

# **Recovery Technology Annual Accessibility Report 2017**

This report provides information about the results of the Accessibility Plan and monitoring program and all accessibility barriers identified during 2017. The philosophy of Recovery Technology is that all people should have access to services, programs and activities in which they have an interest. Consistent with that philosophy, Recovery Technology's Leadership Team adopts an Accessibility Plan annually. This plan is reviewed and modified as appropriate. For the purpose of the accessibility program, a barrier to accessibility can be described as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including an architectural, physical/environmental, attitudinal, financial, employment, communication, technology, transportation, and community integration. The goal of the Accessibility Plan is to describe actions that Recovery Technology will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers to all people (especially those with disabilities) accessing Recovery Technology's facility and services. These actions are taken to benefit staff, clients, families, visitors and volunteers of the organization.

#### **Architecture/Physical/Environmental Access Barriers:**

Recovery Technology is fortunate to be located in a barrier-free building that has easy access for clients, staff and visitors. The Architecture/Physical barriers identified this past year was regarding the handicap parking in the front of the building was not clearly identified and causing some confusion. This was corrected. There was no other architecture, physical or environmental access barriers reported this year.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: This barrier was fixed.

Areas for Improvement: None identified

#### **Attitudinal Access Barriers:**

Recovery Technology provides Cultural Diversity Training upon hire and annually thereafter, and is committed to increasing staff knowledge of other cultures and lifestyles in order to provide quality services to all groups of people. Recovery Technology provided quality training to all staff throughout this fiscal year. No attitudinal barriers were reported this year.

Progress made in the Removal of Identified Barriers: N/A

Areas for Improvement: None identified

#### **Financial Access Barriers:**

There continues to be a "gap" with clients who do not have insurance or have limited coverage in Mental Health benefits. Recovery Technology refers to community resources when possible, but remains committed to maintaining Interns through area universities. The clients benefit by having their mental health needs met in an affordable way (free of charge), and the interns benefit by obtaining their needed hours, experience and supervision to complete their education. Recovery Technology tries to take at least 2 graduate students and 2 undergrad students each semester.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: Recovery Technology utilized 3 Master's level interns, 3 bachelor level interns, 1 nurse practitioner and 1 medical student who did 2 rotations with Dr. Saran during 2017. The Master Level interns were able to work with 24 clients who did not meet criteria for CMH services and had no insurance, or were unable to afford co-pays. The bachelor level interns are not able to have a caseload, but are able to help out many clients who would not be eligible for services on an "as needed" or PRN basis. Recovery Technology also continues to utilize a "pro-bono" policy in which staff is able to see a limited number of clients free of charge who meet the same criteria as above. Recovery Technology was able to serve 7 case management clients in this manner.

Areas for Improvement: (1) Take on more interns if possible. (2) Continue to develop relationships with community resources to better assist clients.

Recovery Technology also had financial difficulties throughout 2017. Our physician's services were downsized in 2016, leaving Recovery Technology with 2 doctors and 3 nurses. This was a department that was losing a large amount of money and we were unable to sustain its operation. Recovery Technology also had several other layoffs in late 2016 as a result. Recovery Technology also was in a payback situation with LifeWays and had mounting debt. As a result of the hard work of staff and leadership, Recovery Technology was able to improve its' financial outlook in 2017 and has ended the year in the black.

### **Employment Access Barriers:**

There continues to be barriers to employment for clients as well as mental health workers, including staff and other stakeholders due in large part to the economy. Recovery Technology addresses employment barriers for clients by utilizing community resources that assist with employment, such as Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Work Services and the Evidence Based Supported Employment programs. Recovery Technology staff are also trained to assist clients independently if they do not happen to qualify for any of these programs. Recovery Technology addresses this barrier with staff by remaining committed to a "no lay-off" policy if at all possible. Recovery Technology also balances this with a "no waiting list" policy. If referrals are coming in at a rate too rapid for existing staff to keep up with, Recovery Technology will make every effort to hire new staff to meet the growing need.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: Recovery Technology had to lay off 1 staff this year. This occurred in January and was a result of the downsizing of our Physician Services. There was no longer a need for two receptionists after eliminating several physicians. No other layoffs occurred in 2017 and Recovery Technology stabilized its staffing levels. See 2017 Staffing Report for details. Recovery Technology has had a minimal wait list in outpatient therapy this year. Due to financial issues we are unable to hire as quickly as we were able to in the past in order to prevent a wait list. However, the wait list is typically no longer than 2 weeks before we are able to schedule an intake appointment and it is only for clients with an insurance that has a limited number of therapist who accept it.

Areas for improvement: Continue to strive for improved employment opportunities for clients and minimize/eliminate layoff of Recovery Technology staff.

**Communication Access Barriers:**

No barriers reported or identified this year.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: N/A

Areas for Improvement: None identified

**Technology Access Barriers:**

Recovery Technology has identified that technology barriers have become prominent due to changing laws in health care. We recognize that improving technology will improve our ability to remain competitive, provide quality services to our clients, efficiencies with our staff and improve how our organization is run.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: Recovery Technology has a full-time IT support person on site. This has enabled Recovery Technology to use e—prescribing and maintain the Meaningful Use Program. Recovery Technology has made good progress this year in improving technology and using that technology to become more efficient. Recovery Technology was also able to continue to buy and replace aging computers and other equipment throughout the year as our financial picture improved.

Areas for Improvement: Recovery Technology needs to continue to grow and improve in this area.

**Transportation Access Barriers:**

As the bed bug epidemic continues in Jackson, staff are reluctant to transport clients who have bedbugs in their personal vehicles. Recovery Technology staff have worked extensively with clients and landlords to help eradicate bed bugs in our client's homes so that the clients are able to participate in treatment and other activities in the community. This epidemic remains a problem, but Recovery Technology is doing everything possible to keep our clients protected from this. Recovery Technology continues to provide bus passes and discount fare cards, as well as assisting our clients to utilize natural supports. Staff also assists when needed to provide transportation to our clients. No other transportation barriers were identified this year.

Progress made in the removal of identified barriers: Recovery Technology continues to work toward elimination barriers in this area.

Areas for Improvement: None Identified

**Community Integration Barriers:** Many barriers exist for different reasons for clients, staff and other stakeholders from becoming fully integrated into the community. Recovery Technology has made many active steps to help staff, clients and stakeholders achieve this. Recovery Technology has made several community outreach attempts with partners to help promote integration of our clients in to the community. For further details, see the 2017 Quality Management/Performance Improvement Report.

**Progress made for removal of identified barriers:**

- RT sponsored outings to area baseball games, parks and local orchards for clients and staff
- RT held several picnics in a local park for staff and clients
- RT holds staff parties periodically for different occasions and annually at Christmas for staff
- RT sponsors an annual Christmas party in the community for clients in which the staff serve the clients
- RT makes all attempts to participate in anti-stigma campaigns throughout the community and state and assists in educating the community in regards to mental illness and developmental disabilities.

Areas for improvement: Recovery Technology will continue to work diligently to remove barriers and assist in community integration for our clients, staff and other stakeholders.