

# Working Well Together

Training and Technical Assistance Center



## What's Working Well

...In the Employment of People with Lived Experience of Mental Health Challenges, Parents and Family Members to Transform California's Public Behavioral Health Workforce

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<http://workingwelltogether.org/>

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Working Well Together (WWT) is a collaborative project comprised of the California Association of Mental Health Peer Run Organizations (CAMHPRO)-PEERS, NAMI California, United Advocates for Children and Families, and the California Institute for Mental Health. Funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the WWT Training and Technical Assistance Center supports the vision of the MHSA to transform systems to be client and family-driven. As such, WWT supports the sustained development of client, family member and parent/caregiver employment within every level of the public mental health workforce. The What's Working Well Quarterly News brief is produced and edited by [Karin Lettau, MS](#), WWT Technical Assistance Coordinator for the Southern Region. Translations and acculturations by [Gabriela Melano, Ed.D.](#)

### Los Angeles Region Peer Specialist Core Competencies

The County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health (DMH) has been in parallel step with the California Peer Certification movement in identifying core values and competencies that cut across age-specific peer providers—TAY, adult, family member and parent peer specialists. Below are the overarching values, essential skills and knowledge, taken from the DMH [Summary of Findings: Peer Specialist Training & Core Competency Committee and Age-Specific Work Groups](#) of April, 2013. Listed below in order of priority:

- ◇ Principles of hope, dignity, respect, empowerment, self-advocacy, personal responsibility, support and self determination.
- ◇ Life experience is crucial.
- ◇ Relationship is primary.
- ◇ Sharing and connecting with others as Peers.
- ◇ Cultural awareness.
- ◇ "Basic skills set enables a person to maintain safety, understand their scope of practice, complete documentation, manage time effectively, avoid power struggles, practice nonviolent communication, recognize when personal triggers occur and have a process to resolve those triggers effectively. Essential basic skills also include the ability to educate others about confidentiality and their rights, provide resources and referral, and assess the person/family strengths and challenges as well as assist people in developing self-directed plans for their wellness (e.g. WRAP, goal setting, advanced directives and crisis planning)."
- ◇ Ability to develop rapport and demonstrate good interpersonal skills
- ◇ Knowledge of systems
- ◇ Knowledge of key wellness, recovery and resiliency concepts and principles. Great work Los Angeles County!

### Inner Thoughts, A Story by Wendy Cabil of LA County

Once upon a time, three forces were engaged in a discussion. Here's a snapshot of a special moment involving Hope, Wellness and Recovery. Hope explained the importance of its role in the universe, "Without me, there is no need for the both of you to exist", speaking to Wellness and Recovery. "How so?" the two inquired, "Without us, Wellness and Recovery, you Hope would have nothing to strive for and demonstrate your ability. We represent action-oriented results to a productive life." "Perhaps, you two do make a difference at some point", stated Hope. "Of course, we do!" they both shouted. "As a matter of fact," Wellness added, "I am progressive and on-going." Recovery interrupted with "Amen"! Then Recovery continued with "But I represent the process". "Without me, how do you measure your progress, Wellness? And how do you gauge your condition, Hope? I offer the context in which Hope inspires Wellness while keeping you two on the same page and connected. I also allow time the freedom to interact in the process so that we are united as one in a symphony." "Enough of this debate," said, Recovery. "Instead, let us focus our energies positively rather than challenge the importance of each other's contribution. We need to spread the message to the world that Hope, Wellness and Recovery are essential keys to mankind living a fulfilled life no matter what stage of life he or she is experiencing." "Also noteworthy" added Hope, "is that we are freely given".

### Points of Interest in This Issue

- ◇ Los Angeles Region Core Competencies
- ◇ Inner Thoughts by Wendy Cabil
- ◇ Regional Updates
- ◇ Update on State Peer Certification & WET 5 Year Plan
- ◇ Monthly WWT Networking Calls

## Superior Region

**A message from Donna Matthews:** *"It is with deep appreciation to peer providers (with experience as consumers, family member, parents and caregivers) across the state and particularly in the Superior Region that I leave CiMH and my role as Superior Region TAC Coordinator and Project Manager for WWT. I have enjoyed immensely bringing my own skills and knowledge to bear in ways, over the last five and a half years, that impacted positively on the statewide workforce development of consumers, family members, parents and caregivers within the public mental health system. My opportunity to engage with each of you has been a joy and privilege. WWT has changed my life in so many positive ways, not the least of which was an increased awareness about my own wellness! I will be continuing to work on a local level in Mendocino County with Manzanita Services - a wellness center and peer provider organization*

*([www.manzanitaservices.org](http://www.manzanitaservices.org)). I welcome the opportunity to partner with you all should opportunities arise and absolutely look forward to staying in touch! My last day will be on October 24 after which I may be contacted at [dmat-thews@manzanitaservices.org](mailto:dmat-thews@manzanitaservices.org) or [916-505-3494](tel:916-505-3494).*

*Kim Mayer, Associate Director at CiMH, will be working on a transition plan to ensure Superior Region technical assistance by WWT and she may be contacted at [kmayer@cimh.org](mailto:kmayer@cimh.org)."*

We know that Donna will be missed in a big way, but she will continue to work for our mutual goals in a different capacity for now!

## Greater Bay Area Region

Deborah Van Dunk, WWT TAC, is working with a Wellness Center in the Greater Bay Area Region to assist the case manager with developing training topics for the consumer employee development plan, policies/procedures for the center, i.e., probationary period, employee accommodations and roles/responsibilities. On November 20, 2013, San Mateo County will host the Greater Bay Area Regional Training. The training topic is, Supporting Lived Experience in the Workforce: A New Needs Paradigm, training facilitators, Sharon Kuehn, BA, PEER Social Inclusion Manager and Karin Lettau, MS, WWT TAC, Southern Region. The audience for the training is clinicians, supervisors and support staff employed with the mental health workforce in the Greater Bay Area Region. For further information please contact Deborah Van Dunk, WWT TAC, Greater Bay Area Region, [dvandunk@uacf4hope.org](mailto:dvandunk@uacf4hope.org).

## Join WWT Monthly Networking Calls

...For people with lived experience working in public mental health:

**Parent Call:** 2nd Tuesday of each month, 10-11am, [1-800-914-3396](tel:1-800-914-3396) Code 3970681, Email [dvandunk@uacf4hope.org](mailto:dvandunk@uacf4hope.org)

**Consumer Web Call:** 2nd Wednesday of each month, 4-5pm Register for web link at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/2855921328720867072>

Use free computer audio or call [1-909-259-0034](tel:1-909-259-0034), Code: 419-253-837. Email [klettau7@gmail.com](mailto:klettau7@gmail.com) if you require a toll-free number.

## State Peer Certification & WET 5 Year Plan Updates

Progress towards State Peer Specialist Certification for Consumer, Youth, Family Members and Parents is materializing on many fronts.

The WWT Draft Recommendations for State Peer Specialist Certification were championed at the Mental Health Career Pathway Committee of the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) in September, which with stakeholder input has informed the draft of the next Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five Year Plan. The draft plan includes an action item for "establishment of state certification for consumers and family members" listed under the last objective. Stakeholders may provide feedback to the draft WET 5 year plan on a teleconference call on November 5 and 7 from 9 am– 5pm. ([1-888-431-3632](tel:1-888-431-3632), Code: 3553409#). See agenda at <http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/pdfs/wet/WET-Five-Year-Plan-Stakeholder-Engagement-Conference-Call-Forum-Agenda.pdf>. The most updated WET 5 Year Plan draft and more can be found at

<http://www.oshpd.ca.gov/HWDD/WET.html>. Sharon Kuehn and others have received remarkable support presenting to various State agencies on State Peer Specialist Certification, including the MHS Oversight and Accountability Commission, and also the CA MH Planning Council (CMHPC) which is the body that finally approves the next WET Five Year Plan. On October 18, CMHPC voted to prioritize State Peer Specialist Certification.

**Webinar on Update of WWT & Peer Specialist Certification Progress since the May Summit by Sharon Kuehn: Monday, December 2, 11:00-12:00 noon. We will send the link and call-in number soon.**

More good news; the State of California will receive limited technical assistance from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) through SAMHSA to promote State Certification of Peer Specialists. Soon State inter-agency meetings will be planned to move the ball forward.

WWT will be adjusting one of the projects slated for this fiscal year, 'Supports Models' to accommodate next steps towards certification.

Finally, Senator Steinberg's bill, the [Investment in the Mental Health Wellness Act of 2013](#) funds \$2 million for Peer Specialists in Crisis and Triage services. Nice traction!