



CREATING A PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM FOR MCLEAN COUNTY: A PROTOTYPE NARRATIVE

Illinois Recovery Corps, Chestnut Health Systems, and McLean County ROSC

Cat Hays, Project Coordinator

7/19/2022

ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION: WHAT IS COME ALIVE! RECOVERY LIFE CENTER?

- Come Alive! Recovery Life Center is a non-profit 501c3 recovery community center (RCC).
- Our Mission: Collaborating to build and empower communities of recovery
- Our Vision: To improve health, wellness, and recovery for individuals and families, with or at risk of substance use/mental health problems, to promote healthy and safe communities, and to maximize the chance our fellow McLean county citizens can achieve a safe, sober, happy, healthy and fulfilled life
- Our Core Values: Hope, Self-Determination, Empowerment, Wellness, Community, & Diversity
- Our Target Markets: Individuals in recovery from substance use, individuals with co-occurring mental health disorders, individuals seeking recovery support services, impacted friends and family, mentors, & key stakeholders.
- Our Unique Value Proposition:
 - Problem – Connection to community resources and social support systems to support individuals in recovery.
 - Solution – Clearinghouse of community resources as a one-stop resource & recovery friendly, pro social environment to develop healthy relationships and community to support the recovery process.
 - Benefits – Streamlined coordination of resource access & creation of opportunities for development of healthy, supportive relationships & community

ORGANIZATIONAL & MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE: WHO ARE WE AND HOW WILL WE OPERATE?

- Our Organizational Hierarchy:
 - Board of Directors
 - Committees – Executive, finance, nominating/board development, & others (examples: fundraising, volunteer recruitment, community partnerships, etc.)
 - Paid Staff – Reception/telephone support; volunteer coordination; advocacy & outreach; peers who provide services; bookkeeping/accounting; Executive Director/CEO
 - Volunteers
 - Community Partnerships
- Organizational Bylaws – Governance Policies & Procedures:
 - How organization is managed and governed– legal, financial, & ethical aspects
 - Setup of board of directors

PROGRAMS & SERVICES: WHAT WILL WE OFFER?

This is the full scope of programs and services we intend to expand to offer:

Support groups	Spiritual support
Sober social events and recreational activities	Housing assistance
Recovery resource connection and/or referrals	Help from a recovery coach
Volunteer/service opportunities	Remote/virtual peer support
Family support & programming	Transportation assistance
Health & wellness services	Life and/or recovery skills training & education
Employment and/or education assistance	Advocacy
Public education & awareness	

MARKETING, PROMOTIONAL, & OUTREACH PLAN: CONNECT WITH US!

- Social Media: Check us out our Facebook page, Instagram account, & YouTube channel!
- Traditional Media: Stay tuned for our upcoming radio spotlight on WGLT, the upcoming Pantagraph article covering the results of the community wide survey conducted by IL Recovery Corps Project Coordinator, Cat Hays, and our upcoming advertising partnership with WTVP!
- Community Outreach & Engagement Strategies: Our street team will be present at the McLean County Fair; the First Friday events in downtown Bloomington for months of August, September, and October; and the Sugar Creek Arts Festival. Be sure to stop by our table to collect event exclusive swag!
- Community Partnerships: Meet just a few of our partners – Integrity Counseling, Heartland Community College, the Center for Human Services, Tarter Construction, the McLean County ROSC, & the local NAMI chapter, NAMI Mid Central Illinois.

OPERATIONAL PLAN: DAY-TO-DETAILS

- **Location:** Look for more details as we prepare for moving to a permanent home. For now, we will be housed in the McLean County Center for Human Services.
- **Daily Activities:** Keep up with our community calendar of upcoming events listed on our website. We will be keeping a complete and up-to-date calendar of events and the times and places our community partners will be available for utilizing services.
- **Center Equipment & Spaces:** The blueprint for the center's permanent home includes classrooms for support group meetings, conference rooms for trainings and workshops, individual office spaces for one-on-one peer counseling and recovery coaching sessions, a kitchen and eating area, a computer lab, and various lounge spaces throughout the center for fun and relaxation.
- **Safety & Liability:** We are dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of our staff, volunteers, community partners, and program participants. We currently have strict cybersecurity and confidentiality protocols in place to safeguard the privacy and dignity of our participants. In the event of a mental health crisis, the Center for Human Services has crisis team on staff 24/7. In the event of an escalated incident, we have a partnership with local law enforcement to work together to resolve the situation.
- **Day-to-Day Expense Budget:** For anyone wanting more information on our operational budget, please contact the head of the finance committee.
- **Daily Operational Policies & Procedures** (examples: hiring, accepting donations, volunteer recruitment, program/service design & selection, etc.).

STRATEGIC & IMPACT PLAN: WHAT DO WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH?

- Organizational Priorities: Peer recovery support services, advocacy, and public education and awareness
- Strategic Goals: The community and our participants may learn more about our strategic goals in the organizational Strategic Plan listed on our website.
- Sustainability & Future Planning: Our sustainability plan consists of four key components: funding, workforce and volunteer force development (including credentialing of peer professionals), community collaboration (as seen is work with our community partners), and offering continually relevant programs and services for the community.
- Credentialing of the Center: The center is currently working towards accreditation as a recovery community center from the Council on Accreditation of Peer Recovery Support Services (CAPRSS). We will be keeping our key stakeholders, staff, volunteers, and center participants updated on our progress.

EVALUATION PLAN: HOW ARE WE DOING?

- **Outcomes:** An outcome we will be tracking is number of participants served. This will specifically look like attendance numbers at sober social events and recreational activities, number of participants utilizing community services, number of resource connections made, attendance numbers of support group meetings, and number of recovery coaching sessions.
- **Metrics:** Metrics we plan to utilize include increase/decreases in number of participants served, increases in quality of life and recovery capital, participant satisfaction of offered programs and services, social media traffic metrics for current awareness campaigns, and the use of both qualitative (stories, testimonials) and quantitative (surveys, number of participants) data.
- **Progress Tracking:** We will be using our Strategic Plan as the benchmark for progress toward strategic goals. Progress toward completed strategic goals will be evaluated quarterly.
- **Improvement Plans:** After the Strategic Plan has been reviewed at each quarterly meeting, the Board of Directors, subcommittees, staff, community partners, and volunteers will hold various meetings and huddles to determine course correction to keep the organization on track toward achievement of strategic goals.

FINANCIAL PLAN: HOW ARE WE FUNDED?

- **Funding Sources:** Our work could not be possible without the support of Illinois Prairie Community Foundation; United Way McLean County; Illinois Humanities; the R3: Restore, Reinvest, Renew Grant; the John M. Scott Grants program; IDHS-SUPR; the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority; SAMSHA; HRSA; the CDC; HUD; and contributions from local corporate and private donors.
- **Community Partnerships:** Much thanks and appreciation for our community partners for their work, dedication, and efforts to serve our community.
- **Fundraising Activities:** Be sure to check out our website for more information on the International Overdose Awareness Day giving campaign in August and the center's first annual National Recovery Picnic & Family Fun Fair Fundraiser at the end of September.
- **Financial Oversight and Management:** For more information on the center's financials and management of, please contact the head of the finance committee for a full report, including our 990 Form.

POTENTIAL DERIVED BENEFITS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

- Evidence-based research data for potential derived benefits for program participants as they make use of the center & its program/service offerings:
 - Increase in recovery capital
 - Lower psychological stress
 - Better quality of life
 - Improved self-esteem
 - Improvements in abstinence and substance use problems
 - Aid in supporting and sustaining long-term recovery
 - Mutual accountability
 - Development of community, a sense of belonging & “local citizenship”
 - Centralized location for resources, support, and assistance

POTENTIAL DERIVED BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY:

- Potential derived benefits for the community based on community-wide survey data:
 - “Would depend on the actual ability of the CRC to provide given services. If partnered sufficiently for employment and housing, could see fewer people living long-term in shelters, could increase overall wellbeing of clients.”
 - “Parents of children in foster care are often dealing with substance misuse, and relapse is part of gaining sobriety. Having a safe space to come out of that would be another asset in assisting with a reunification goals for the children in care.”
 - “Individuals in recovery in the Bloomington-Normal area need more social events, social settings, and community engagement. In my experience, the most common relapse triggers are isolation, loneliness, and boredom. Especially amongst the younger members of the recovery community (18-35 years).”
 - “As a place to volunteer or find community with others in recovery, it would complement services offered by our University Health Services to students and employer HR programs to benefit staff.”
 - “No current members of my organizations would have direct use for this; however as social circles grow and people talk to people, referrals and help to those in need can be very beneficial.”
 - “Having another outlet of support and guidance through sobriety. I think it’s great to meet and work with people in their element vs. seeing them in a clinical setting.”
 - “Central location. Relationship with other people with similar lived experiences.”
 - “Already provide case management, but it would increase capacity.”
 - “Opportunity for safe space and consistency of support; opportunity to be connected to all needed resources; opportunity to feel a sense of community.”

PROBLEM AREAS: ACCESS BARRIERS & RAISED CONCERNS

- The following are problem areas of potential access barriers and raised concerns among community members that the center will be working to address going forward:

Transportation/ability to travel to services	Money/funding on part of recipient of services
Stigma	Timing and availability of services
Awareness/knowledge of services and dissemination of info about resources	Child care
Post COVID discomfort in accessing services and COVID restrictions	Insurance coverage
Lack of adequate mental healthcare workforce and lack of caring, empathetic, and compassionate mental healthcare providers	Compassion fatigue and burnout of current mental healthcare workforce
Stable housing	Stable income
Consistency of services	Co-occurring mental health disorder and chronic condition diagnoses
Hopelessness	Safety – privacy; physical, emotional, & mental well-being

RECOMMENDATIONS TO USE GOING FORWARD

- The following are recommendations made by Illinois Recovery Corps Project Coordinator, Cat Hays, in her research that we will be making use of going forward:
 - Conducting community listening sessions and community surveys for further development & improvement of the center and its program/service offerings.
 - Starting out, choose 1-2 things to do well to establish credibility and trust.
 - Be smart with resource and funding allocation – prototype different services, programs, and activities as a trial run to see if they are a viable and well-received solution.
 - Follow the user experience (UX) design approach to selecting and developing programs, services, and activities.
 - Partnerships! Partnership! Partnerships! – Get different organizations, agencies, businesses, nonprofits, and corporations involved early on. Build and foster those relationships!
 - Creative community engagement strategies – People want to be engaged in a fun, interesting, and dynamic way.



COME ALIVE AND DISCOVER THAT RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE!

Come alive, come alive
Go and ride your light
Let it burn so bright
Reaching up
To the sky
And it's open wide
You're electrified

When the world becomes a fantasy
And you're more than you could ever be
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide open
And you know you can't go back again
To the world that you were living in
'Cause you're dreaming with your eyes wide open
So, come alive!