

Good Stories

Gayle Bluebird

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An example of this was Gayle Bluebird's work at South Florida State Hospital. In the midst of attempting to receive JCAHO accreditation for the first time, move into a new hospital, start up a treatment mall, and reduce the use of seclusion and restraint, the leadership team, including Gayle, knew that staff who demonstrated best practices had to be recognized for their incredible work in changing this hospital's culture. Many ideas were initiated, such as providing more convenient parking spaces, recognition by the CEO in a formal certificate, and memos for personnel files. But Gayle Bluebird, a peer hired in a paid staff role came up with the best plan. The plan was to interview hospital residents and gather information from them on what, specifically, hospital staff had done to help these residents to "get better." This amazingly powerful project resulted in a published document titled "Good Stories" that contained many vignettes from service users on who, why, and how they had been helped to move toward recovery, naming specific staff members. The document was disseminated during annual nurse's week and had a huge impact on the staff named as helping, and conversely, a different kind of impact on staff who were not named. Gayle understood the power of recognition and went to the most important information source: the service users.