

10 Steps to Consider:
A Workforce, Education, and Training Planning Guide
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As counties develop their workforce, education, and training plans, they will have numerous processes to consider. To assist counties in their local planning efforts, we developed the following list of *10 Steps to Consider*.

IF FUNDING PERMITS, HIRE A PROJECT COORDINATOR

- 1. ESTABLISH A VISION:** Create a vision for workforce, education, and training that is united to the vision for the provision and outcomes of mental services in your county, particularly those services highlighted during the Community Services and Supports (CSS) process. For example, if your Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) CSS plan has a vision that calls for the expansion of recovery-based services, then ensure that the workforce, education, and training initiatives developed enhance the knowledge and ability of your county's workforce to provide recovery-based services. Easier said than done, but try not to create different visions for different components of the MHSA, it will be more difficult to unite components that do not "speak to one another."
- 2. USE YOUR VISION:** Ensure that the vision your county develops is infused in the workforce, education, and training initiatives your county puts forth in its workforce, education, and training plan. A unified vision among initiatives that is included in all of the local initiatives will ease communication to the public, local partners, and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) on how initiatives and outcomes were selected.
- 3. ASSESS YOUR NEEDS:** Evaluate what you already have in place – staff, resources, programs, partnerships, supports - and what you can build on as you develop your education and training plan. Initiate the county-wide needs assessment, determining the workforce capacity and the need for additional workers, as well as the county's organizational capacity and its ability to expand. Utilize existing workforce information where possible.
- 4. KNOW YOUR TOTAL FUNDING ABILITY:** Determine the total funds available for administrating local initiatives and the total funds the county will have for administrating initiatives from a short-, mid, and long-term perspective. In other words, know the answers to at least the following

questions: Do you have enough money to sustain programs over time? Are you going to use funding to initiate local workforce, education, and training initiatives with the understanding that outside financial resources will be brought-in? Do you have the capacity to administrate these “extra dollars?” What is your financial “game-plan?” You need to understand what is possible and realistic with your funding allocation, as you begin to identify potential initiatives.

5. UNITE LOCAL EXPERTISE: Establish a Workforce, Education, and Training (WET) Committee made up of at least the following:

- County Mental Health Leaders
- Consumers
- Family Members
- Representatives from Ethnically Diverse Communities
- Community-based Agencies
- County Human Resources Department/Personnel
- County Finance
- Agency Partners, such as Probation, Social Services, Educational Programs
- Training and Internship Coordinators
- Ethnic Services Managers
- Others i.e. local workforce entities, faith-based communities

Rather than creating a new committee, you may choose to reconvene your CSS Advisory Group and invite additional representatives from the list above. Before you approach new stakeholders, it would be helpful to assess current county capacity. It would also be beneficial to meet with county departments, such as Finance, Human Resources, the County Auditor and the County Counsel, to explain the intent of the MHPA Workforce, Education, and Training component and to describe the types of initiatives that could be implemented. Many workforce initiatives – such as career pathways and financial incentive programs – will require the development of new county procedures (e.g. job descriptions, the hiring process, and loan and stipend programs) and approval by administrative leadership and the Board of Supervisors. Creating early opportunities for discussion and partnership will help pave the way for collaboration once specific initiatives have been identified.

6. UTILIZE LOCAL EXPERTISE AND INPUT: Convene the WET Committee and review the Vision, Needs Assessment, County Capacity Considerations, and Available Resources. At the first meeting outline the Workforce, Education, and Training Plan development process and the stakeholder review process. Develop the WET Committee's goals and establish a timetable for WET Committee member participation. Prioritize workforce, education, and training initiatives based on local needs. Have the WET

Committee members self select to serve on workgroups to help in the development of local initiatives that can be presented to stakeholders for review and consideration.

- 7. PUT FOLKS TO WORK:** Initiate Work Groups, made up of WET Committee members, based on the five funding areas that are outlined both in the early implementation funding and in the 3 Year County Expenditure Guidelines. Work Group members should develop initiatives among the selected categories for workforce education and training and assign outcomes for each initiative. Outcomes should be connected not only to the vision, but should be service focused as well. For example, promoting recovery-based services could lead to the development of a peer support mental health career pathway in the county. Consequently, the outcomes for the pathway initiative should be connected not only to the number of consumers who enter the pathway and become employed, but should extend to understanding if services were in fact improved.
- 8. CONNECT YOUR WORK TO THE COMMUNITY:** Present the vision, the assessment, the local initiatives developed by the WET Committee and the desired outcomes of the initiatives to stakeholders for their review and comment. Be sure to create and share realistic expectations with your stakeholders. Have the WET Committee involved in ensuring broad participation and have WET Committee members (as available) present at the stakeholders meeting. Remember to begin each stakeholder meeting with a review of the county's vision. You may also choose to initiate a pre-stakeholder meeting for members of your community who may require more background on the MHSA and the Workforce, Education, and Training Component.
- 9. FINALIZE THE PLAN:** Include stakeholder input in the proposal developed by the WET Committee and reconvene for a final review. Design the local initiative proposal and include in the plan to the DMH.
- 10. SUBMIT THE PLAN:** Communicate back to local partners and the community that you have submitted the plan and inform them of the timeline from DMH for its review and approval.