Continuum of Collaborative Care Pilot Project: Individuals with Mental Illness and Developmental Disabilities
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**About:**

- NH Council on Developmental Disabilities is a federally funded agency that supports public policies and initiatives that remove barriers and promote opportunities in all areas of life. The Council develops a State Plan every five years to establish priorities and carries out its mission through education, advocacy and the funding of innovative projects that make a difference in people’s lives.

**Mission:**

- “We are dedicated to dignity, full rights of citizenship, equal opportunities, and full participation for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.”

**Learnings about Leadership and its relationship to LEND:**

Leadership is needed in all positions to make changes within the community. From this project I learned that being a leader means making changes that impact individuals within that community. This project showed me that to make change, it takes a team of dedicated leaders with varied experiences. It also showed me that systems change can take time.

**Project Description:**

- Through funding from the New Hampshire Council on Developmental Disabilities, made available through a Request For Proposal (RFP) process, the Continuum of Collaborative Care Pilot Project was selected for implementation.

- The Continuum of Collaborative Care Pilot Project is a fully integrated model with interagency collaboration for individuals with a dual diagnosis of a mental illness and developmental disability. It would provide educational opportunities for professionals, as well as joint interdisciplinary meetings to provide collaboration on treatment plans and Individual Service Agreements for individuals receiving services from both systems. This allows for goals and treatment plans to be merged.

- This was funded by a grant to support the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities’ five-year State plan, and supports Objective 3 related to Dual Diagnosis, within Goal 3: Personal Choice.

- Community Crossroads, in collaboration with Center for Life Management, was the agency selected for a pilot project, with their Continuum of Care through Strengthened Interagency Collaboration.

**Description of Activities:**

- Researching the gaps in services for individuals with a dual diagnosis of a mental illness and developmental disability.

- Creating a Request for Proposal for “Implementing New Strategies for Addressing the Needs of Individuals with a Dual Diagnosis of DD and Mental Health Needs”.

- Being part of the evaluation team that reviewed and selected the best proposal to implement a pilot project.

- Testifying on proposed legislation intended to study the treatment needs of individuals with dual diagnosis.

**Learnings:**

- Learned the impact that systems have on an individual.

- How an RFP is created and proposals are selected for funding as a pilot study.

- This pilot would gather data and evidence that may support the model and an evidence-based practice in the future.

- The process it takes to implement a project.

- How to prepare testimony on bills.

**Next steps:**

- Replicating the Continuum of Collaborative Care pilot project throughout the state of NH.

- Contributing to the existing body of knowledge pertaining to best practices for serving individuals with a dual diagnosis.

- Informing leaders, legislators and state agencies about best practices that can lead to system change.

- Data collection to gather evidence in support of a promising practice.

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