Self Advocacy: Where Do We Begin?

RITF Recovery Education Committee

CCS Statewide Meeting
September 7, 2016
Welcome!

Brief introductions
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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?
Role Play

Watch the presenters role play an advocacy situation
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”
Wisconsin Recovery Implementation Task Force

Wrap Up

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

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