

# Housing First and Employment I:

*Service design and delivery in  
permanent supportive housing*

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

April 9, 2018

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Advocates for Human Potential

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Downtown Emergency Services Center

Pedro Spencer

Downtown Emergency Services Center

Ian Lisan

Advocates for Human Potential

# Agenda

9am – Welcome and Introductions

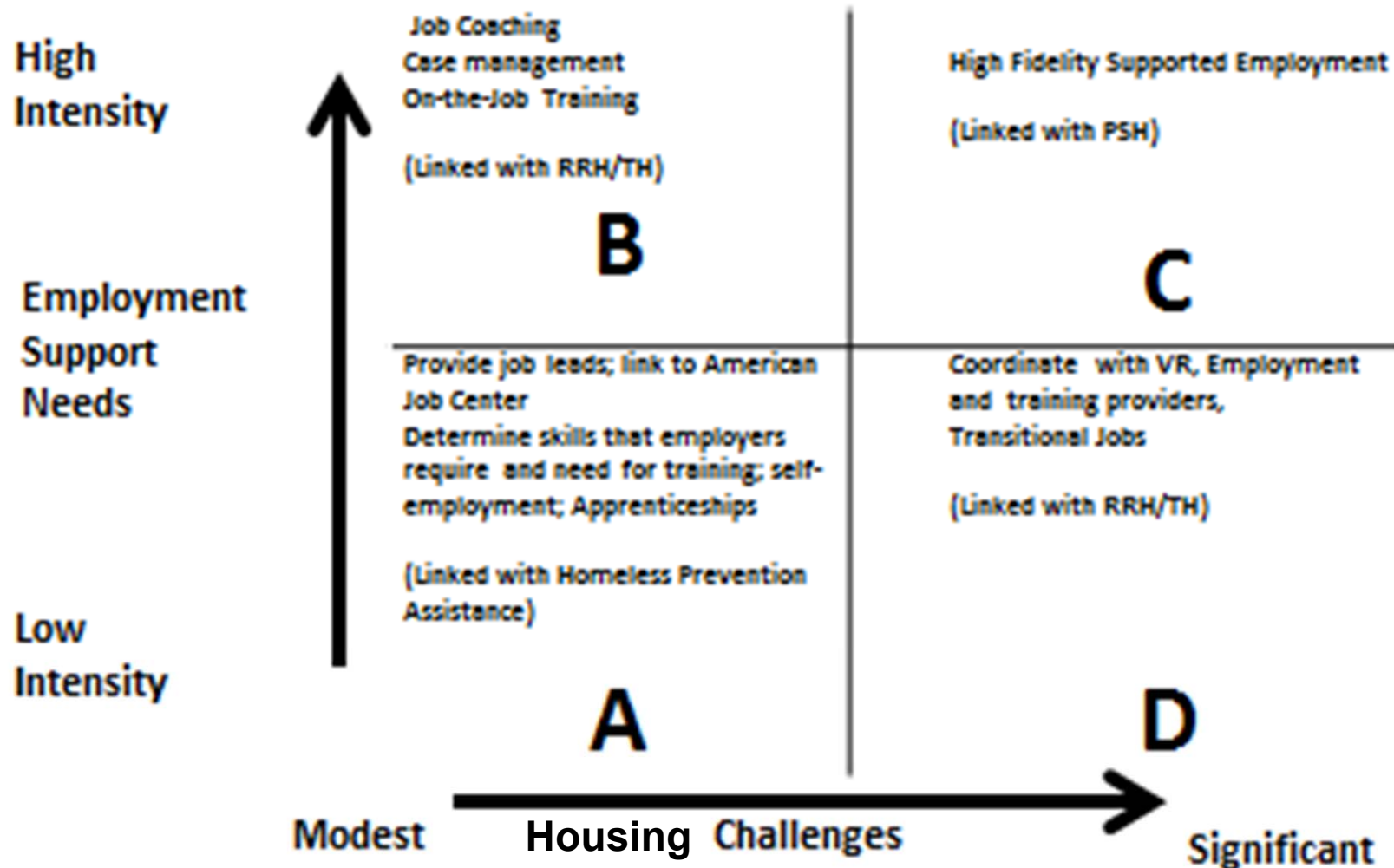
- Overview of PSH
- Promising Employment Strategies
- Why Supported Employment

10:00 Break

10:15 Implementing SE in PSH

12:00 Adjourn

# Service Needs of Job Seekers Experiencing Homelessness



What is permanent supportive housing?

# The Estelle, Seattle





# Scattered Site Unit



But, Housing is not enough,

Absent vocational intervention,  
Tenants will remain unemployed



Why isn't there more  
employment services  
available to people  
experiencing  
homelessness?

# **Work is part of recovery...**

SAMHSA's goal is a high-quality, self-directed, satisfying life integrated in a community for all people in America. This includes:

**A Healthy Life**

**A Home**

**A Purpose**

**A Community**

# Success is the Pursuit of Purpose

Increase gainful employment and educational opportunities for individuals with or in recovery from mental and substance use disorders.



What do you get out of your  
work besides a paycheck?

# **The Nine Programmatic Principles of Successful Employment Programs**

1. Inclusiveness
2. Flexibility
3. Voluntary
4. Work First
5. Long Term View
6. Choice
7. Ongoing Wrap Around Services
8. Outcome Orientation
9. Continuous Contact

# Create a work supporting culture in your program

- Engineer the environment
- Make work an expected, hoped for activity
- Inspire tenants to work
- Make work tools and resources available
- Blend case management and workforce services
- Anybody can work
- Connection to work opportunities

# Vocationalizing at DESC

- Entire clinical team discusses employment
- Employment Board
- Group Outings to Job Fairs
- Discussion in Community Meeting
- Start at intake in CM Program and continue when incarcerated or hospitalized



# Work Talk

- Think of your favorite uncle. What did he do for work
- Have you ever considered working?
- What job did you do most recently?
- What did you like about the job?
- What did you not like about the job?
- Why did you leave the job?
- What do you think work would do for you personally, financially and socially?
- What about work worries you? Excites you?

# Work Talk...

- Promotes employment as a possibility.
- Meets a person “where they are at”
- Serves as a natural “readiness assessment”

# Measure your atmosphere

## Critical Ingredients for Offering an Integrated Employment Service in Housing John Rio, MA, CRC

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This list includes essential ingredients of place-based strategies in four domains: Vocationalizing, In-house Hiring, Job Development and Placement, and Linkages with Employment & Training Resources. The list may be useful as a guide to developing employment services in supportive housing. Indicate which ingredients are present in your program.

***I. VOCATIONALIZING THE ORGANIZATION/BUILDING/CULTURE:*** As one employment staff person put it, “Every policy, practice, activity – my whole organization – supports my ability to help tenants get employed.” The isolated employment staff person or tenant can't make significant changes in the rate of employment or quality of opportunity available to tenants effectively.

*An organization is "vocationalized" if...*

- ☐ The written mission includes tenant employment as a central purpose of the organization
- ☐ A high-ranking staff member (e.g., on par with the Director of Housing and the Director of Social Services) has authority and

<http://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Vocationalizing-Supportive-Housing.pdf>

# EVIDENCED BASED PRACTICE

# What is an EBP?

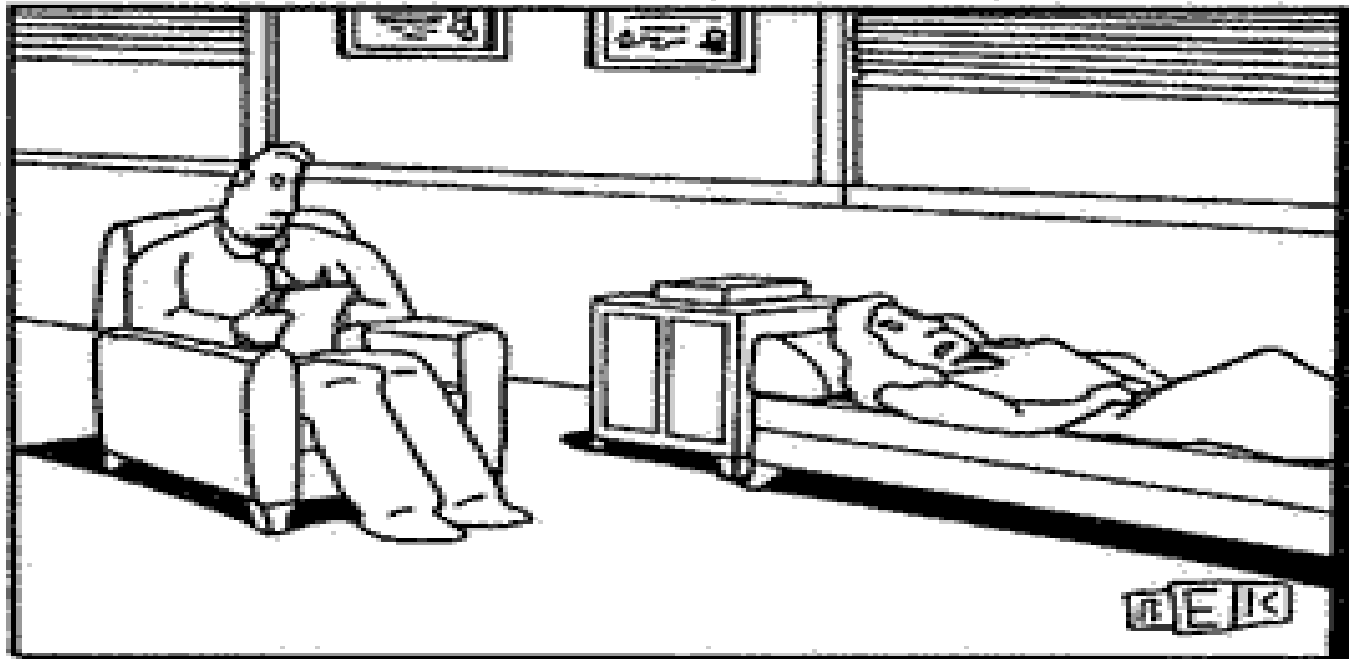
- Practices validated by research
- Standardized guidelines describing critical ingredients
- Replicable and teachable
- A practice that has an operations manual and quantifiable measurable criteria (fidelity scales)

# EBP Philosophy

People, including those with behavioral health conditions, and families have the right to access services that are known to be effective

# Fidelity & EBP

**Faithful implementation to the practice...  
leads to desired outcomes**



*"Well, I do have this recurring dream that one day I might see some results."*



# Features of Supported Employment (EBP)

- **Competitive and satisfying jobs in community**
- **Minimum wage +**
- **Integrated work setting**
- **Ongoing support**
- **For people with a desire to work**
- **Includes people with the most severe disabilities**
- **Eligibility for SE services is based on consumer choice**
- **Tenant preferences are important**
- **Integrated with mental health treatment**
- **Rapid job search**

# Cross-over core principles

## Supported Employment

- Mainstream job in the community.
- Clients choose employment options
- Minimum wage or above.
- Integrated work setting/integrated teams.
- Ongoing supports from service agency.
- Most Seriously Disabled.

## Supported Housing

- Mainstream housing in the community.
- Clients choose housing options.
- Integrated housing setting/integrated teams.
- Ongoing supports from service agency.
- Most Seriously Disabled.

***“Recovery may be a  
journey; but if you never get  
anywhere, it can easily become  
a treadmill”***

***Joe Marrone***



Does it work?



“Nothing that I have studied has the same kind of impact on people that employment does. Medication, case management, and psychotherapies tend to produce a small impact on people’s overall adjustment. But the differences are often striking and dramatic with employment”

-Robert Drake, M.D.

Pedro – does it work for clients?

# Competitive Employment for People with Serious Mental Illness

- Say they want to work: 60%-75%
- Are currently working: <15%
- Have access to Supported  
Employment Programs <15%



# **SE research is robust and compelling**

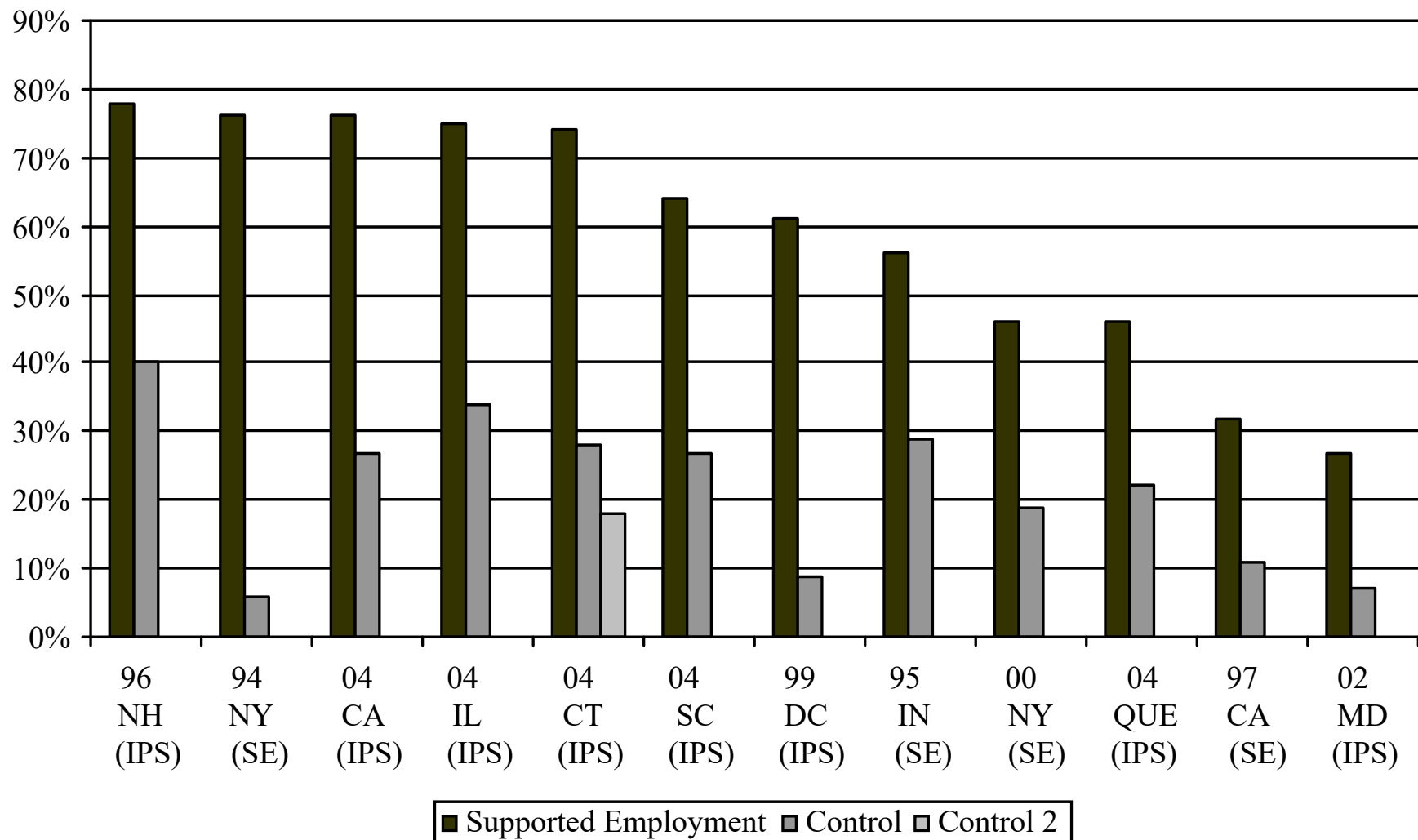
**The IPS (Individual Placement and Support) model was the foundation for EBP-SE principles**

**Superior employment outcomes are produced when fidelity to the core practices is maintained**

**Higher employment outcomes  
40-80% vs. 10-21% for traditional models**

**There is no evidence that anything “adverse” happens to employed persons with psychiatric disabilities (increase in symptoms/hospitalizations)**

## Competitive Employment Rates in 12 RCTs of Supported Employment



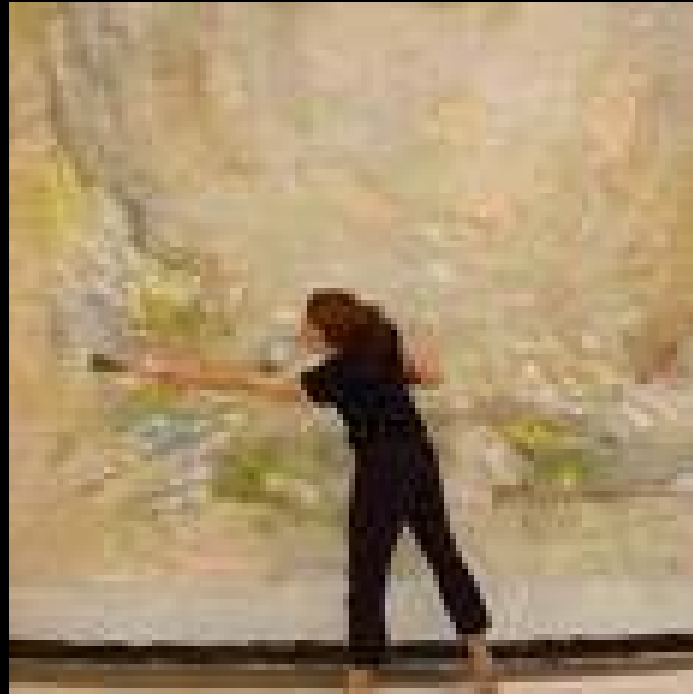
# EBP SE Benefits

- Responds rapidly to an individual who desires to work.
- Streamlines the service delivery process.
- Avoids duplication of effort for consumers and staff.
- The entire treatment team shares responsibility for the employment outcome.
- Employment specialists are supported by the agency in all aspects of their work with consumers.
- Extensive research evidence demonstrating effectiveness, when applied with fidelity.
- Improves a consumer's sense of self-worth and symptom control, reduces social isolation, enhances quality of life and satisfaction with finances and leisure.  
(Bond, 2001)

# Pedro's Viewpoint

How does it work at DESC?





How do you do it?

# SE at the Downtown Emergency Services Center, Seattle



After other agencies labeled Nancy "not housing ready", DESC placed Nancy into her own studio apartment at The Union. She now actively participates in supportive services, and is looking forward to finding a part-time job in landscaping or working in a nursery with plants.

# DESC Employment Services

- Operating Since 2009
- 1 program manager
- 3 employment specialists (2 in SE; 1 on the housing team)
- Enroll \_\_\_\_\_ people 1/1/17 to 12/31/17
- Placed \_\_\_\_\_ clients in part and fulltime jobs in 2017
- Tenant job retention rate \_\_\_\_\_
- Integration with housing and clinical staff



# How are we making it work?

- Utilizing fidelity to guide our program design/changes.
- Measuring outcomes
- Taking the pulse of stakeholders
- Continuously addressing issues impacting integration
  - Multi-player responsibility
  - Documentation
  - Reporting
- Utilization of TA & Training

# Principles of EBP-SE

1. **Competitive employment is the goal**
2. **Systematic Job Development**
3. **A rapid job search approach is used**
4. **Employment is integrated with service/treatment team**
5. **Ongoing work incentives and benefits counseling is used to educate consumers on the effects of earnings on benefits (e.g. federal, state, and local benefits).**
6. **Participation in the SE program is open to all who want to work “Zero Exclusion”**
7. **Long-term supports are proactive and ongoing**
8. **Job finding is individualized with attention to consumer preferences**

# 1. A competitive job is the goal

**Regular competitive jobs that pay at least minimum wage, are in the community and are open to anyone, not just people with mental illnesses or other disabilities.**

**Volunteer work and other pre-placement services such as trial work experiences are used sparingly and ONLY in response to individual preferences.**

## 2. Systematic Job Development

- Prepare for employer engagement
- Get an appointment with a decision maker
- Establish rapport
- Navigate the employer interview
  - Listen for employer needs
  - Learn about the work environment
  - Test possible solutions
- Follow-up with employers
- Present your solutions
  - Representing job seekers
  - Demonstrating SE services
- Maintain & nurture employer relationships

### 3. Rapid Job Search

- **No research shows that participation in extensive pre-vocational assessment, work adjustment and job skills training programs improves employment success (Becker & Drake, 2003)**
- **Community-based work assessments/work experiences/situational assessments should be limited to career exploration and only when REQUESTED by a consumer**
- **State agreements between VR and MH Programs establishing presumptive eligibility**

# Rapid Job Search

- You track employer contacts
- First face-to-face contact with an employer about a competitive job is on average within 30 days after program entry.
- 6 face-to-face employer contacts per week
- Multiple in person visits to an employer to build a relationship
- Employment specialists spends 65% of time in community
- Jobs obtained are diverse

## 4. Behavioral health, supportive services and employment services are Integrated .

- Same Staff
- Same Team
- Same Organization
- Same Case Record

Why Integrate?

Lower dropout rate for consumers/customers

Better communication

Clinicians get involved

Clinical information incorporated into employment plan

-Bond, 2001

# What is a service or treatment team?

**Regular daily contact**

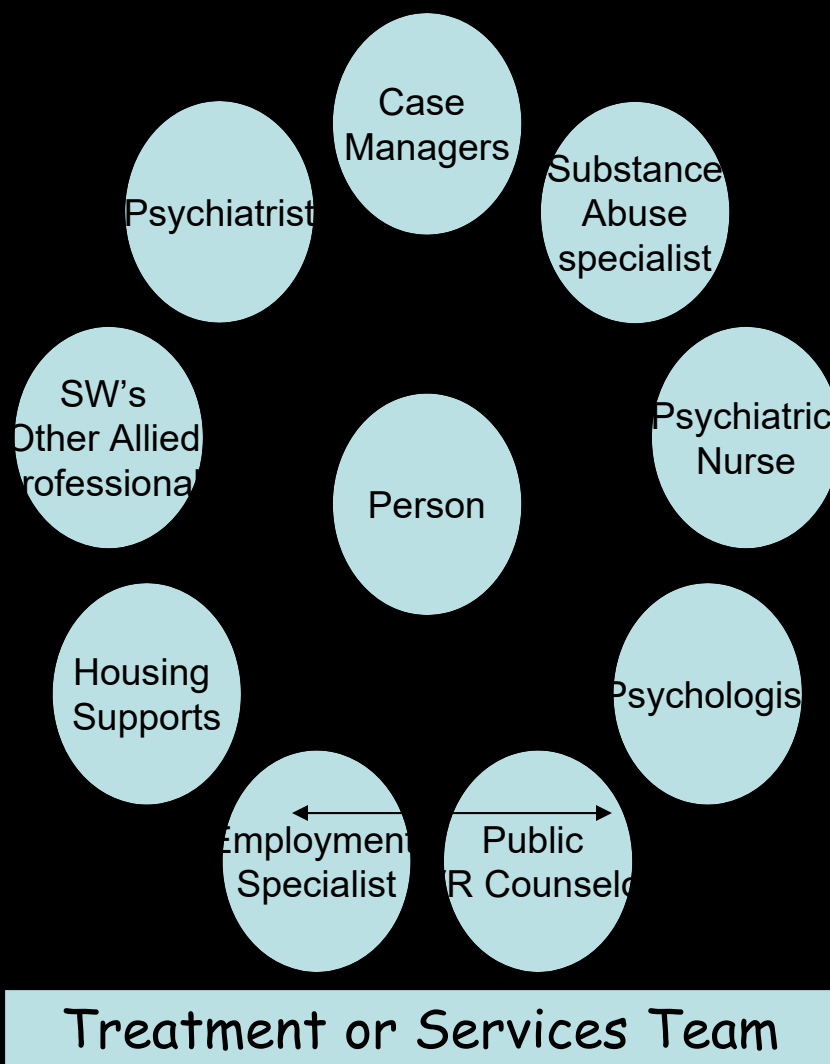
**Ideally, ESs are co-located with Team**

**Meet as least weekly to discuss cases & share clinical information**

**Shared decision making  
(job seeker makes the final call)**

**ESs coordinate plans with team.**

**Ideally one integrated case record**





# Employment services are integrated with treatment and supportive services

- ES regular attendance at team meetings and a regularly scheduled presence at the mental health program/agency is important
- State VR Counselor is part of the treatment team
- Collaboration with only a case manager, a psychologist or a housing program is not considered integration with a team.

# Employment Specialists Duties

- Employment Specialists only provide vocational services, they do not perform general case management duties
- Employment specialists provide the full range of SE services including: job development, job coaching and job supports

## 5. Personalized benefits planning

- Benefits Planning is addressed at the beginning of vocational planning not only when people secure a job
- Benefits counseling can be critical for people with mental illnesses, helping to allay anxieties and fears about losing coverage if they try work and encouraging them to go ahead
- Benefits counseling may need to continue beyond initial employment, to assist consumers in coping with reporting requirements, raises, etc.

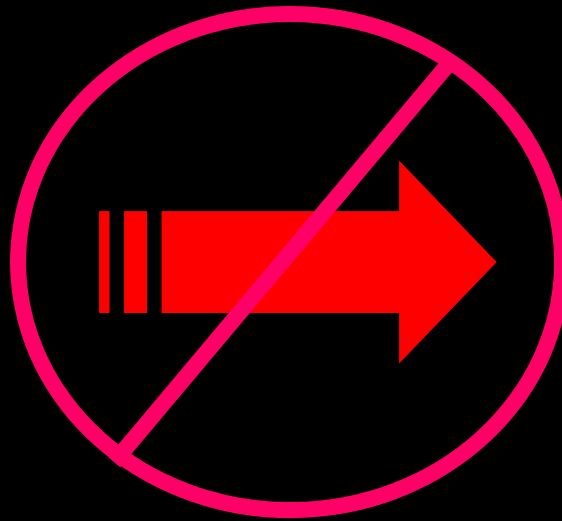
## 6. Participation is open to all who want to work

*“We don’t seem to do  
well at predicting  
who can work and  
who cannot”*



# What do we mean by “Zero exclusion”

- **Diagnosis**
- **Substance Use**
- **Symptoms**
- **Age**
- **Hospitalization History**
- **Education**
- **Gender**



Better  
Employment  
Outcomes

# All who want to work can participate

- Individuals are not screened out because of substance abuse lapses. MH and Employment specialists work with individuals to fully support a recovery lifestyle.
- Assertive outreach is provided to engage persons who are reluctant to participate or drop out
- Differing levels of readiness to participate in employment is accepted and encouragement to become engaged in employment is continuous.
- Standardized tests, work samples and situational assessments/work experiences do not predict outcomes,

# It's time for a new paradigm!



*"I'm afraid you've had a paradigm shift."*  
**Can you shift your paradigm?**

# Reframing “Readiness for employment”

Paradigm shift:

- People will accept services that they want
- The role of professionals is to help people get those services that they say they want AND provide necessary supports

People are ready to work when they say  
they are ready to work



# 7. Time Unlimited Support

Follow along supports should be highly individualized, but can include:

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| on site coaching                    | supports to employer       |
| • off site supports                 | • AM phone calls           |
| • family supports/<br>interventions | • help with grooming/dress |
| • help reporting<br>income          | • social skills training   |
| • transportation<br>options         | • money management         |
|                                     | • medication adjustment    |
|                                     | • help tracking schedule   |
|                                     | • And on and on!           |

# Time unlimited supports- Proactive and ongoing

- SE program with support from MH is responsible for the time-unlimited supports

## 8. Preferences are Important

Job finding is based on preferences, strengths, and work experiences, not on a pool of jobs that are available



# Job Seeker preferences may include:

- Number of hours
- Type of job
- Workplace environment
- Work shift
- Disclosure (or no disclosure)
- Location
- Types and Frequency of support

# Job Seeker Preferences

- Job seeker choice is fostered and respected
- Effort is made to help job seekers make informed decisions
- Research has shown that people with severe mental illness generally have realistic ideas about what work they can do, how many hours a week they can work and what work environments are good or bad for them. (Becker& Drake, 2003)

How do I pay for it?



# Funding Sources

- State Department of Mental Health
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
- County funding
- Philanthropy
- Community Development Block Grant
- SNAP – Employment & Training
- Medicaid
- Local revenue
- US Department of Labor

# Financing Employment Programs for Homeless People Toolkit

Date Published: January 2009

## Description

Increasingly, homeless assistance providers need to find creative ways to finance employment services for homeless people and other disadvantaged jobseekers. This PowerPoint slide presentation, with detailed notes, provides in-depth information about the types of Federal, State, local, and private funding available for employment and training services. Program examples are included to illustrate innovative ways to finance these services. A set of accompanying handouts provides additional information on specific topics or programs.

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1036/financing-employment-programs-for-homeless-people-toolkit/>



# Why implement evidence-based supported employment?

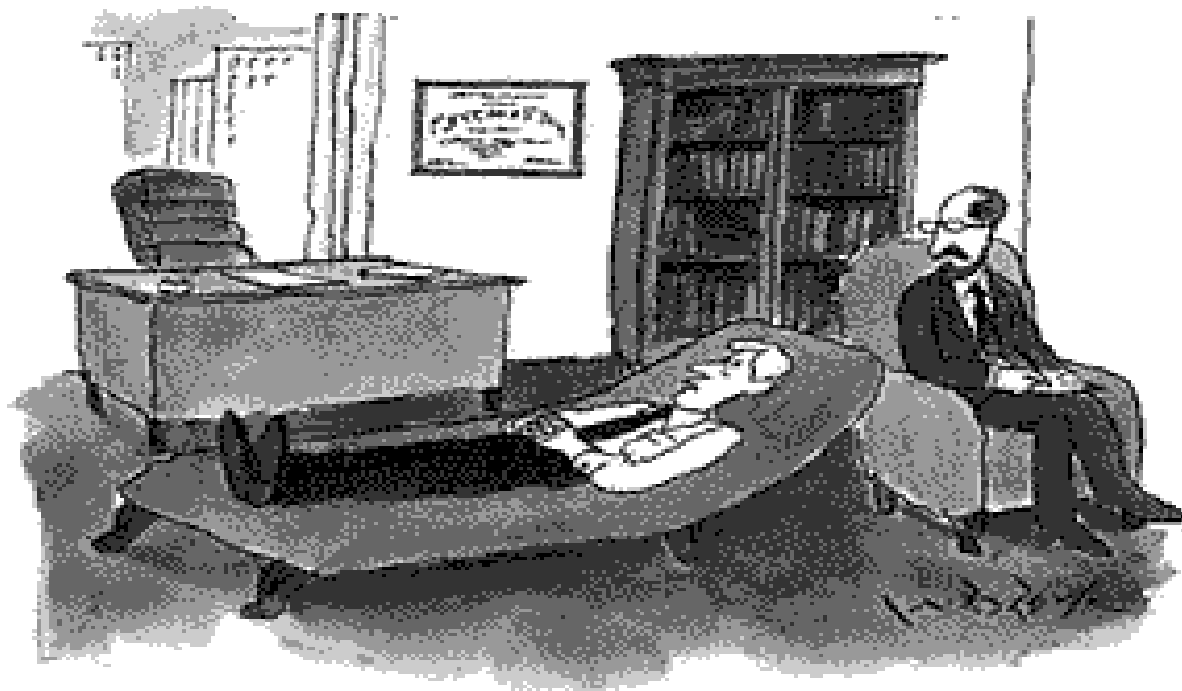
- Work, even part-time clearly gives people hope, self-esteem and an overall better quality of life
- EBP-SE helps more people with SMI go to work
- More income, less reliance on housing subsidies

What do you say to people  
who say they don't want to  
work?

OR


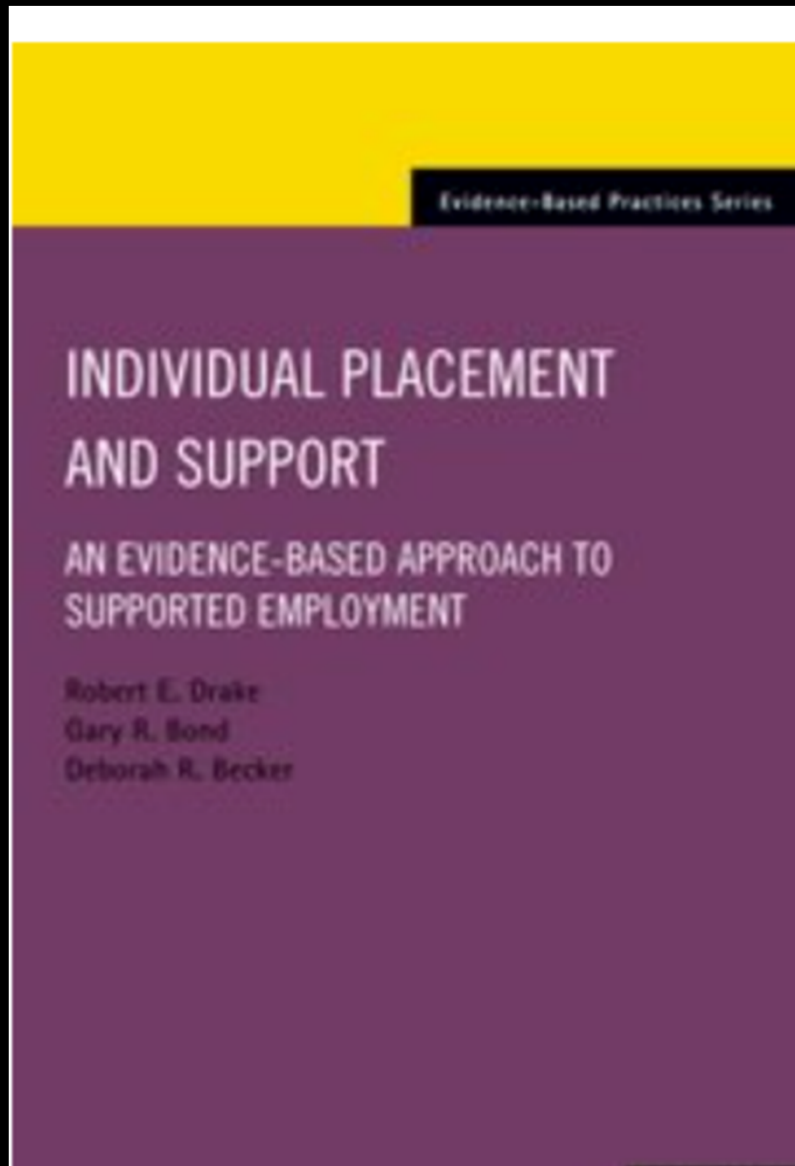
Say they want to work but  
don't follow thru for some  
reason?

# Motivational Interviewing



*"I had the dream about meaningful employment again last night."*

# Reference Books



## IPS Supported Employment Program Implementation Guide

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<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Supported-Employment-Evidence-Based-Practices-EBP-KIT/SMA08-4365>

## Resources

- IPS Employment Center
- <https://ipsworks.org/>
- Financing  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/1036/financing-employment-programs-for-homeless-people-toolkit/>
- Nine HUD Employment Lectures  
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/996/hud-employment-audio-lecture-series/>