Bridging the Gap between VR Counseling and Behavioral Health Counseling

Presenters: Shardae Carter and Leo Yates
AGENDA

PART ONE: Overview of Counseling Disciplines
- Introductions
- Brief history of Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling
- Brief history of Social Work and Counseling
- Challenges of V.R. Counseling

PART TWO: Bridging the Gap
- Conversations
- Coordinating Care
- Success Stories
Introduction of the Presenters

- Shardae Carter
- Leo Yates, Jr.
HISTORY OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
The Public Mandate: A Federal Overview

Module 1: History of Vocational Rehabilitation

Increasing; (2) individuals with disabilities constitute one of the most disadvantaged groups in society; (3) disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to - (A) live independently; (B) enjoy self determination; (C) make choices; (D) contribute to society; (E) pursue meaningful careers; and (F) enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society; for increased employment of individuals with disabilities can be achieved through implementation of statewide vocational rehabilitation systems.
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

- The Rehabilitation Process
  - Is typically client driven

  - Identifying strengths, attributes, interests, aptitude, experiences, history, and BARRIERS to employment.

  - Scheduling assessments such as medical, psychological, education/aptitude, career, AND ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE screenings or barriers (perhaps the addiction severity is only mild or moderate and not severe)
HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK & COUNSELING
OVERVIEW OF ADDICTION
They have stopped drinking or using. No other behavioral changes have occurred. Some people think this is enough.

There’s a chance it’ll return.

**SOBRIETY / ABSTINENCE**

**RECOVERY**

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

**Better chance for success.**
Ethics
BRIDGING THE GAP - PART 2
Supporting the Rehabilitation Process
40% of motivation for change comes from “unknown” factors.
CONSIDERATIONS

Enabling is when the person who cares mistakenly or accidentally supports the addiction. This slows down or prevents change.

WE DON’T WANT TO DO THAT!

Document off-putting behaviors or noticeable concerns. Such as:

- Missed appointments
- Lateness
- Calling at the last minute to cancel
- Appears disheveled or underdressed for a professional appt.
- Concerning behaviors (be specific)

You’re identifying possible barriers. You’re planting seeds for showing the need for change.
We should commend them if they’re keeping appointments. Late or missed appts may be due to subconscious reasons.

We should try to engage them with phone calls or letters.

We should have conversations (with documented occurrences) when needed.

If you suggest treatment and they say no, then bring it up again when it’s the right time. “What’s holding you back? What must happen for you to consider it?”
CONVERSATION(S)

WHAT’S CHANGED?
Is the consumer doing better at keeping appointments? If no, then why not? Their behaviors may be slowing down their progress.

RECEIVING WEEKLY UPDATES
Be an accountability partner and ask the client to do weekly check-ins, even if it’s a voicemail that is left. 12 Step Slips

TREATMENT
Is treatment on the table? Request counselor updates (e.g. kept appts, results).

EMPLOYER CONCERNS
Sometimes, we need to explain employer’s concerns about substance abuse in the workplace.

Lectures do not typically work.
CONVERSATION(S)

SUPPORT
Be up front with what support your services can provide.

TRANSPARENCY
Keep things real and be transparent about concerns.

CELEBRATE
Commend them and celebrate milestones (e.g. 30 days clean).

SUCCESS STORIES
Share success stories of others who are in recovery.

Typically, you’ll have multiple conversations
Look for partnerships or other support systems for better success!
COORDINATE CARE

Are others seeing the issues you’re seeing?

Communication is Essential

Consider a team meeting or conference call
CONSIDERATIONS

- Encouragement (you may be the only one in the person’s life who gives it)
- Empathy
- Listening
- Put aside biases (not every addict is the same)
- What will work for the person? (thinking outside the box helps)
- Resources (business cards/fliers) on hand for when treatment is requested
- Advocacy
- Believe in the person (identify their best qualities and strengths)
- Respect their choices & their values (doesn’t mean you have to agree with them)
- Is part-time the better option?

Not everyone can be fast-tracked for employment
SUCCESS STORIES
THANK YOU!

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