



Wisconsin Recovery Implementation Task Force

Self Advocacy: Where Do We Begin?

RITF Recovery Education Committee

CCS Statewide Meeting
September 7, 2016



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Welcome!

Brief introductions



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What is the RITF?

- An advisory board to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Care and Treatment Services
- Ensures Wisconsin's mental health and substance use disorder services promote recovery, hope, dignity, and empowerment throughout the lifespan



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What is the RITF?

- Members include individuals with lived experience of a mental illness and/or substance use disorder and advocates for individuals with these concerns
- Twenty year history of advocacy at the state level



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Types of Advocacy

- **Self Advocacy:** taking action to represent and advance your own interests
- **Individual or Peer Advocacy:** taking action to represent the rights and interests of someone other than yourself



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Types of Advocacy

- **Systems Advocacy:** taking action to influence social, political, and economic systems to bring about change for groups of people
- **Legal Advocacy:** taking action to use attorneys and the legal or administrative systems to establish or protect legal rights



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Tactics for All Types of Advocacy

- Decide what you want
- Get the facts
- Plan your strategy
- Gather your support
- Be firm and persistent
- Maintain your credibility
- Use good verbal and nonverbal skills
- Document your interactions



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Problem Solving Skills

- Identify the problem
- Break the problem into smaller parts
- Identify who can help to solve the problem
- Develop an action plan
- Keep your final goal in mind



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Dealing with Emotions

- Emotions are necessary and can be helpful
- Anticipate triggers
- Practice staying calm
- Have a place to vent
- Use self care
- Use Support from others



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Example of Advocacy

Does anyone wish to share an example of something they advocated for?

- What was the problem?
- What steps did you take to address the issue?
- How was the issue solved?
- What did you learn from this experience?



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Role Play

Watch the presenters role play an advocacy situation



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Small Group Practice

Break into small groups. Role play one of the following situations or use one of your own.

- Customer service representative: “We can’t pay for the treatment because it is not medically necessary”
- Staff member: “I don’t think that there are any openings on the advisory board right now”
- Friend: “Seems like they let the crazy people out today”



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Wrap Up

- What did you learn?
- What do you want to do next?
- What steps will you take to get there?



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Resources

- Go to ritf.wisconsin.gov
- Click on “Resources”