mitigate burnout?

Answer 3
Supporting Wisconsin’s Peer Services

Joann Stephens
Consumer Affairs Coordinator
Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Supporting Wisconsin’s Peer Services

• Resilient Wisconsin: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/resilient/index.htm
• Certified Peer and Parent Peer Specialists: https://www.wicps.org/
• Wisconsin Peer Run Respites: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/peer-run-respite/index.htm
• Wisconsin Peer Recovery Centers: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/recovery/peer-run-recovery-centers.htm
• Partnership with statewide United Way 211 line to include Certified Peer Specialist Support: https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/
Increased Access to Support

- Monthly Learning Collaborative Opportunities
  - for Certified Peer and Parent Peer Specialists
  - for supervisors of peer employees
  - for peer run respite leaders
  - for peer recovery center staff
- Problem solving sessions
  - Navigating warmline calls; increased volume and intensified needs
  - Staff wellness and support
  - Peer support network for peer supporters
Specific Topics of Discussion

• Trauma
  – Collective trauma on an unprecedented global scale
  – Individual responses to disruption in routine, predictability, stability

• Care
  – Self care
  – Staff care

• Healthy Boundaries

• Advocacy
  – For self within employment
  – For systems change
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Thank You!

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COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Harm Reduction Services: An Environmental Scan

https://tinyurl.com/HRCOVID-envscan
Questions?

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