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The Mental Health Agency Research Network (MHARN): Developing a statewide network for knowledge sharing, technical assistance & collaborative research

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Comments
The Mental Health Agency Research Network (MHARN) is developing a statewide network for knowledge sharing, technical assistance, and collaborative research. The MHARN is a developing network for sharing knowledge and research collaboration between the CMHSR (Center for Mental Health Services Research) and other universities, DMH (Department of Mental Health), providers, community agencies, and families. Its mission is to close the gap between science and service in mental health services in Massachusetts by improving the relevance of research to practitioners and consumers.

The MHARN Objectives:
- Disseminate information about evidence-based practices and DMH system priorities
- Engage academics, DMH and agency providers, and consumers in a dialogue about research & evaluation
- Increase awareness about evidence-based practices and programs
- Increase translation of knowledge about evidence-based practices into changes in practitioner behavior and benefits to consumers
- Improve the relevance of research to practitioners and consumers
- Increase collaboration, communication, and training
- Promote the development of new knowledge and research skills among DMH providers

MHARN Goals:
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The MHARN: 
- A small number of sites will actively participate in the planning of future research projects and the acquisition of funding for those projects.
- A broad, statewide representation of providers, individual and group-based providers offers the opportunity to leverage ongoing research and evaluation data.
- The MHARN aims to foster collaboration among providers and agencies to improve the delivery of evidence-based practices.
- The MHARN's website offers a variety of resources for evidence-based practices and consumer input.

Dissemination:
- New initiatives: • Disseminating new evidence-based practices • Evaluating the impact of evidence-based practices • Linking to resources for evidence-based practice • New materials for evidence-based practice and consumer education

Newsletter:
- Highlighting evidence-based practices and recent research in evidence-based practices
- Links to resources for evidence-based practice and consumer education
- New materials for evidence-based practice and consumer education
- Interactive features for consumer feedback

Issue briefs for dissemination & knowledge translation:
- Highlighting evidence-based practices
- Sharing key messages from workshops

MHARN page on CMHSR website:
- User-friendly information about evidence-based practices
- Interactive features for evidence-based practice and consumer education

Mental Health Agency Research Network (MHARN)
- Engaging academics, community providers, and consumers in a dialogue about research & evaluation
- Increasing awareness about evidence-based practices and programs
- Improving the relevance of research to practitioners and consumers

Research Collaboration:
- Active partners in collaborative research & grant-writing
- Engage academics, DMH and agency providers, and consumers in a dialogue about research & evaluation
- Increase awareness about evidence-based practices and programs
- Increase translation of knowledge about evidence-based practices into changes in practitioner behavior and benefits to consumers
- Improve the relevance of research to practitioners and consumers
- Increase collaboration, communication, and training
- Promote the development of new knowledge and research skills among DMH providers

Dissemination:
- Large, disseminated network of evidence-based practices, organizational change, and consumer & family benefits & input
- Highlights evidence-based practices, recent research on evidence-based practices
- Linking to resources for evidence-based practice and consumer education
- New materials for evidence-based practice and consumer education

MHARN Structure:
The MHARN has three tiers: a basic tier of service providers receiving information about innovations in services and treatments, a middle tier of providers who participate in surveys and other observational research, and a top tier of providers who participate actively in highly structured intervention studies. Movement of members through the tiers is based on levels of participation. The MHARN is a developing network for sharing knowledge and research collaboration.

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