

## **Transforming Public Mental Health: An Introduction**

**To: Students, Interns, Postdocs, Early Career Psychologists and Psychology Faculty:**

**Greetings from the VA Section of APA Division 18 (Psychologists in Public Service)!**

The world of mental health care is in the midst of unprecedented change. Galvanized by the President's New Freedom Commission Report (2003) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) "Federal Action Agenda," state and federal agencies are transforming their mental health services to "client-driven" processes that enhance public awareness, service access, client engagement, system responsiveness and personal recovery. System leaders, service providers and recipients, family and community members and advocates are collaborating as never before to implement fundamental changes at federal, state, and local levels. Empowerment, values, evidence and hope are driving strategic plans in new ways. As you apply for an internship, postdoc, or first job, there has never been a more exciting time to be involved in public mental health.

We anticipate that this transformation will be profound and influential in all sectors of U.S. mental health care. The Department of Veterans Affairs, the nation's largest health care system, has already taken major steps to alter the ways it delivers mental health care, devoting millions of dollars to implement evidence-based, recovery-oriented services in its facilities across the nation. State systems are reforming services from the inside out.

You may not have heard much about these real changes as you reviewed literature and collected research data. Your academic training program may have emphasized traditional psychological roles and practice settings. Indeed, many students and recent graduates arrive for internship and postdoctoral training in public service settings with little exposure to recovery concepts, evidence-based practices, community-based services, or interdisciplinary treatment planning. Training programs are under pressure to provide more information and assure greater competency in less time and opt to "teach what they know," leaving real world practice experiences to fill in the gaps.

Given the widespread absence of education about the President's New Freedom Commission Report and its public policy implications in most graduate programs, we thought it would be useful to offer this brief introduction. We are grateful to the leaders of Psychology Training Councils for helping us make this information available to you. We've selected the brief list and links that follow as signposts to direct caring, creative individuals toward public mental health's new horizon: stigma reduction; recovery-oriented care; community-based services; in vivo skills assessment and training; client-centered care; peer support initiatives; tele-mental health technologies; and the design and implementation of evidence-based practices. FYI: If you are looking for a dissertation or grant topic, you'll find many down this road. We invite you to join us! Be a part of this change! Thanks for giving this a look!

### **President's New Freedom Commission Report (2003)**

**Vision: We envision a future when everyone with a mental illness will recover, a future when mental illnesses can be prevented or cured, a future when mental illnesses are detected early, and a future when everyone with a mental illness at any stage of life has access to effective treatment and supports - essentials for living, working, learning, and participating fully in the community.**

**Goals: 1: Americans understand that mental health is essential to overall health**

**2: Mental health care is consumer and family driven**

**3: Disparities in mental health services are eliminated**

**4: Early mental health screening, assessment, and referral are common practice**

**5: Excellent mental health care is delivered and research is accelerated**

**6: Technology is used to access mental health care and information**

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov/reports/Finalreport/FullReport.htm>

### **Transformation Agenda:**

**The Federal Mental Health Action Agenda offers an unprecedented opportunity to fundamentally alter the form and function of the mental health service delivery system in this country to one that puts individuals—adults with mental illnesses, children with emotional disturbances, and family members—at its very core. Gone will be a system in which outmoded and contradictory regulations dictate the services an individual receives and the funding that is available. In its place will be a seamless system of care designed to help children, adults, and**

**older adults achieve their maximum potential in all spheres of life and at all points in their development. Transformation of the mental health system will not be easy, nor will it happen overnight.**

[http://www.samhsa.gov/Federalactionagenda/NFC\\_TOC.aspx](http://www.samhsa.gov/Federalactionagenda/NFC_TOC.aspx)

Evidence-Based and Emerging Best Practices:

**Assertive Community Treatment**

**Consumer-run/Peer services**

**Crisis services**

**Family Psycho-education**

**Illness Management and Recovery**

**Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment**

**Medication Management protocols**

**Mental Health e-Technologies**

Campaign for Mental Health Reform: <http://www.mhreform.org/policy/ebs.htm>

SAMHSA EBP Tool-kits (<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/communitysupport/toolkits/about.asp>)

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD: <http://www.nasmhpd.org/>)

NASMHPD Research Institute: (<http://www.nri-inc.org/>)

Office for the Advancement of Tele-health (HRSA: <http://www.hrsa.gov/telehealth/>)

APA SMI Task Force Training Grid: [http://www.apa.org/practice/smi\\_grid2.pdf](http://www.apa.org/practice/smi_grid2.pdf)

Assertive Community Treatment Association (ACTA: <http://www.actassociation.org/>)

American Telemedicine Association (ATA: <http://www.atmeda.org/>)

**Psychotherapy**

- Cognitive behavioral

- Dialectical behavioral

- Interpersonal

- Brief Dynamic

**Supported Employment**

**Supported Housing**

Consumer / Survivor and Family Advocacy:

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (<http://www.dbsalliance.org/>)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI: <http://www.nami.org/>)

National Empowerment Center (<http://www.power2u.org/>)

National Mental Health Association (<http://www.nmha.org/>)

National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse (<http://www.mhselfhelp.org/>)

Resource Center to Address Discrimination and Stigma (SAMHSA ADS Center: <http://www.adscenter.org/>)

Veterans in Recovery (<http://www.veteranrecovery.org/>)

Psychiatric Rehabilitation:

Boston University Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation (CPR: <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/>)

United States Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA: <http://www.uspra.org> )

Journals:

American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation (<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/uapr>)

Community Mental Health Journal (<http://springerlink.metapress.com/content/1573-2789/>)

Psychiatric Services (<http://psychservices.psychiatryonline.org/>)

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal (<http://www.bu.edu/cpr/prj/index.html>)

Psychological Services (<http://www.apa.org/journals/ser/>)

Public Service Psychology:

American Psychological Association (APA: <http://www.apa.org/>)

APA Division 18 (Psychologists in Public Service: <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div18/>)

APA Division 18 Veterans Affairs Section (<http://apa.org/divisions/div18/vaweb/index.htm>)

APA Education Directorate (<http://www.apa.org/ed/>)

APA of Graduate Students (<http://www.apa.org/apags/>)

APA Practice Directorate (<http://www.apa.org/practice/>)

Association of VA Psychology Leaders (AVAPL: <http://www.avapl.org/index.html>)

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