Welcome to the Pennsylvania Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Curriculum training on *Mental Health Wellness and Recovery.*
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) and the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) have undertaken a joint initiative to address the needs of people who have an intellectual disability as well as mental health challenges. People who have both of these challenges are commonly referred to as those who have Dual Diagnosis. For the purpose of this training, Dual Diagnosis is not referring to co-occurring mental health challenges and substance abuse or dependence, although people can have substance abuse or dependence issues as well as a Dual Diagnosis of intellectual disability and mental health challenges. The curriculum was designed for Direct Supporters, Supports Coordinators and others who work in either the intellectual disability field or the mental health field.

The ultimate goal of this training curriculum is to provide information that can aid in the understanding of the struggles and the triumphs of those you support or will support. This curriculum was designed to demonstrate the complexity of Dual Diagnosis and the factors that need to be considered to best support those with whom you come into contact. The Pennsylvania Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Curriculum was also designed to demonstrate that all people in this world, regardless of their challenges, are much more alike than they are different.
The information presented to you today is to increase your awareness. It is not intended to replace medical advice. If you believe you or someone you support have these conditions or concerns, please seek the advice of a physician.
The objectives of this training are to help you:

• Define what mental health wellness and recovery means

• Identify ways in which people can practice mental health wellness, and identify tools that can aid in the establishment and maintenance of mental health wellness and recovery
Mental health is defined as how a person thinks, acts, and copes with life and the stressors and challenges that are part of the human experience.

Individuals with good mental health wellness are better able to function during stressful situations.

The primary focus of mental health wellness is to achieve a positive balance in one’s life and develop the necessary skills to cope and work toward recovery from both chronic mental health challenges and transient stressors, (the burdens of everyday life that can cause frustration).
Good mental health wellness is about being able to bounce back from adversity. It is about not letting the trials and tribulations of life get the best of you. It is about communicating your feelings, wants and needs in an appropriate and productive way.

Mental health wellness is about the development of positive relationships and setting goals. It is about achieving the goals we set for ourselves and managing the stressors of daily living, effectively. Mental health wellness is about not being afraid to seek help when it is needed.

Mental health wellness is about:
• living life to the fullest
• appreciating the skills and talents we possess, and
• becoming more in touch with what we want and what we need to be happy
The Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services defines recovery as “a self-determined and holistic journey that people undertake to heal and grow. Recovery is facilitated by relationships and environments that provide hope, empowerment, choices and opportunities that promote people reaching their full potential as individual and community members.”

- PA Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 2005

Recovery does not necessarily mean the elimination of all symptoms forever, but learning to cope, having hope, and living the best life possible.
Many individuals who have an intellectual disability and mental health diagnosis face greater challenges than those who have a mental health diagnosis alone.

There are still some clinicians and psychiatrists that believe that an individual who has an intellectual disability cannot have a mental health diagnosis.

There are also some who believe that an individual with an intellectual disability cannot benefit from traditional mental health services such as therapy, counseling, group therapy, club houses, certified peer supports and other mental health supports and services.

Recovery means improving Quality of Life regardless of IQ, mental health diagnosis, or other challenges.
A person with a dual diagnosis can recover, from their mental health challenge even if they cannot fully recover from their intellectual disability.

Individuals with a Dual Diagnosis do have the ability to reduce their psychiatric symptoms and learn ways to effectively manage their mental health challenges if provided the opportunity and support to do so.
Recovery can be a part of an individual’s Everyday Life.

Striving and being supported to obtain and maintain an Everyday Life can play a very large positive role in a person’s recovery as well. When people feel like their life is heading in a positive direction, it strengthens their commitment to recovery. When a person is committed to recovery, it fosters the desire, for an Everyday Life.

Recovery and Everyday Lives for a person dually diagnosed cannot exist without one another, they are intricately connected and the principles of both must be established and supported to help support, and promote better outcomes. This also promotes Mental Health Wellness.
The blue text on the slide –Hope, Secure Base, Supportive Relationships, Empowerment & Inclusion, Meaning, Self and Coping Strategies - incorporates principles of recovery along with the core characteristics of *Everyday Lives*. The fundamental concept of *Everyday Lives* is that, with the support of family and friends, people with disabilities can decide how to live their lives and what support they need. It also means that they are responsible for their decisions and actions.

Like *Everyday Lives*, the principles of recovery focus on the fundamental concepts of establishing support, meaningful relationships, a sense of identity and meaning to life and empowering a person to take control of, and be responsible for, their own life.

Think about a person you know who may be in recovery, whether it be due to a mental health challenge, drug or alcohol issue, or both. What helps that person maintain their recovery? What kind of support works or worked best for them? What do you think contributed to the times when the person relapsed or decompensated? What areas on this slide do you think made the most impact for a person you know who is, or was in recovery?

An important concept to incorporate is self-determination. Self determination is the process by which a person controls their own life.
Here are some examples of activities and strategies that promote mental health wellness and recovery.

**Relaxation and Meditation** can involve many different things. Some examples are breathing exercises, yoga or simply having a “quiet space” to relax. Relaxation and meditation can reduce both stress and anxiety which is helpful when coping with the complexities of life.
Physical activity can also be utilized to promote mental health wellness. Physical activity generates endorphins which increases feelings of happiness. Doing something physically demanding and fun leads to less focus on internal negative thoughts and feelings. For individuals who have a diagnosis of depression or anxiety, physical activity can greatly reduce focus on negative thoughts and feelings.
Building meaningful relationships are extremely vital in promoting mental health wellness. Many individuals who experience mental health challenges and intellectual disabilities, can feel disconnected and isolated from others. Many individuals can feel alone with these challenges. Building meaningful relationships within and outside of their peer group is extremely important.
Spirituality can have a very strong impact in promotion of mental health wellness. Spirituality does not necessarily mean adhering to a specific religion, but rather the belief that there is both a higher power and a higher purpose in life. It is believed that the challenges that people face serve a purpose and that overcoming such challenges and learning from them guides them to find their place in this world. Certified Peer Specialists and Sponsors speak on higher purposes and many can attest that overcoming their challenges has led them to helping professions that foster hope and support for those who currently struggle.
Activities and hobbies are an integral part of mental health wellness. Activities and hobbies stimulate the mind, provide motivation, enjoyment and can distract people from negative thoughts and feelings. Activities and hobbies can help to open doors and build important relationships through common interests.
Pets can also be a fantastic mental health wellness tool. Petting cats and dogs can provide a calming effect that decreases one’s blood pressure and heart rate. Pets can also provide companionship and a sense of purpose for a person in recovery. Studies have shown a high correlation between having therapy dogs and cats in various psychiatric and geriatric settings. Patients have reported an increase in life satisfaction and happiness with pets.
Sleep hygiene is very important for all of us when it comes to mental health wellness. Adequate sleep is the cornerstone of being mentally and emotionally able to handle life stressors and frustration. Adequate sleep increases the ability to effectively solve problems.
Good nutritional habits are important for mental wellness. Consuming a healthy balanced diet provides energy for the body to meet nutrition needs, as opposed to consuming much of our diet from fast food or junk food.
The next several slides will discuss various mental health wellness and recovery tools that you may be unfamiliar with such as: Wellness Recovery Action Planning, also known as WRAP®, Certified Peer Specialists, Personal Medicine Tools and Common Ground.

We will also talk briefly about other traditional mental health supports such as psychotherapy and psychiatry.
Wellness Recovery Action Plans or WRAP®, provide mental health wellness tools that are developed BY the person FOR the person. WRAP® plans are individualized strategies and self-developed in the person’s own words, that the person uses to maintain their mental health wellness and recovery.

WRAP® plans include information such as:
- A person’s symptoms of mental health challenges in their own words
- Triggers that might cause the recurrence of symptoms
- Coping strategies that work and those that do not
- Strategies to employ in a crisis
- What to do if all else fails, including information about who to contact in a mental health emergency, a preferred hospital, list of current medications and “do’s and don’ts”

“Do’s and Don’ts” are developed in case the person is non-verbal or the person is unable to respond in the event of a psychiatric crisis.
To find out more information on Wellness Recovery Action Plans, or to locate a WRAP® facilitator or to receive WRAP® training, visit the Copeland Center website.
Certified Peer Specialists can assist with mental wellness.

A Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) is a person who has self-identified as having received or is receiving mental health or addiction services in his or her personal recovery.

This person has undergone extensive training on how to assist others in regaining control over their lives based on the principles of recovery and resiliency.

A certified peer specialist’s role includes but is not limited to:
• Providing emotional support and insight
• Helping individuals expand their social support network

Here are some examples of what a CPS can do to help:
• Assist in creating recovery and WRAP plans
• Assist in creatively looking at issues and work on strategies to address issues
• Assist in going out into the community and developing community skills and,
• Assist in developing independence
Another example of Mental Health Wellness Tools are Personal Medicine Tools™ created by Patricia Deegan, PhD.

Personal Medicine Tools™ are natural and personal tools individuals use to help people feel better and empower their lives.

Personal Medicine Tools™ are what we utilize to center ourselves in order to remain productive and mentally healthy.

It is about what a person DOES, NOT what they TAKE in order to feel better. Personal Medicine Tools™ does not include medications.

The following is a list of some Personal Medicine Tools™:
- Doing crossword puzzles
- Taking long walks
- Being alone to relax
- Doing word problems
- Bird watching

Personal Medicine Tools must be what the person desires and believes will make them feel better.
Let’s talk about Common Ground...

Patricia Deegan PhD, the creator of CommonGround™, explains CommonGround in the following way:

“When we go for a medication appointment with the psychiatrist, there are many issues that need to be discussed. However, the appointment is short, often only 15-20 minutes. It can be hard to organize our thoughts, answer the doctor's questions, ask our own questions, speak up about our concerns and make decisions. Sometimes we can feel more like spectators on our own care, rather than full partners in making decisions about what treatment is right for us.”

• “Common Ground™ is a web-based application to support shared decision making in the psychopharmacology consultation that helps people prepare to meet with psychiatrists and arrive at the best decisions for treatment and recovery.”

• “Common Ground™ addresses this challenge by helping us prepare before the appointment, so that during the appointment we are ready to work with our doctor to find the best decisions for our treatment and recovery.”

• “Before the appointment, CommonGround™ helps us prepare a 1-page Health Report that summarizes how we are doing and what our concerns are. Additionally, CommonGround™ links us to information about our treatment and provides suggestions that help us manage our disorder and make progress in our recovery.”

• “During the appointment, our CommonGround™ Health Report acts like an amplifier, helping our doctor quickly understand our goals, concerns and progress. Together we arrive at a shared decision about the next best steps for treatment and recovery. Our shared decision is printed out so we can bring it home as a reminder about what we will do to help ourselves before the next appointment.”

All that is needed to use CommonGround™ is a computer, modern web-browser, high speed internet and the CommonGround™ software.
The last two tools, Personal Medicine Tools™ and Common Ground™ are based on the work of Pat Deegan, an independent consultant who specializes in researching and lecturing on the topic of recovery and the empowerment of people diagnosed with a mental health challenge.

Pat is an activist in the disability rights movement and has lived her own journey of recovery after being diagnosed with schizophrenia as a teenager.

More information about these tools are available on the PDA website.
Although the majority of this training was developed to discuss how a person can work to achieve mental health wellness and obtain and maintain their recovery on a personal level, we need to discuss the importance of traditional mental health services and supports that can assist in maintaining recovery.

- Good psychiatric care, including psychotropic medications, may be a strong component of the person’s recovery and mental health wellness. This can be especially true for people with more chronic and persistent mental health challenges such as Schizophrenia.
- Therapy and Counseling can also be important to mental health recovery and wellness. Therapy and counseling can assist a person with concerns, such as learning how to avoid negative thoughts and emotions, developing coping and self-management skills and even assist in dealing with the stressors of everyday life. Therapy can be provided on a short term or long term basis.
- A Case Manager is a coordinator and facilitator of necessary medical and social services. It is the case manager’s role to locate appropriate resources and assist the person in gaining access to needed services. At times when a person requires a higher level of case management they may receive intensive case management services.
- At times, crisis support and hospitalization may be necessary or desired if a person is struggling with their recovery. The use of crisis support and hospitalization should not be viewed as a failure in the recovery process but rather as a re-evaluation of a person’s recovery and what barriers to recovery led to the need for such supports.
- Partial hospitalization programs, Community Integrated Recovery Centers (CIRCS) and clubhouses can also be valuable recovery tools. These services and supports can provide a safe therapeutic environment for a person to attend therapy and meet regularly with their psychiatrist.
- Community Treatment is generally more intensive than traditional case management services. Community Treatment Teams assist by helping the person with medication management, crisis supports, vocational needs, and housing, and mental health treatment in the community.
Total mental health wellness is contingent and motivated by the individual AND the system of mental health services.

Without adequate mental health services, mental health issues can persist and people are left to maintain their mental health wellness alone.

Without adequate mental health services, mental health issues cannot be thoroughly addressed and understood in the Intellectual Disability system.

We continue to advocate for equal resources from the mental health system in order to provide all people, especially those who are dually diagnosed, the opportunity to have a chance at a successful recovery.

It is up to all of us, as a society, to continue advocating and lobbying for equal resources to invoke change and give all people, regardless of their disabilities, the chance to add recovery to their Everyday Lives.
Here are ways to assist the people we support with their mental health wellness and recovery:

Educate the person you support about:
• Their mental health diagnosis, recovery tools, supports and strategies available to them

Have the person describe, in their own words, their symptoms of a mental health challenge.
• Talk about what might trigger those symptoms
• Talk about coping strategies
• Consider connecting with a Certified Peer Specialist
• Suggest seeking therapy, counseling and other mental health support or service available to that person
• Discuss crisis planning

Encourage the people you support to:
• Adopt recovery strategies to give control and responsibility back to the person
• Explore services from the mental health system for example: various mental health therapies or Certified Peer Specialists
To assist people with mental health challenges and an intellectual disability it is helpful to obtain training on the topics of:

- Mental health challenges
- Recovery
- Mental health wellness
- Certified peer specialists
- Available mental health supports and services
- Various tools that can aid in mental health wellness and recovery
Without an understanding of ourselves, there is no change.
Without change, there is no hope.
Without hope, there is no reason to try.
Without a reason to try, there is no chance.
Mental health wellness and recovery is about hope, change and another chance at an Everyday Life.

www.dhs.pa.gov
Congratulations, you have successfully completed the Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Curriculum training

Mental Health Wellness and Recovery

Congratulations, you have successfully completed the Mental Health Wellness and Recovery training.
Thank you for your participation in this training.