

Excerpt from Chapter 11, On Our Own, Together

Common Ingredients as a Fidelity Measure for Peer-Run Programs

by Matthew Johnsen, Gregory Teague, and Elizabeth McDonel Herr

The Common Ingredients Subcommittee worked closely with the separate Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP) of the COSP MRI. Although the Common Ingredients Subcommittee included a majority of consumers, it was important that a large and representative group of consumers with experience developing and operating the service programs be available to review and work through issues at length and separately from the researchers to ensure that a resulting measure would be maximally faithful to the intent of COSPs. In fact, in this aspect the COSP fidelity measure development paralleled the methodology used by McGrew and Bond (1995) in seeking expert consensus on the ingredients of assertive community treatment. The MRI represented COSP sites across the country chosen by competitive review process to be part of this federally funded research study. Each site was able to bring to the table multiple consumers with varying perspectives and roles within their COSPs. For example, there were consumers who were executive directors or staff on COSPs, consumers currently receiving services within COSP, consumer researchers, and consumers who were nationally recognized consumer advocates serving as reviewers and contributors to this process.

...

Ultimately we developed a list of common ingredients and definitions that were shared with the CAP. The CAP considered this list of common ingredients and reached agreement about both the inclusion of particular common ingredients within the list and definitions of these common ingredients. The work of the CAP at this stage was particularly crucial in three respects. First, CAP members included individuals intimately involved with the day-to-day operations of consumer-operated services, and input from these individuals provided an important initial test of the relevance of the ingredients. Second, CAP members represented each of the eight study sites, insuring wider generalizability than one program model. Third, the CAP was able to wrestle with questions about whether common ingredients are, in fact, common across all sites. These modifications were then fed back to the Common Ingredients Subcommittee as it entered the measurement phase of its work. The common ingredients are also described in Chapters 1, 2, and 12 of this book.

...

To operationalize these common ingredients, work groups were charged with identifying recommended data collection strategies for each common ingredient, developing anchored ratings for each common ingredient within the particular domains included in the Common Ingredients List, and returning to the Common Ingredients Subcommittee prepared to present these ratings for consideration. We tried to ensure that each work group included both researchers and consumers, since both sets of insights would be crucial to effectively carrying out these tasks. In addition, a small number of work group staff participated on more than one work group to insure a consistent approach across domains.