



Best Practices to Help Reduce the Risk of Crisis: Supportive Housing; Case Management; Supported Employment

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July 25, 2022



TAC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping our nation's human services, health care, homelessness, and affordable housing systems implement policies and practices that empower people to live healthy, independent lives in the communities they choose.

Jack of all Trades



Prevention, Mitigation, and Recovery

- Crisis Prevention** → Identifying crisis risk factors, intervening to reduce the risk of crisis occurring.
- Crisis Mitigation** → Intervening to reduce the severity of a crisis, and to resolve it once it occurs.
- Crisis Recovery** → Post-crisis connection with and return to services/supports that promote recovery and prevent recurring crises.

Best Practices**

Broadly defined:

- Supportive Housing: Supportive housing links decent, safe, affordable, community-based housing with flexible, voluntary support services designed to help the individual or family stay housed and live a more productive life in the community. There is no time limitation, and tenants may live in their homes as long as they meet the basic obligations of tenancy. While participation in services is encouraged, it is not a condition of living in the housing. Housing affordability is ensured either through a rent subsidy or by setting rents at affordable levels. (USICH)
- Case Management: A range of services (e.g. linkage, referral, coordination, and training) provided to assist and support individuals in developing their skills to gain access to needed medical, behavioral health, housing, employment, social, educational, and other services essential to meeting basic human services.
- Supported Employment: Supported employment means competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which individuals are working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment, that is individualized and customized consistent with the strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals involved, for individuals with the most severe disabilities. ([34 CFR § 385.4](#))

Key Points

- Supportive housing, case management, and employment programs that use evidence-based and best practices provide critical opportunities to recognize the early warning signs of a behavioral health crisis and take steps to prevent it.
- High-fidelity supportive housing and supported employment programs serving individuals with mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders, including those who experience homelessness, integrate crisis prevention and intervention into their service models. When implemented effectively, these services can help reduce the severity of crises that do occur, and can facilitate post-crisis recovery.
- Case management services that incorporate evidence-based and best practice interventions can function as a critical hub for engaging individuals, facilitating self-direction, choice, and linkages to these and other services and supports that help reduce crisis risk and assist in recovery.
- SBHAs can strengthen the role of these services in crisis prevention, mitigation, and recovery through policy, funding, and practice support, and by ensuring effective coordination between upstream services that address social determinants of health (SDOH) and crisis services.

Key Program Features & Strategies that Support Crisis Prevention, Mitigation & Recovery

- Crisis risk assessment and planning
- Proactive and ongoing engagement
- 24/7 community-based availability
- Low caseload sizes
- Integration with behavioral health services
- Team-based case planning and service delivery
- Peers integrated as team members
- Ability to monitor and adjust service intensity/frequency
- Protocols for coordination with crisis services
- Timely post-crisis referrals and warm-handoffs

Reality Check - Variability of “Best Practice” Design and Implementation

Service Model Variability

- PSH Models – range from 15:1 to ??:1
- Case Management models range from fidelity-based ACT to non-fidelity-based ACT to case management “light.”
- Supported Employment ranges from fidelity-based IPS-SE to alternative models (e.g. transitional, train-then-place). Quality of linkage to behavioral provider/team.

Implications for Outcomes

Staff/consumer ratio may effect the types of outcomes that can be achieved.

Capacity to have role in crisis prevention, mitigation, recovery?

Target population, complexity, and level of need? Eligibility? Who gets access to these services?

Recommendations

- Commit to making supportive housing, case management, and supported employment services more available and accessible within their systems to address SDOH, reduce crisis risk, and support individuals in their recovery.
- Policies, regulations, service definitions, and performance monitoring should reinforce key features of these services that make them effective in crisis prevention, mitigation, and recovery, and ensure their alignment and coordination with the crisis response system.
- Coordinate with state Medicaid agencies to ensure sufficient funding and coverage to support effective implementation of these services, along with adequate provider rates, factoring in their role in crisis and also integrating peer supports.
- Supportive housing, case management, and employment services providers should be equipped with guidance, tools, and protocols, and offered training and technical assistance to ensure they can effectively assess, plan for, and intervene to prevent or resolve crises as needed. They should also be trained on protocols for accessing local crisis systems and services.
- Invest in recruiting, training, and retaining a diverse, culturally competent workforce.

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