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August 31, 2016

Supported Employment Fidelity Report

SE Fidelity Review Date: July 12th, 2016

To: Riverbend Community Mental Health Center:

Peter Evers, Executive Director

Chris Mumford, Director of Community Support Programs (CSP)

Sheryl Putney, Director of Quality Assurance (QA)

James Quinn, Supported Employment (SE) Leader.

From: New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division for Behavioral Health Services (DBH), Bureau of Mental Health Services (BMHS), Supported Employment Fidelity Review Team (SE Fidelity Review Team):

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Overview:

This report describes Individual Placement and Support/Supported Employment (IPS/SE) services at Riverbend Community Mental Health. The fidelity review is considered an integral component to complement and validate self-fidelity measures and is intended to promote and assure fidelity to the Dartmouth IPS model and compliance with the Community Mental Health Agreement (CMHA).

“Riverbend has been providing outpatient services to the community since its inception in 1964. The Mission of the agency is to care for the behavioral health of the community. Riverbend has been creative and resourceful in remaining true to its mission and vision despite increased demand for services.” (<https://www.riverbendcmhc.org>)

Riverbend's Community Support Program is responsible for the treatment of adults aged 18 and older with serious and persistent mental illness and who require a range of intensive community-based services that include Targeted Case Management, Functional Support Services (FSS), Illness Management and Recovery (IMR), Individual and Group Psychotherapy, Dual Diagnosis Services, Elder Services, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Psychiatric Medication Management, Nursing Assessments, Supported Employment (SE) Services, InSHAPE, and Substance Misuse Treatment.

Executive Summary:

The Fidelity Team was pleased with the openness and cooperation exhibited from all levels at Riverbend in terms of preparation, scheduling, coordination of the assessment activities, access to records, staff, and consumers for the fidelity review. Riverbend was asked to accommodate a larger team than usual for training purposes and did this successfully.

The outcome of this review for Riverbend is the achievement of a "Good Fidelity" rating with a score of 103 out of a possible 125 points.

Highlights:

Agency Support: Riverbend has an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Steering Committee that meets monthly. This committee is comprised of the Chief Operations Officer, the Director of CSP, the IMR and SE Leaders, and the Director of Quality Assurance (QA). The Executive Director, in addition, chairs a SE Learning Collaborative every other month with other community mental health center staff to augment skills, problem solve and share experiences.

Staff Training and Orientation: All agency staff receive an orientation to SE services, regardless of the program in which they are hired to work. New SE staff are provided with orientation and training to include shadowing of the SE Leader and other SE Specialists, individual and weekly group supervision.

SE Staff Motivation: The Team was impressed with the commitment and motivation to provide exemplary services to their consumers. The SE staff appeared to be dedicated and flexible to provide whatever the consumers may require in order to obtain the ultimate goal of successful employment.

SE Leadership: The SE Leader was a true ambassador for the program, the concepts and the goals. The Team heard that the SE Leader even initiated contact with the Governor of New Hampshire to share the experiences of consumers engaged in SE services. The principles of SE were clearly adhered to, with the flexibility to provide whatever was needed for staff to enhance their skills and also meet the needs of consumers.

SE Services: The most important component of SE, the services themselves, is very much in alignment with high fidelity. There was a wide array of jobs held by consumers, all expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the work of the SE Specialists, and individual attention and adaptations were noted throughout.

Areas of focus:

Tracking and sharing of SE activities and outcomes: There is some tracking that occurs with SE, as evidenced by examples of a “Dashboard” created with the QA Department. Tracking is not robust, nor are outcomes shared with the SE Specialists.

Recommendation: Develop job development tracking, and employer contact tracking. Develop a mechanism to measure outcomes, such as the number of consumers who obtained competitive jobs in the past six months, and share the information with staff.

Broaden agency support for SE: The Executive Director has a highly visible role in the state-wide SE Learning Collaborative, but outside of the CSP Department services, little appears to be known by other agency staff about SE. The Team did not see evidence of broad advertising of the service (compared to Mobile Crisis Services and substance misuse services).

Recommendation: Consider more frequent, in-depth, reviews of SE by the QA department to simultaneously increase opportunities for outcome sharing, broaden referrals to SE, and identify areas of improvement. The development of a display of the successes of SE, perhaps in the waiting rooms of all programs, would be another method to convey the benefits of the service.

Increase documentation of SE services and integrate all aspects of SE into one record: The Vocational Profile is in a physical chart, while the SE notes are in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR). There were some aspects of SE services that the Team feels occur, but lacking detailed documentation to support the assumptions, the “credit” couldn’t be given.

Recommendation: Explore the expansion of the EMR to include the Vocational Profile. Use documentation as part of staff training and supervision. Incorporating some of the tracking items previously suggested, such as job development and outcomes may also have the additional benefit of improved documentation.

Method:

The SE Fidelity Review Team conducted an on-site IPS/SE Fidelity Review on July 12, 2016. This review consisted of:

1. An agency orientation with some of the Fidelity Review Team (due to a misunderstanding on the part of the late arrival of some of the Team), the CSP Director, and the SE Leader (15 minutes).
2. A meeting with the Fidelity Review Team and Senior Leadership consisting of the Executive Director, the CSP Director, and the QA Director (45 minutes).
3. Observation of follow-along supports with an Employment Specialist (45 minutes).
4. Observation of a SE Unit Team meeting (1 hour).
5. Split opportunity for Job Development with one Employment Specialist with half the team, follow-along supports with the SE Leader with the other half of the team (1 hour).
6. A meeting with current and past recipients of SE services (1 hour).
7. Observation of the ACT clinical team meeting (1 hour).
8. Interviews with the Employment Specialists (1 hour).
9. Interview with the SE Leader (1 hour).
10. Chart Reviews (1.5 hours).

The Supported Employment Fidelity Scale was completed following the visit independently by each member of the SE Fidelity Review Team. A subsequent meeting was held the following day in order to develop consensus scoring results. The scale is divided into three sections: including staffing, organization and services. Each item is rated on a 5-point response formation ranging from 1= no implementation to 5= full implementation with intermediate numbers representing progressively greater degrees of implementation. Agencies that fully implement IPS Supported Employment according to the scale criteria have shown to have higher competitive employment rates than those that do not. The following sections address the three areas based on the visit.

I. Staffing:

1. Caseload size:	SCORE = 4 out of 5
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Reports and interviews support that Employment Specialists' caseloads range between 21-25 consumers. There was a vacancy in the unit at the time of the assessment.

2. Employment services staff:	SCORE= 5 out of 5
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Records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists provide employment-related services at least 96% of the time. Staffs at all levels are aware of the Employment Specialists' need to focus solely on the delivery of SE services.

3. Vocational generalists:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists carry out all six phases of employment services (e.g., program intake, engagement, assessment, job development/placement, job coaching and follow-along supports).

II. Organization:

1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru team assignment:	SCORE = 3 out of 5
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Records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists are attached to one or two mental health treatment teams, from which at least 50-74% of the Employment Specialists caseload is comprised. There is currently a vacancy for a SE Specialist, resulting in the SE Leader attending one-two treatment teams a week, three teams are covered by one person. This can result in an Employment Specialist who works with an individual on a particular team, (e.g. Blue Team) is unable to attend that individual's treatment team meeting.

2. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru frequent team member contact:	SCORE= 4 out of 5
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Records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, as well as observations, revealed that four of the five key components are present: 1) Employment Specialists attend weekly mental health treatment team meetings; 2) Employment Specialists participate in treatment team meetings with shared decision-making; 3) Employment Specialists' offices are in close proximity to (or shared with) their mental health treatment team members; 4) Employment Specialists help the team think about employment for people who haven't yet been referred to Supported Employment services. The one component that was not observed was that of "Employment services documentation (i.e., vocational assessment/profile, employment plan, progress notes) is

integrated into a consumer’s mental health treatment record”. The Fidelity Review team reviewed the consumer’s physical chart for some information and then reviewed the consumer’s EMR for additional information.

3. Collaboration between Employment Specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors:	SCORE= 3 out of 5
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Interviews with staff and supervisors revealed that Employment Specialists and VR counselors have consumer-related contacts (phone, e-mail, and in-person) monthly to discuss shared consumers and referrals. There is currently a vacancy in VR which has created some challenges. Nonetheless, there aren’t any scheduled face-to-face meetings or participation in treatment teams with VR staff. Communication with VR staff does occur with all Employment Specialists within a 30-day period, but it isn’t regularly scheduled.

4. Vocational unit:	SCORE= 5 out of 5
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Interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations, revealed that there are at least 2 full-time Employment Specialists and a team leader that form an employment unit with weekly consumer-based group supervision based on the Supported Employment model in which strategies are identified and job leads are shared. They provide coverage for each other’s caseloads when needed. Consumers reported working with different Employment Specialists when their “assigned” one is on vacation. The Fidelity Team observed discussions about job leads.

5. Role of employment supervisor:	SCORE= 3 out of 5
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Interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that three key roles of the employment supervisor are present. The Fidelity Review Team observed the following: 1) the SE Leader conducts weekly Supported Employment supervision designed to review consumer situations and identify new strategies and ideas to help consumers in their work lives; 2) the SE Leader communicates with mental health treatment team leaders to ensure that services are integrated, to problem-solve programmatic issues (such as referral process, or transfer of follow-along supports to mental health workers) and to be a champion for the value of work. Attends a meeting for each mental health treatment team on a quarterly basis; 3) the SE Leader accompanies Employment Specialists, who are new or having difficulty with job development, in the field monthly to improve skills by observing, modeling, and giving feedback on skills, e.g. meeting employers for job development. The two roles that the Fidelity Team found missing were: 1) “One full-time equivalent (FTE) supervisor is responsible for no more

than 10 Employment Specialist. The SE Leader does not have other supervisory responsibilities (Program leaders supervising fewer than ten Employment Specialists may spend a percentage of time on other supervisory activities on a pro-rated basis. For example, a SE Leader responsible for 2 Employment Specialists may be devoted to SE Supervision half time)”. The SE Leader carried almost a full-time case load (19 consumers) at the time of the assessment. 2) “The SE Leader reviews current consumer outcomes with Employment Specialists and sets goals to improve program performance at least quarterly”. The Fidelity Review Team did not hear of regular sharing of outcomes with staff when staff was queried about this component.

6. Zero exclusion criteria:	SCORE = 4 out of 5
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Interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that there was no evidence of exclusion, formal or informal. Referrals are not solicited by a wide variety of sources. Employment Specialists offer to help with another job when one has ended, regardless of the reason that the job ended or number of jobs held. There was one comment overheard during the clinical team meeting observation about “he may not be ready for work” made by a team member, but it did not appear to be a systematic exclusionary process. Referrals appeared to be solicited by team only and not by a wide variety of sources.

7. Agency focus on competitive employment:	SCORE = 3 out of 5
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Reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that the Agency promotes competitive work through three of five strategies. The Fidelity Review Team saw that, 1) while not consistent in every chart reviewed, the Agency Intake does include questions about the consumer’s interest in employment; 2) the Agency includes questions about interest in employment on all annual (or semiannual) assessment or treatment plan reviews. This was observed many times in the Targeted Case Management assessment; 3) the Agency supports ways for consumers to share work stories with other consumers and staff (e.g., agency-wide employment recognition events, in-service training, peer support groups, agency newsletter articles, invited speakers at consumer treatment groups, etc...) at least twice a year. The Agency newsletter, E-Currents, had a focus on SE and peer support groups were mentioned. The Fidelity Review Team did not find the following; 1) “Agency displays written posting (e.g., bulletin boards, posters) about working and Supported Employment services, in the lobby or other waiting areas”. The Team was given brochures by the SE Leader during the day and was informed that consumers often take brochures out of the waiting area. Nonetheless, the Team felt that since the Fidelity assessment had been announced ahead of time, a full stocking of brochures in the waiting room could have occurred even minutes

before the Team arrived. The other strategy missing was: “Agency measures rate of competitive employment on at least a quarterly basis and shares outcome with agency leadership and staff”.

8. Executive support for Supported Employment:	SCORE= 3 out of 5
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Interviews with supervisors as well as observations revealed that three key components of executive team support are present. The Fidelity Team observed that the following were present: 1) Executive Director and Clinical Director demonstrates knowledge regarding the principles of evidence-based Supported Employment; 2) at least one member of the Executive team actively participates at SE leadership team meetings (steering committee meeting) that occur at least every six months for high fidelity programs and at least quarterly for programs that have not yet achieved high fidelity. Steering committee is defined as a diverse group of stakeholders charged with reviewing fidelity, program implementation and the service delivery system. Committee develops written action plans aimed at developing or sustaining high fidelity services; 3) SE Leader shares information about EBP barriers and facilitators with the Executive team (including the Executive Director) at least twice each year. The executive team help the SE Leader identify and implement solution to barriers. The following components were missing: 1) “Agency QA process includes an explicit review of the SE program, or components of the program, at least every 6 months through the use of the Supported Employment Fidelity scale or until achieving high fidelity, and at least yearly thereafter. Agency QA process uses the results of the fidelity assessment to improve SE implementation and sustainability”. The Review Team learned that the SE Leader conducted a Self-Fidelity in October 2015. The second component missing was: “The agency CEO/Executive Director communicates how SE services support the mission of the agency and articulates clear and specific goals for SE and/or competitive employment to all agency staff during the first six months and at least annually (e.g. SE kickoff, all-agency meetings, agency newsletters, etc...). This item is not delegated to another administrator.” None of the team members heard or observed any of this occurring, staff reported not being aware of an annual announcement of SE work, and the agency does not track competitive employment.

III.SERVICES:

1. Work incentives planning:	SCORE= 5 out of 5
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Reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed the work incentives planning process at Riverbend. Employment Specialists, or other MH practitioners, offer consumers assistance in obtaining comprehensive, individualized work incentives planning by a specially trained work incentive planner prior to starting a job. They also facilitate access to work incentive planning when consumers need to make decisions about

changes in work hours and pay. Consumers are provided information and assistance about reporting earnings to Social Security Administration, housing programs, etc... depending on the persons' benefits. The agency, as others in the state, used to use Granite State Independent Living for assistance in this area. This resource is no longer available, so the agency has made a concerted effort to train the Employment Specialists in knowing this aspect of the service. There are times that a referral to VR occurs for some of the more complicated cases, and if accepted by VR, then VR does the research. The team heard discussion about different consumers and the impact work had on their food stamps and other sources of income and how that was addressed.

2. Disclosure:	SCORE= 5 out of 5
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Reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, and observations revealed that all four components regarding disclosure are present. Employment Specialists do not require all consumers to disclose their psychiatric disability at the work site in order to receive services. Employment Specialists offer to discuss with consumers the possible costs and benefits (pros and cons) of disclosure at the work site in advance of consumers disclosing at the work site. Employment Specialists describe how disclosure related to requesting accommodations and the employment specialist's role in communicating with the employer. Employment Specialists discuss specific information to be disclosed (e.g. disclose receiving mental health treatment or presence of a psychiatric disability, or difficulty with anxiety or unemployed for a period of time, etc...) and offers examples of what could be said to employers. Employment Specialists discuss disclosure on more than one occasion (e.g. if consumers have not found employment after two months or if consumers reports difficulty on the job). The Team heard consumers report their preferences at both ends of the spectrum; some disclosed immediately and others did not want to disclose.

3. Ongoing work-based vocational assessment:	SCORE = 4 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that the initial vocational assessment occurs over 2-3 sessions in which interests and strengths are explored. Employment Specialists help consumers learn from each job experience and also work with the treatment team to analyze job loss, job problems, and job successes. They do not document these lessons learned in the vocational profile, OR the vocational profile is not updated on a regular basis. While there were some instances of detailed documentation, many of the records did not adequately convey the analysis of why jobs were lost or otherwise not a good fit. Nor was there much documentation to see regarding job tailoring. Interviews with staff and consumers were likewise somewhat weak in this aspect.

4. Rapid job search for competitive job:	SCORE = 4 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations resulted in learning that the first face-to-face contact with an employer by the consumer or the Employment Specialist about a competitive job is on average between 31-60 days (1-2 mos) after program entry. There were some records with very strong support for contact much sooner than the 31 day mark, but the agency doesn't track employer contacts and therefore could not earn a rating of a 5.

5. Individualized job search:	SCORE= 4 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that 75-89% of employer contacts by the Employment Specialists are based on job choices which reflect consumers' preference, strengths, symptoms, etc... rather than the job market and are consistent with the current employment plan. There wasn't a lot of strong documentation to support or reflect this aspect, so the Team relied on observations and consumer interviews, which resulted in a lower percentage than a score of 5 (90-100%) would yield. One consumer read a particularly powerful statement about his experiences with Supported Employment and how a lot of effort was made to find a job for him using his art skills; he worked teaching painting at a local craft supply store and worked to obtain a grant to be an "artist in residence" (which he unfortunately did not get). This individual had a lot of experience in the restaurant industry, yet he reported that he did not experience any pressure or suggestions to explore that type of employment. Another consumer reported a very specific goal of working in a school system, which posed some limitations to finding employment. Options had been explored by staff with this individual around positions in summer camps and related areas, but declined due to the specific goal of a school setting for employment.

6. Job development-Frequent employer contact:	SCORE = 2 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers as well as observations revealed that each Employment Specialist makes more than 2 face-to-face employer contacts per week that are consumer-specific, but there isn't a process for tracking this activity. The Team has no doubt about the frequency as it was reflected in interviews, but lack of a tracking mechanism prohibits a higher rating.

7. Job Development-Quality of employer contact:	SCORE = 4 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists meet with employers in person whether or not there is a job opening, advocates for consumers by describing strengths and asks employers to interview consumers. One Employment Specialist in particular described their process whereby they will meet alone with a potential employer to “make it all about them” in terms of their business and the business’ needs and will then bring up the opportunity to meet with a consumer. Some visits are done by staff unannounced and will walk in based on a “Help Wanted” sign, some visits are planned a bit more for days when it is known that the hiring manager is on site.

8. Diversity of job types:	SCORE=5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, and observations revealed that Employment Specialists assist consumers obtain different types of jobs 85-100% of the time. There were 30 consumers employed at the time of the visit working in jobs ranging from assembling pizza boxes to shuttle drivers to working as a state park clerk. The most common category, personal care attendant, had four different consumers working in this capacity, with two more working as “care companions”.

9. Diversity of employers:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists assist consumers obtain jobs with different employers 85-100% of the time. There were 25 (or 26 as one was “unknown”) different employers of the 30 employed consumers. A few employers were listed no more than two times (which is “allowed” in the scoring). The most common category, which was personal care attendant and “care companion”, still had diverse employers and met the threshold of at least 85%.

10. Competitive jobs:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that 95% or more competitive jobs held by consumers are permanent. All but one of the jobs paid at least minimum wage; the one that was less was a consumer who did some babysitting for a friend. All of the jobs were permanent (not temporary or time-limited) and were jobs that were open to anyone to apply for-not set aside for individuals with disabilities.

11. Individualized follow-along supports:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that consumers receive different types of support for working a job that are based on the job, consumer preferences, work history, needs, etc.... Employment Specialists also provide employer support (e.g. education information, job accommodations) at consumers' request. The Employment Specialist helps people move onto more preferable jobs and also help people with school or certified training programs. The site provides examples of different types of support including enhancing supports by treatment team members. The Team observed the ACT Team Peer Specialist offer to work with a consumer who was experiencing increased anxiety, "we can work together on the anxiety", and during the follow-along support observation had a short discussion with the employer about ways that job accommodation occurs (different task and/or some time off) in collaboration with the Employment Specialist.

12. Time-unlimited follow-along supports:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists have face-to-face contact within 1 week before starting a job, within 3 days after starting a job, weekly for the first month, as at least monthly for a year or more, on average, after working steadily and desired by consumers. The Team heard and read of a range of services from consumers who wanted no contact with their employer to one that had been working for over a year and still had weekly follow-along supports.

13. Community-based services:	SCORE = 5 out of 5
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Review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists spend 65% or more of total scheduled work hours in the community. Employment Specialists were asked by the Team to share a random day. One that shared the day before the assessment did have a high percentage of time based in the office, but it was due to weekly meetings that are held on that day; Specialists who provided their daily recap for a different day had much more time out of the office. One shared that back-to-back appointments are often scheduled at the Employment Security office to allow for efficient use of time (less travel in the community) and have job-searching resources at the disposal for consumers. Billing codes likewise reflected community based work.

14. Assertive engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team:	SCORE = 3 out of 5
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Reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that four strategies for engagement and outreach are used. The Team found evidence of: 1) service termination is not based on missed appointments or fixed time limits; 2) engagement and outreach attempts are made by integrated team members; 3) multiple home/community visits occur; and 4) coordinated visits by Employment Specialists with integrated team member. The two areas found lacking were: 1) “systematic documentation of outreach attempts”. Verbally, Employment Specialists stated that they made outreach efforts, but two of the ten records the team reviewed showed that re-engagement efforts were not documented after consumers did not show up for an appointment. The other area found to be lacking was; 2) “connect with family, when applicable. Once it is clear that the consumer no longer wants to work or continue SE services, the team stops outreach”. The mention of family and documentation of family involvement, or efforts thereof, wasn’t frequently mentioned in any of the assessment opportunities.

IPS SE Fidelity Scale Results:

TOTAL Score = 103 Good Fidelity

Fidelity Team:

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