EXPLORING HARM REDUCTION
Doing More Good Than Harm
Friday, November 15
9:30am - 12:00pm

CUCS
center for urban community services

Rebuilding Lives, Sharing Knowledge, Shaping Systems
Center for Urban Community Services

CUCS offers a range of programs & services to more than 20,000 individuals and families in NYC.

- Permanent Housing
- Transitional Housing
- Single Stop
- Street Outreach
- ACT Team
- Janian Medical
- Housing Consultation
- Case Management Consultation

CUCS shares knowledge with several thousand direct care staff annually through training & pre / post training support throughout the nation.
OUR DISTINGUISHED PANEL

Mike Golub (moderator), Trainer/Consultant, CUCS

Panelists

Dr. Scott Kellogg, Clinical Assistant Professor in the NYU Department of Psychology

D. Alexandra Dyer, Executive Director, Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center

Katie Bower, Director of Substance Abuse Housing at Project Renewal, Inc.
Substance Abuse is possibly the largest challenge for supportive housing providers.
HARM REDUCTION
ORIGINS OF HARM REDUCTION

- “formally” developed in Europe in the 1980’s as a public health response to the spreading of the AIDS epidemic
  - providing services to active users
  - offering non-judgmental treatment options
  - creating low demand services
  - designing services targeting the needs of active users
  - offering education
There is no universal definition or formula for implementing harm reduction but it does embrace certain principles…
The Principles of Harm Reduction
Harm reduction is designed to serve people engaged in unsafe behaviors (drug use, unsafe sex, etc.)

- does embrace certain principles and practices with realistic/pragmatic strategies that reduce the negative consequences of harmful behaviors:
  - safer use, safer sex, etc.
  - managed use or decreased behavior
  - sometimes to complete abstinence

Source: Harm Reduction Coalition
HARM REDUCTION ASKS

- what specifically are the harms associated with different licit & illicit substances, unprotected sex, etc.?
- what can be done to reduce the risk of those harms occurring?

Harm reduction can be applied to almost any problem behavior (*diet, exercise, sexual practices, hoarding, any addictive behaviors*)
PRINCIPLES OF HARM REDUCTION

- accepts, for better or worse, that people use/abuse drugs
- understands drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviors from severe abuse to total abstinence
- recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, sexism, social isolation, past traumas and institutionalization and other social inequalities effect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with harmful behaviors
- doesn’t attempt to minimize or ignore the real and tragic harm and danger associated with licit and illicit drug use, unprotected sex, etc.

Source: Harm Reduction Coalition
acknowledges that there are safer ways to use

calls for non-judgmental, non-coercive services where clients are empowered to make their own clinical decisions

empowers client to make the decisions about treatment
DRUG USE IS MEANINGFUL & SERVES A PURPOSE

People use substances for complex and deep-seated reasons that may need to be addressed before the individual will be willing to make changes in their use.

Drugs serve a purpose to the user as a:

- pathway to pleasure
- way to reduce inner pain and suffering
- method for coping with medical problems
- vehicle for making and affirming social connections
- as a response to social oppression and poverty
STAGES OF CHANGE
TRANSTHEORETICAL MODEL

Prochaska,
DiClemente &
Norcross
LOWERING RESISTANCE IS KEY

- helps worker not become so frustrated
- helps worker remain neutral when using and relapsing
- help build awareness of negative consequences of use
- work on mutual goals
- avoid pushing our own agenda
- elicit personal goals
- develop discrepancy when ready
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<tr>
<th>STAGES OF CHANGE - MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING</th>
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<td><strong>Pre-Contemplation &amp; Contemplation</strong></td>
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<td>Using</td>
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Harm Reduction:
In Practice & The Outcomes
WHY IS HARM REDUCTION IMPORTANT?

Risky behavior(s) increase a person’s vulnerability to:

- homelessness
- disease such as HIV and other negative health outcomes
- incarceration
- self injury
- injury to others
- hospitalization
- isolation
- loss of family, friends and/or employment
EXAMPLES OF HARM REDUCTION STRATEGIES

- helping person find employment
- setting up rep payee
- discussing methods for having safe sex by using condoms
HARM REDUCTION HAS POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- improves mental and physical health
- reduces the use of public services (emergency rooms, prisons, etc.)
- increases housing stability
EBP THAT USE HARM REDUCTION

- Supportive Housing
- Housing First
- Contingency Management / BTSAS
- Needle Exchange Programs
- Safe havens
- Methadone maintenance
- Condom distribution & use

Harm Reduction is compatible with:
- Recovery
- Motivational Interviewing
- Critical Time Intervention
- Wellness Self Management
- Housing First
- Supportive Housing
Thank You.

Presented by:
Mike Golub, Trainer/Consultant
mgolub@cucs.org
212.801.3377
Center for Urban Community Services
Training & Consulting Services
198 East 121st Street
New York, NY 10035
www.cucs.org