I. Overview

This DMHAS funded training and technical assistance initiative is focused on assisting New Jersey’s supportive housing agencies in enhancing their ability to deliver and document Medicaid reimbursable Community Support Services. These rehabilitation services are designed to help individuals diagnosed with serious mental illnesses attain the skills and resources needed to live successfully in the community and move forward in their recovery. More specifically, Community Support Services (CSS) focus on helping individuals achieve and maintain valued life roles in employment, education, housing and social environments.

Delivering CSS interventions requires partnering with service users to identify their own wellness and recovery goals. This partnership continues with the completion of comprehensive needs assessments and the development and implementation of individualized and recovery-oriented rehabilitation plans. Ongoing CSS interventions emphasize rehabilitative skill development, as well as illness management and recovery training, crisis intervention, and the coordination of all of the services and supports needed for optimal community participation.

Because of a recent Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) State Plan amendment, CSS is now an approved Medicaid billable service in New Jersey. The DMHAS is in the process of promulgating CSS regulations. Once CSS regulations are
promulgated, the Department of Human Services, Office of Licensure can begin to issue licenses to DMHAS-funded supportive housing providers who meet the CSS regulatory standards enabling these providers to bill Medicaid for CSS. DMHAS is currently finalizing CSS rules and regulations for their delivery by supportive housing providers. This training initiative will assist in preparing supportive housing providers to comply with the new regulations once they are promulgated and more importantly, provide agencies with the tools to develop the competencies necessary to provide high quality rehabilitation services that are reimbursable through Medicaid.

The new CSS regulations will be sent to mental health providers and other stakeholders for review in December, 2014. It is anticipated that the regulations will be promulgated by the State of New Jersey early in 2015 and the Office of Licensing will begin issuing licenses a few months later. CSS will most likely become a billable service by licensed supportive housing providers by July of 2015 [Note: This updated timeline was reported by senior DMHAS staff in August 2014].

To support the implementation of Community Support Services, DMHAS has contracted with the Rutgers University School of Health Related Professions (SHRP, formerly part of UMDNJ) to provide training and technical support. SHRP’s Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions is well known nationally and internationally as a leader in psychiatric rehabilitation education and research. SHRP is also well known by many New Jersey mental health providers who have clinical affiliations with the school and have served as clinical sites for psychiatric rehabilitation and rehabilitation counseling students. In addition, many providers have utilized the training and technical assistance provided by the SHRP Integrated Employment Institute.
II. Training Series Logistics

Two training series will be provided for supportive housing providers. The first series will be for supervisory staff to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the scope of CSS and the wellness and recovery philosophy that supports the service model. The emphasis of this series will be on preparing trainees to supervise direct care staff who will be providing and documenting CSS. This series will consist of eight full day (six hour) sessions that will begin in February 2014 and run every two weeks until the end of May 2014. A second series for the direct care staff will begin in September 2014. It will also consist of eight full day sessions that will cover the conceptual and practical aspects of CSS provision. Early in 2015 both the Supervisor Training Series and Direct Care Staff training series will be offered again. It is anticipated that by June of 2015, more than 450 direct care staff and supervisors will have completed the CSS training series. Additional training will be offered in 2015 pending the continuation of funding.

Trainings will be offered regionally. Training will be held at the Rutgers SHRP Campus in Scotch Plains for providers in the Northern and Central regions; trainings for providers in Southern region will be held in Mays Landing. A training site in Freehold has also been secured for the September, 2014 Direct Care Staff training.

All training sessions will be interactive and emphasize real world application of the knowledge and skills acquired. Post training technical assistance and coaching will also be available if needed. Agency self-assessments to determine additional training, coaching and technical assistance needs will be conducted with the assistance of SHRP faculty. Details of the training objectives and a schedule for the supervisory training
series are also available on the CSS Project Web Page. Beginning in September 2015, training materials and other resources to support the transition to CSS will also be posted. In a later stage of the Project, trainings will be web-enhanced to allow trainees to access both resource materials and support from the trainers in between sessions.