VI SN 3 Recovery in Action:
One VI SN’s Journey to System Transformation

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VI SN 3 Recovery in Action

- VI SN 3 Transformation Process
- Challenges and obstacles
- Accomplishments
- More Challenges and obstacles
- Future objectives
- What worked for us
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Our Starting Point:

- VI SN Mental Health Executive Board members (MHEB) involved in developing the *Comprehensive VHA Strategic Plan for Mental Health Services*
- Executive Leadership support for mental health services and innovative planning.
- Veteran’s Advisory Councils (VAC) at each facility since FY 2000
- MIRECC well integrated in our Mental Health Care Line planning and activities
- Structured Peer Support (paid and voluntary) active in VI SN 3 since 1996 (with growing presence throughout mental health care line)
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Strategic Planning Begins (Winter 2005-06):

- Implementation of the VISN Recovery Advocates workgroup
  - Veteran consumers
  - Clinical staff
  - LRCs
  - MI RECC staff
  - VISN Administrators
- VISN level VAC formed
- Integration of VAC members on all local and VISN level MH planning bodies
- Education for senior VISN leadership
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Where does transformation begin (Spring 2006)?

- Identification of “Core Elements of Recovery”
  - Psycho-education
  - Case management
  - Access to supportive housing
  - Supported Employment
  - Family involvement
  - Ability to access services
  - Institution cultural factors
- Identification of tools to measure change
  - RSA
  - Local gap analysis.
- Identification of staff and veteran educational needs
Transformation begins and so do the challenges!

- Starting the process without dedicated staff
- Agreeing upon the “core elements of recovery” to measure
  - We now have 45 items and counting!
- Selecting an instrument to measure change
  - Effort to be consistent with national planning
  - Securing OMB approval to survey veterans on their perceptions
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Recovery Advocates get started (summer 2006):

- Two day Recovery Conference planned
  - Target audience: Mental Health staff and **Veterans**
- Education subcommittee workgroup implemented
  - Develop tools to continuously educate staff and transform culture
- Structured Partnering workgroup implemented
  - Develop strategies to influence collaborative treatment planning and goal setting
  - Pilot Imed consent to ensure veteran’s involvement in treatment planning
- VAC further empowered
  - Develop strategies to educate veterans
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Recovery Advocates hit obstacles!

- Recovery Conference
  - Getting veterans funded
  - Selecting veterans for attendance
- Structured partnering workgroup
  - Focus groups on collaborative treatment planning
  - Focus group results: *What treatment planner??*
- VAC education efforts
  - All efforts must go through VI SN Public Affairs!
Recovery Advocates make strides:

- Recovery conference for staff and veterans held September 2006
- VISN wide electronic treatment planner being modified to be veteran centered, recovery oriented and user friendly
- VISN Director endorses monthly electronic distribution of “recovery quotes” to all VISN staff
- VAC newsletter released for VISN wide distribution
  - Network PAO provides technical support and guidance
- VAC members invited to participate in VISN level non-MH committees
- Staff and veterans at each facility trained in focus group facilitation.
  - Objective: to continue to educate and raise awareness for staff and veterans
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Current Recovery Efforts:

- 14 Paid Peer Technicians
- 1 Club house, 1 scheduled to open
- 2 Recovery Centers, 1 Scheduled to open
- Recovery education DVD in development (in collaboration with V16)
- Staff/veteran focus groups (September 2007)
- VI SN wide training on collaborative treatment planning (September 2007)
- “Training the Champions” – training facility recovery transformation teams (October 2007).
And Current Recovery Challenges:

- Collaborative treatment planning:
  - What does this look like for physicians?
  - What does this mean for our veterans?
- Recovery and service connected benefits
  - VISN 3 advocacy and planning
What works in VI SN 3:

- Education, education, education (for staff and veterans)
- Senior leadership involvement and buy-in
- Empowered and involved Veteran’s Advisory Council to keep us honest
- Focus groups as a tool for education, awareness and change
- **We are all in this together.** All staff and veterans on Recovery Advocates team bring a unique perspective to system transformation. All are equally as critical to planning and understanding.