

DMH PARTNERS WITH THE BRIDGE FOR STATEWIDE TRAINING

DMH is pleased to announce our partnership with the The Bridge of Central MA in a contract funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#)) and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors ([NASMHPD](#)) – to expand the practice of [Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy \(CT-R\)](#) across the state.

The Department and The Bridge are developing statewide capacity for CT-R trainers and expand the delivery of this evidence-based practice within the community-based mental health system. Six teams have been selected statewide to participate in this project, and 50 employees have received the training. Teams include the Prevention and Recovery in Early Psychosis program by ServiceNet in Holyoke, the Forensic PACT Team of Behavioral Health Network in Springfield, the State-Operated PACT Team in Brockton, the PATH Team of Eliot Community Human Services in Worcester, the C5 Team at Tewksbury Hospital, and the Adult Inpatient and Partial Hospitalization Programs at Carney Hospital.

CT-R is an innovative, evidence-based practice that trains and empowers staff to operationalize recovery and resilience in a person-centered, trauma-informed way. Individuals with serious mental illness collaborate to identify and achieve the life of their choosing, including the choice to overcome the challenges they face.

Research demonstrates that CT-R reduces symptoms of psychosis, isolation, inpatient stays, and aggression. It has also been shown to improve staff attitudes towards the individuals they care for, and increase job satisfaction.

Since 2016, Bridge instructors have trained multi-disciplinary staff including peer specialists, direct care staff, social workers, case managers, psychologists, nurses and psychiatrists in CT-R practices and principles. CT-R has produced remarkable changes in the attitudes and practices of staff and has been associated with individuals achieving meaningful goals, engaging in activities of their choosing and overcoming roadblocks to their recovery. As a result of the training, teams use language that is more strength-based and person-centered, and individuals are identifying and actively pursuing desirable experiences that they have never discussed before.

These programs have reported significantly higher participation in program activities – from arts and crafts clubs, to movie nights, dining out, nature hikes, and even skiing and snowboarding. For individuals with mental health challenges, these activities aren't just recreational – they are vital to tap into their personal interests, build their confidence to engage in community settings, and promote a trusting relationship with staff.

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