

Houston Recovery Initiative

A Project of the Texas Department of State Health Services

September 15, 2011

Phase II Report

Progress on Development of a Recovery Oriented System of Care

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This project was supported by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). The contents of this report are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of DSHS or the DHHS.

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PROGRESS OF THE INITIATIVE:

A. Background

After planning sessions with DSHS in the spring of 2010, The Addiction Research Institute (ARI) entered into an agreement with The Council on Alcohol and Drugs Houston for development of a ROSC in Houston. In April, a planning meeting was held between Leonard Kincaid of The Council, Richard Spence of ARI, and Laurel Mangrum of ARI, to lay out a framework for the ROSC initiative. An organizational kickoff meeting was convened by The Council and ARI in May, 2010 bringing together core Houston stakeholders. A key result of this meeting was the formation of workgroups to identify ROSC problems and challenges, and recommendations for changes. These workgroups reported their progress back to the core stakeholder team every two weeks and in less than two months a preliminary summary report was developed for DSHS which identified an initial list of problems and recommendations to develop and improve the ROSC community of care in Houston. These initial recommendations were presented to the broader community of Houston stakeholders in a large event on July 30, 2010. During this meeting, feedback on the recommendations was provided by community stakeholders as well as outside experts brought to the meeting from other communities which have had more extensive experience in growing and improving ROSC initiatives in other states.

Following the stakeholder meeting, a follow-up meeting of the core stakeholders was convened to consider feedback received and to narrow their focus on a more limited number of key recommendations. Out of the 33 recommendations for change, six strategies were identified which would direct the focus of the Houston Recovery Initiative for the next phase of effort. These six strategies were perceived as the most important, most feasible, and the most timely objectives which could have an immediate impact on improving the recovery environment in Houston. Recommendations to begin an Adolescent ROSC effort were acknowledged and action was postponed until completion of Phase I of the overall community effort. However, an adolescent recovery initiative has now been added as a 7th strategy undertaken by the community.

B. ROSC Processes during year one:

Three phases were originally envisioned for the Houston Recovery Initiative. See Appendix A for a chart depicting these phases.

Phase I

This phase consisted primarily of Consensus Building activities. The recruitment of key stakeholders to be workgroup members was a key task which was accomplished and these leaders worked to address the first three strategies of:

- 1) Stakeholder Involvement,
- 2) Developing Consensus on Recovery Roadblocks and Service Gaps, and

3) Developing Consensus on New Directions Needed in the community.

The initial activities of the Houston initiative have made a tremendous contribution to consensus building and have identified specific strategies which the whole community has expressed commitment to work for changes. A report describing the activities and accomplishments of Phase 1 was issued one year ago and is available online at the following link on the Gulf Coast ATTC web site: [www.addictioncareers.org/userfiles/file/GulfCoast/HRI Final Report for Phase 1 \(2\).pdf](http://www.addictioncareers.org/userfiles/file/GulfCoast/HRI%20Final%20Report%20for%20Phase%201%20(2).pdf)

Phase II

During the first year, the groundwork was laid for entering into a second phase (Planning and Organizing for Change) which would provide a framework for involvement of community stakeholders for an extended period of time in working on new directions for recovery support. Out of an initial list of 33 recommendations, a smaller set of six strategic initiatives were identified. The original list was modified during subsequent meetings with the resulting list of the following seven strategies and workgroups:

1. HOUSING

- Priority attention for underserved populations and recovering persons.

2. RECOVERY COMMUNITY CENTERS

- Work with the City on designation of public centers as resources for recovery.

3. PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT

- Recovery Coach Training
- Include customers on advisory boards and in evaluation activities to ensure the voice of recovery is considered in program decisions.

4. 12-STEP COMMUNITY

- Coordinate with the 12-step community.

5. EDUCATION

- Education of agencies on the Chronic Care Model.

6. RECOVERY RESOURCE DIRECTORY

- Develop and maintain a web-based directory of agency resources in the community.

7. ADOLESCENT ROSC

- Develop consensus on specific strategies for adolescents.

C. Progress and Accomplishments

HOUSING

The Coalition for the Homeless was involved in a meeting of 150 service providers in the Houston area to prioritize housing needs. These include a central intake system, rapid re-housing, and better data on

the performance of existing housing resources. The city is developing a system to identify people at risk of losing their housing and they are conducting an inventory of apartment complexes that are receptive to people who are challenged to find housing.

RECOVERY COMMUNITY CENTERS

- The City of Houston representative to the ROSC has initiated plans to incorporate Recovery Center operations within city multi-service centers. Houston and Harris County are working on a federal community transformation grant application to build capacity for treating chronic diseases including addictions. The ROSC has been invited to assist in planning for this effort.

PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT

- Recovery coach trainings have become routinely offered in Houston. More than 60 people have been trained and five recovery coach practicum sites have been developed. Recovery coach practicum placements and support are now offered for recovery coach training graduates. 10 people have been selected to be practicum supervisors and are meeting regularly.

- Monthly recovery coach alumni meetings are being conducted to provide ongoing training and support.

- VOA has matched 40 women with mentors. However, former patients are not allowed to become mentors due to probation restrictions. VOA is building a ROSC model within its organization to support clients before and after leaving treatment.

- Cenikor has a goal to provide two recovery coach scholarships each year to graduates of its program.

- Santa Maria Hostel has had five recovery coaches with over 120 clients receiving coaching.

- The City of Houston has sent staff to recovery coach training and has used them in its Reentry Program.

- A support group for persons in long-term recovery (at least three years) has been organized and had its first meeting in July.

12-STEP COMMUNITY

A large community meeting was held to exchange information and foster improved cooperation among community 12-step groups, treatment programs, and recovery coaches. Over 140 participants attended, including treatment staff, recovery coaches, and others.

EDUCATION

- The ATTC provided two trainings training for treatment personnel on evidence-based treatment strategies.

- The ATTC also provided trainings on Recovery Planning with an emphasis on identification of recovery capitol, strength-based assessment, role of recovery coaches and other allies, and goals for holistic health after treatment.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

- A web-based resource directory has been created and procedures are being developed for ongoing updates and training for usage.

ADOLESCENT ROSC

A group has been formed to work on developing an improved adolescent recovery environment in Houston . This is a new initiative which has been undertaken based on recommendations from the stakeholder meeting and advocacy from within the ROSC workgroups. Initial meetings have been convened and a schedule of meetings established to work on issues necessary to start an adolescent ROSC. Alternative (non-12-step) peer support groups have been identified as a model to be replicated to promote a safe environment where young people support each other in maintaining a drug-free lifestyle.

D. Recommendations:

A set of recommendations have been identified to enhance the implementation of Recovery Oriented Systems of Care in Houston. Some of these are specific recommendations offered by Houston stakeholders. Other recommendations have been developed by the Addiction Research Institute (ARI) based on review of progress and challenges for the ROSC to date. See the final section of this report for a description of these recommendations.

Summary:

Overall, the Houston ROSC has been perceived to be a major success story. Stakeholders have been mobilized and their efforts are being multiplied through recruitment of other agencies and individuals throughout the city and county to engage in the six strategic initiatives adopted by the program.

This effort can be expected to continue to be effective but progress can be enhanced by providing organizational support for meetings, administrative support, training and technical assistance. The Council on Alcohol and Drugs has proven to be a very effective resource for coordinating and supporting the workgroup structure and hosting meetings. It is strongly recommended that this organization continue in a central role to support the Houston Recovery Initiative.