

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 10, 2015

The notes and minutes for the last meeting were approved.

Today's meeting included discussions with the Training Team. The new CPS program assistant (20 hours/week) was introduced.

These items were discussed (no action steps identified for follow-up):

- Overview of the Oversight Committee Role and the rationale for establishing the Committee
- Individual introductions
- Whether the phrase "in but not of the system" should be replaced (conclusion: do not replace the phrase at this time)
- Retention survey (still planned; details not determined)
- Future training and/or a symposium on retention, hiring, supervision

Program Update

Interviews are complete and probably 33 people will be accepted into the next class, which starts in January. The most recent exams are completed; the new exam did not seem substantially different from earlier versions in terms of difficulty.

NEXT MEETING: January 14, 2016

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday November 12, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon

Old Business

The Oversight Committee approved the September meeting note and minutes (that meeting was held at DMH). The Oversight Committee agreed that further discussion is needed with DMH to regarding their future participation in CPS Oversight Committee meetings.

Program Update

The fall class finished and did well—all 30 who finished were eligible and 26 passed. This was the new exam format that dropped the oral exam and shifted more towards application questions and used some True-False and multiple choice questions. An analysis of the scores for each exam item showed a reasonable range of responses and, overall, a good balance between numbers getting the question right vs. wrong. Open response questions (short answer / discussion) still account for about 2/3 of the points for the exam.

The next CPS class, beginning in January, will have an internship requirement (this could include a current job). There will be task assignments to complete at the internship. An additional class, offered in the usual way, will occur between January and June. Both classes are on the same application form. There will be no Western Mass class this year, given that only three classes are to be offered.

New Business

- *CPS Program Assistant* will be starting tomorrow (20 hours).
- *Training Team* will meet with the Oversight Committee in December. The main purpose of the meeting will be to develop an understanding between the Training Team and the Oversight Committee, including hearing from them about what help/support/guidance the Oversight Committee can provide to the Training Team and the CPS program overall.
- *Retention survey* is still in the planning stage.
- *Public statements* will be posted on the Transformation Center website describing and explaining updates to the program, policies, exam, etc. A sample addressing the exam revision was distributed for comment. The document was approved with minor edits (attached).

Public Statement regarding the examination update (final)

From time to time, the curriculum and examination for the Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) program are revised. These revisions are made in keeping with the following program policies:

- The Certification process is operated in a way that is consistent with traditional and established practices for professional certification

- The Certification Examination is constructed and scored in a way that meets standardized testing practices
- The learning objectives of the training and the Certification Examination are in alignment
- The CPS core competencies are reflected in the training and examination

In the fall of 2015, following revision of the learning objectives and curriculum for the CPS training program, the examination content was reviewed and changed to ensure alignment with the identified core competencies, the learning objectives, and the curriculum. At the same time, the format of the examination was changed to include true-false, and multiple choice questions, and open-response items. The oral exam component was eliminated. These changes were made to ensure a standardized and objective exam process, to facilitate analysis of individual exam items, to permit development of multiple equivalent examination versions for exam security, and to make it easier to arrange for reasonable accommodations for test takers.

The initial version of the revised exam was offered in October 2015. Analysis of the examination results suggest that the new exam format yields similar results as the previous version. Analysis of individual exam items provided information that will guide the CPS program in item revision, new item development, and adjustments to the design and delivery of the training curriculum.

There was not an Oversight Committee meeting in October 2015

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 10, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon at DMH

Old Business

- The meeting began with introductions and an appreciation for DMH to be willing and available to meet with the CPS Oversight Committee.
- The minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

Program Update

- The newest class begins today. The Program Coordinator's report was presented, summarizing the background of the applicants and people accepted into the next class. This class includes a larger number of young adults than previous classes. Exam pass rates are up, especially for participants in the tutoring.
- The group discussed recent policy initiatives through TRANSCOM, which is part of the State Planning Council, and plans for a peer conference in 2017.
- The role of the CPS Oversight Committee was described. Updates were presented on current efforts to revise the exam to make it more objective, with assistance and guidance from the Oversight Committee, and on recent admissions to the new CPS class (beginning today).
- Discussions on continuing education, future reimbursement options, and peer workforce expansion highlighted the different peer roles (and how training needs vary with the varied roles), and the need for better definitions of those roles, as well as the need for education and training for supervisors and administrators regarding the peer role, so that people at these key decision-making levels have the necessary information. The planned survey on retention hopefully will provide information about what works in supervision.
- A self-care module to the CPS training to address issues of compassion fatigue.
- A new version of the training will happen starting in January, with part of the class offered, then an internship (15-16 weeks total) occurring with monthly support meetings, then the rest of the training will occur.
- New initiatives related to the opiate task force may involve training peer workers.
- The new Transformation website will have a central training calendar. The link to the website is the same.
- The Transformation Center is recruiting for an administrative assistant for the CPS program.

Other announcements

- SAMHSA is having a focus on trauma-informed communities, which will highlight the Transformation Center and the Central Massachusetts RLC. There will be several "amplifier" sites for people to attend websites.
- Another federal initiative (cross-agency) will include the Transformation Center as a model agency for community work. This will occur at the end of September.
- September 27 is the 5K race/run/walk for the Transformation Center at Jamaica Pond.
- November 4 and 5 will be the MassPRA institutes and workshops.
- May will include the national PRA conference in Boston, so there will be no fall 2016 MassPRA conference—Martha is hoping to use that timing for a one-day peer conference.

NEXT MEETING: October 8, 2015

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 13, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon

Old business

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Program update

The CPS program achieved the year's goal of training 180 people (we actually had 186 begin) with a pass rate of 80% (the actual average pass rate was 81% for the year). For the next class in Worcester, 36 people have already been accepted, with overall good quality applicants and a broad pool (80 people applied). The new class includes about 10 young adults (in their 20s), about 8 people from the central and western RLCs, and people from a variety of agencies.

New business

Competency project:

The learning objectives for each module were lined up with the expanded list of SAMHSA competencies. The next step is to reconstruct the learning objectives and revise the exam.

Internship:

During the current year (FY16), one of the training classes will include an internship that would occur during the training—with part 1 and part 2 of the training as “bookends” for the internship, which would allow the TC to offer another CPS training during the internship period). The internship will provide trainees with a full understanding of the role of a CPS

Retention survey

This topic will be tabled, pending ongoing discussion occurs with DMH. A recent iNAPS survey was compared to one done seven years earlier. Details at <http://inaops.org/2014-survey-of-education-compensation-and-satisfaction/>

NEXT MEETINGS (all are scheduled as 10 AM to noon):

- September 10, 2015: Brooke Doyle (DMH Assistant Commissioner, Mental Health Services) will attend
- October 8, 2015
- November 12, 2015
- December 10, 2015

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 9, 2015

Old business

The Oversight Committee approved the minutes from the last meeting for posting on the Transformation Center website.

Program update

The two classes (in Hyannis and Boston) have finished, ending with 43 completing (18 in Hyannis and 25 in Boston). Overall, the class was successful and well-received. Testing starts tomorrow.

New business: Competencies

A competency list was developed based on the recent draft list from SAMHSA that indicates which competencies are touched on in which module. The list of objectives for each module will be reviewed and, eventually, will be used to evaluate, and most likely revise, the exam.

The issue of CPS job retention will be discussed at a future meeting.

Note: After the meeting, a search for retention data found this information:

The following quote is from p. 6 of the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Office of Quality Management and Policy Report on the 2010 Peer Workforce Survey (found via Google)

Sixty three (63%) of providers reported some turnover in peer positions. Providers typically identified higher rates of turnover in part-time positions and reported that many of their staff in peer roles, especially full-time roles, have been in the position since it was created. Approximately one third (33%) of providers report that peer staff have left positions for career advancement, including more hours, higher pay, increased responsibilities and to obtain further education. Thirteen percent (13%) of providers also reported peer staff leaving for other positions that were not necessarily an advancement but were a “better fit” with the person’s interests, hours, or closer to home. Thirty three percent (33%) reported that peers left positions due to increased stress and symptoms. One provider reported losing peer staff due to layoffs.

The following quote is from abstract of Davis, J. K. (2013). Predictors of Job Satisfaction Among Peer Providers on Professional Treatment Teams in Community-Based Agencies. *Psychiatric Services*, 64(2), 181-184. doi:10.1176/appi.ps.001452012

...peer providers found satisfaction in an integrated work environment that included clearly defined roles, independent functioning, and respect for the expertise that peer providers possess. [These are results of an online survey]

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 11, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon

Old business

The most recent appeal/grievance has been closed as of 5/29, due to there being no reply to the certified letter. The draft of the revised accommodations policy was discussed and approved. The time frame for requesting reasonable accommodation for the exam will be two weeks prior to the exam, as in the original policy. The minutes from the last meeting were approved for posting on TC website.

The Oversight Committee discussed work ongoing by TRANSCOM on peer roles.

Program update

Two classes are going on now: 21 students in Hyannis and 32 in Boston. The internship option through Roxbury Community College is being set up, with at least 12 people in the Boston class expressing interest in that option. Plans for next year's activities were discussed, including the number of CPS classes proposed, possible training and support for CPS supervisors and employers, and outreach to potential CPS trainees with unique training needs (e.g., the Deaf community).

Continuing education for CPSs is an ongoing need, along with mutual support and networking opportunities, although agencies may not be willing to provide release time for attending the networking piece.

A reasonable accommodations training session for the CPS Training Team reviewed the ADA laws and the current policy. The team received it well.

New business

The CPS Oversight Committee discussed developing a Massachusetts CPS competency list based on the SAMHSA competency list (in its current draft).

NEXT MEETINGS (all are scheduled as 10 AM to noon):

- July 9, 2015 (tentative)
- August 13, 2015 (year-end report; evaluation of year with 6 classes)
- September 10, 2015
- October 8, 2015
- November 12, 2015
- December 10, 2015

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Notes
Thursday, May 14, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon at ABH

Old business

Minutes from last meeting APPROVED.

Program update

After this class, we will have met the DMH request to train 180 people in this fiscal year. Teaching six classes per year precludes any curriculum revision between class sizes. A smaller applicant pool for the recent admission cycle suggests that we may be coming close to maxing out the availability of qualified applicant. The exam is now held within 2 weeks of graduating, instead of a month or more).

A recent class was completed for people who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. A Spanish study section was for the CPS training, but only one applicant showed up for an interview.

Roxbury Community College is going to be setting up an internship program with job coaching and job skills development for people who graduate from the CPS program. This will be through the community-learning program.

Grievance

An appeal/grievance was filed was regarding a rejection decision and a determination was made.

New business

Training will be offered to the Training Team regarding reasonable accommodations and the accommodations policy will be edited to be more clear and relevant to the class.

NEXT MEETINGS (all are scheduled as 10 AM to noon):

- June 11, 2015
- July 9, 2015
- August 6, 2015 (this is the 1st Thursday, rescheduled for this one time)
- September 10, 2015
- October 8, 2015
- November 12, 2015
- December 10, 2015

Meetings will be cancelled due to weather if Natick Public Schools are closed.

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 9, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon at ABH

The Oversight Committee approved minutes from the last meeting.

There is no new Coordinator's report and no new dashboard for March. The last training has ended, the next training begins April 10. There is a possibility that future internships may be established. The CPS course timing is being adjusted slightly. The Committee discussed testing competencies.

Competency matrix concept: This would involve developing a list of entry level competencies for the role of a CPS, generating a list of learning objectives for the CPS program based on those competencies, and then comparing the curriculum and exam to be sure those competencies are both taught and evaluated.

CPS competency list: The competency list dated 2009 needs to be updated.

Oversight Committee expansion will be tabled until the next meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS (all are scheduled as 10 AM to noon):

- May 14, 2015
- June 11, 2015 (note PRA conference is June 1-4)
- July 9, 2015
- August 6, 2015 (this is the 1st Thursday, rescheduled for this one time)

Meetings will be cancelled due to weather if Natick Public Schools are closed.

There was not an Oversight Committee meeting in March 2015

CPS Oversight Committee Minutes
Thursday, February 12, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon

Old business: follow up on actions from last meeting

- The minutes from the last meeting were approved for posting on TC website.
- The draft of the orientation packet for new members is acceptable.
- The Oversight Committee unanimously agreed to close the outstanding grievance.
- In spring/summer of 2012, a person was not allowed to test due to missing the last class and filed a discrimination suit at Western MA (alleging discrimination based on race). The suit was filed in Western Mass using the RLC address. Dismissal was based on the fact that the person did not meet the program requirements.

Program update

- For the incoming class (end of February), 96 people were interviewed 96 and 66 accepted.
- The most recent group of people taking the exam is likely to have a pass rate of 80%.
- One more person passed the test on the retake after taking advantage of tutoring.

New business

- *Data and dashboards:* Committee members agreed that a dashboard is useful. Once the next class is underway, a dashboard on the new class will be developed. Some people do not provide demographics (in the most recent applications, about 5 did not, and about 5-10 did not answer all of the questions, such as LGBT). While there are not enough Spanish speakers for a separate study group for the February class, one of the Training Team members will do a special study group for young adults. Data on language proficiency in languages other than English is not currently collected.

ACTION: Add this to the demographics in the application form.

- *Decision making:* A draft list was circulated.

ACTION: The list of decisions for which the Oversight Committee is responsible will be added to the procedures manual and also to the orientation packet for new Committee members.

Oversight Committee expansion

Two issues were discussed—increasing diversity of committee membership and strategically finding allies who can support the CPS Program.

ACTION: Follow up to confirm DMH participation on the Oversight Committee and to see if meeting at DMH is an option for March.

Planning for next meetings

New location for March: Hopefully the next meeting will be at DMH

Tentative agenda items for next meeting: Continued discussion of Oversight Committee expansion.

NEXT MEETING: March 12, 2015—**location TBA**

CPS Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2015 10 AM to 12 noon

The meeting opened with introductions and welcome to new members.

Old business: follow up on actions from last meeting

Orientation packet for new Oversight Committee members (draft)

This was not distributed in advance of the meeting, so its review will be tabled until February.

ACTION: A copy will be sent prior to the next meeting.

Updated self-assessment for potential CPS applicants and other issues related to application

The Committee discussed the new version (it's also in the dropbox) and recommended additional resources. The Committee agreed that examining readiness and ability to complete the course and pass the exam are important, as are offering supports and materials to help everyone learn. Reading level should be assessed for the training materials. Supports will be offered to an incoming group of Spanish speakers.

Should some people might be admitted without having to do an application?

People who have been through the class once, and people who missed one or two sessions, might benefit from a new application. Recently, some people who applied but were not accepted were admitted to the next class (specifically people who lived in the northeast but who had applied to Boston and were qualified were admitted to the next northeast class without a new application or interview). At present, admission without having to do an application/interview is restricted to people who are wait-listed, such as for a later class to be held closer to their home.

The Committee discussed acceptance and completion data, noting that missing more than 3 hours of class disqualifies someone from eligibility for the exam. However, few people have dropped due to logistical issues.

New business: Grievance

The submitted grievance was reviewed and a response composed. The draft will be circulated for Committee review and sent next week.

Next meeting

Given time constraints, the remaining items are tabled: discrimination suit (dismissed by state), Oversight Committee expansion, follow up on the grievance, and the location for the March meeting.

FUTURE MEETINGS (all are scheduled as 10 AM to noon):

- February 12, 2015
- March 12, 2015—**location TBA**
- April 9, 2015
- May 14, 2015
- June 11, 2015 (PRA is June 1-4)

