

**New England MIRECC Peer Education Center**  
**Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital**  
**200 Springs Road, Bedford, MA 01730**

**Confidentiality & Peer Support Services Seminar**

**Seminar Vignettes for Group Discussion**

**Vignette #1:**

Sally, a trained peer support provider, co-facilitates a recovery-based caregivers' support group. For the past two months, Richard has attended the group, seeking support as he takes care of his elderly mother who suffers from dementia. Last week, Richard talked about something new—his girlfriend, Cindy, and his frustration with Cindy's 7-year old son, Steven. Richard complained that Steven "gets on my last nerve with his whining." Richard stated that he has tried to talk with Steven and use time outs to address Steven's misbehavior, but Steven does not listen to him. Richard said he became so frustrated with Steven last week that he accidentally shoved Steven who fell down a set of stairs and broke his arm. Richard expressed remorse for the incident.

**Questions for Vignette #1:**

1. Is there a confidentiality issue here?
2. If you were Sally, what would you do in this situation?

**Vignette #2:**

Stephanie, a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) peer support specialist, meets with six Veterans for individual mentoring on a weekly basis. Stephanie has a regularly scheduled meeting with her supervisor to talk about her work, but she also interacts with her supervisor in other places throughout the week. One week, Stephanie and her supervisor participate in a peer outreach event with several Veterans. During the outreach event set-up, Stephanie tells her supervisor, in the presence of the other Veterans, that "John Doe has gotten back on the wagon and is taking his meds again."

**Questions for Vignette #2:**

1. Is there a confidentiality issue here? If so, what should Stephanie's supervisor do?

2. If you believe there is a confidentiality issue, what do you think Stephanie should do differently in the future?

**Vignette #3:**

Joanne is a peer support specialist who works at the local VA substance abuse treatment program's Aftercare program. For the past month, Joanne has been co-facilitating a peer support recovery group for Veterans participating in the Aftercare program. Since beginning her facilitation of the peer support group, Joanne has heard and seen some interesting things. For example, during a recent group meeting, one of the Veterans talked at length about his previous history with drugs and involvement with a prostitution ring. The Veteran's story was very interesting and humorous at times. Later that evening, Joanne's good friend, Vicky, asked her how her day went. Hoping to share a laugh with her friend, Joanne told Vicky the juicy story shared in her peer support group, but she was careful not to mention any information that could identify the Veteran participants.

**Questions for Vignette #3:**

1. Is there a confidentiality issue here?
2. If you were in this situation, would you do anything differently than Joanne? If so, what would you do differently?

**Vignette #4:**

Carlton, a VA peer support specialist, co-facilitates a recovery-based peer support group for Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. After one of the group meetings, Matt, one of the group participants, approaches Carlton to talk with him about Matt's intention to leave his wife for another woman. Matt reports that he met a woman online and she lives in Spain. Carlton learns that Matt has purchased an airline ticket to Spain and plans to fly out tomorrow without telling Matt's wife or the rest of his family. Matt thanks Carlton for all of his help in the peer support group and tells Carlton not to tell anyone else that Matt is flying to Spain to meet the woman of his dreams.

**Questions for Vignette #4:**

1. Is there a confidentiality issue here?
2. If you were Carlton, what would you do in this situation?