Veteran Support Specialist Training Program

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Purpose of the VSS Program

- Empower North Carolina VSOs to help Veterans navigate a complex system of care
- Provide Veterans in transition with a peer/coach/mentor who has “been there”.
- Increase the capability and versatility of VSOs to engage with Veterans to address a broad range of issues and needs
VSO Theory

- Counsels and assists Veterans and their dependents in filing claims for benefits with the USDVA and other federal, state, and local government agencies.

VSO Reality

TO-DO LIST:
1. EVERYTHING
The VSS Role

What is a Veteran Support Specialist?

Veteran who has successfully completed specialized training in Veteran peer support, crisis management, and VA resource navigation to promote quality of life and well-being for Veterans and their family members.
VSS Training Program

- Adapts VSO training to conditions on the ground.
- Based on the tenets of the Peer Support intervention.
- Designed to leverage shared lived experience in transitioning from military to civilian life.
- Provides outreach to Veterans who may benefit from services.
- Provides engagement, coaching, connection and referrals to Veterans encountering transition issues - including substance use and mental health issues.
- Serves as an advocate to Veterans and family members as they navigate military, VA and civilian systems of resources and services.
Content Overview

Engagement and Communication Skills
- Active and Reflective Listening, Motivational Interviewing, Case Management, Self-Care

Understanding Conditions
- Understanding PTSD, Co-occurring Disorders, Military Sexual Trauma (MST), Wellness and Recovery

Connect with Resources
- Finding community-based solutions
- Making connections with resources
### Engagement Skills

1. Peer/coach/mentor Role & Case Management (including Warm Handoffs)
2. Military Culture
3. Connecting to Resources
4. Reflective & Active Listening
5. Motivational Interviewing
6. Building Relationships/Person First Language
7. Self care/STS Mitigation
8. Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction
9. De-escalation/Planning for Anger
10. Decision-making, Problem Solving, & Conflict Styles

### Understanding MH Conditions

1. Understanding Trauma & PTSD
2. Traumatic Brain Injury
3. Military Sexual Trauma
4. Co-occurring Disorders
5. Homelessness/employment
6. Suicide
7. Substance Abuse & Recovery
8. Whole Health Management/ Mind-Body Connection
9. Self Help & Advocacy
10. Evidence-based Treatment of Mental Health Issues (what is CPT, PE, DBT, etc.)

*coaching into care*
VSO Feedback on Training

4S's
Red Flags
OARS
Case management
Person-first language
MST eligibility
Suicide Prevention
Resources
TBI tx options
Impact on family/kids

Easy and fun!
Watch and re-watch
Dr M and real world
examples
Interview style
Big concepts in language
we use
(Mostly) short
Self-paced
Quality videos

Role plays
Learning together
Immediately using skills on
the job
Self-care reminders
Meeting community
resources
Progress and Plans

- Over 80 VSS graduates
- Plans to continue VSS training on bi-annual basis in 2018-19 with support from DHHS and NCDMVA
- Opportunities to extend VSS training to NC National Guard, MCOs, and community clinicians
Contact

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Cognitive Processing Therapy Training Program

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What is CPT?

- CPT is a time-limited, empirically-supported, cognitive-behavioral treatment. During CPT sessions, the clinician and client collaborate to address the following issues:
  - Educating patients about PTSD and explaining the nature of their symptoms.
  - Helping patients explore how traumatic events have affected their lives.
  - Learning about connections between trauma-related thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
  - Increasing patients' ability to challenge maladaptive thoughts about the trauma.
  - Helping patients increase their understanding of unhelpful thinking patterns and learn new, healthier ways of thinking; and
  - Facilitating patients' exploration of how each of 5 core themes (safety, trust, power/control, esteem, intimacy) have been affected by their traumatic experiences.
Why offer CPT treatment?

- Brief intervention (12 sessions).
- Effective across broad spectrum of traumas: military combat, sexual assault, physical abuse, domestic violence, terrorism, even complex traumas.
- Effective with clients with co-occurring disorders.
- Studies show that clients who engage in CPT treatment reduce/eliminate PTSD symptoms and that improvements are sustained over time.
Other Improvements

- Depression (Resick, et al. 2002, 2012; other studies)
- Guilt (Resick et al. 2002; 2012; Nishith, Nixon & Resick, 2005)
- Borderline personality characteristics (Clarke et al. 2008)
- Reported health symptoms (Galovski et al. JTS 2009)
- Hopelessness (Gallagher & Resick, 2012)
- Suicidal ideation (Gradus et al. 2014)
- Anger (Rizvi et al, 2009)
- Functioning (Wachen et al. 2014)
- No differences between CSA/CPA history and outcomes (Resick et al. 2014)
How Does CPT Work?

Confront avoidance

Experience natural emotions associated with the event

Change erroneous interpretations about the event, leading to a reduction in manufactured (thought-based) emotions

Clients learn not to over-generalize their thinking about a single bad event to all people, situations, or themselves
CPT Training Goals

- **Build clinical capacity** to deliver Cognitive Processing Therapy with fidelity.

- **Build organizational capacity** to sustain CPT in community-based mental healthcare agencies.

- **Develop coordinated treatment programs** to address family mental health needs.
CPT Roster

- CPT Trainees will have the opportunity to be rostered as CPT Providers and be included on the official CPT roster at www.CPTforPTSD.com.

- Rostering requirements include:
  - Identification of appropriate clients for CPT treatment.
  - Expert-led weekly clinical consultation for six (6) months with a 75% or better attendance rate.
  - Active participation in case discussion.
  - Weekly reporting of client measures.
  - Completion of two (2) client cases.
  - Submission of rostering application that includes client measures on all clients enrolled during training period and sample of client worksheets.
Cognitive Processing Therapy

- 32 Agencies
- 32 Senior Leaders
- 104 Clinicians
- 22 Counties
- Over 80% continued delivery after 12 months

GOAL?! To roster CPT providers in every county in North Carolina!
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