

# Improving Client Choices and Establishing Eligibility Criteria

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# Client Eligibility Criteria Considerations

- Flexibility on the part of the Grantees in developing eligibility criteria for clients
- Payer sources
  - Medicaid, TANF, block grant, discretionary funding, state general fund, Indian Health Service funded programs, tribal funding and multiple 3<sup>rd</sup> party sources

## Client Eligibility Criteria Considerations (cont'd)

- Clients have “genuine, free, and independent choice”
- Grantees need to be sensitive when establishing criteria so they do not inadvertently set up barriers to access
  - i.e., % of poverty level too low

# Client Eligibility Criteria Considerations (cont'd)

- Means testing
  - income, assets, excessive costs of care
- “Gap analysis” can identify underserved, unserved general population and special target groups
- Existing eligibility for other State or federal low-income programs
  - Medicaid, TANF, SSI, SSDI, citizenship)
- Different eligibility by age group
- Membership in target groups or locations identified by the applicant

# Fundamental Shifts in Substance Abuse Treatment

From

To

Program focus



Client Focus

Individual  
Agencies/  
Modalities



Provider Networks,  
Continuum of Care

Treatment Focus



Recovery Focus

# Challenge and Opportunity

We have before us the challenge to not develop just another treatment structure/system; rather, it is time to realize our opportunity to create a sustainable healing/recovery environment that suffering people can draw strength from to live a “whole person” lifestyle of recovery.

# **Creating Choice-Driven Recovery Partnerships**

...as opposed to traditional clinical  
treatment structures or forced  
choice options

# Questions clients should ask when choosing providers

- Willing to risk new ideas that help people to change?
- Shares your vision and mission for recovery?
- Appreciates your courage and believes in your readiness to change?
- Helps you to challenge your change issues?
- Willing to do the homework on who you are, what you need, and wants to work in partnership with you to achieve your recovery?

# Catalysts for Lasting Change?

- Client factors (40%) of change exists within the client
- Relationship factors (30%) the receiving environment, the rapport established between client and staff
- Hope and expectancy (15%) of change occurs when the client believes that they can change and recovery is attainable
- Model/technique (15%) of change depends on what approach we use in treatment, staying away from "assembly-line" care and moving toward genuine, client driven individualized care that allows for independent choice

## Finding Client Strengths and Respecting Client Choices Means...

- ...helping them to move from:
  - Lack of Identity → A Sense of Belonging
  - Feeling Less Than → Feeling Valued
  - Humiliation → Respect for Self
  - Feeling Judged → Stand as an Equal
  - Being Forced → Decide for Self
  - Irresponsible → Caring for Others
  - Distrust → Become Vulnerable

# Empowering Clients By Documenting the Efficacy of our Efforts

- Recognizing the value of client choice through:
  - Viewing change as client driven rather than program driven
  - Building recovery partnerships with clients that show their measurable achievement
  - Understanding that programs are ultimately accountable to the client
  - Employing measurable objectives at the onset of program development that demonstrate tangible evidence of change

# Recognizing and Validating Client Choice

- Involves Questioning:
  - How are programs accountable to the client?
  - What is the client's vision of success?
  - What does the client value as evidence that he/she is meeting his/her change objectives?
  - What does the client value in the recovery partnership process?
  - How can we enhance our efforts to empower the client?

# **Example of a Voucher Program**

- Outreach to clients informing them of choice of new options for care
- Establish a 1-800 Helpline to allow ready access to menu of options
- Educate clients about the eligibility criteria that must be met
- Establish administrative processes that assure efficient client interface with clinical treatment and recovery support services

## **Implementing Standards-based Provider Network**

- Provide client assurance that all providers in network meet established standards for clinical treatment and recovery support services
- Inform client and provider how the voucher process works
- Build in incentives for efficiency
- Assure provider performance through outcome measurement