



# Adult Psychiatric Rehabilitation Newsletter



Office of  
Mental Health

Winter 2026

## Individualized Placement and Support: **A Success Story**

Integrating Individualized Placement and Support into our community-based psychiatric rehabilitation services has helped many individuals obtain and maintain competitive, integrated employment. Because employment can play a vital role in recovery, applying IPS principles makes meaningful work more achievable. A recent example comes from a State Aid Funded Employment Program operated by [Southern Tier Environments for Living](#).

At Southern Tier Environments, they believe every journey matters, and each step forward is worth celebrating. Some paths to stability are straightforward, but others require courage, resilience, and a strong support system. This is the story of one individual who proved that, with determination and the right resources, transformation is possible.

When he first came to the agency's Living's Workforce Program, he was experiencing homelessness and battling alcoholism. Early on, he faced many setbacks, including several inpatient stays for mental health and substance use treatment while residing in the local homeless shelter. Yet, with perseverance and the encouragement of his Workforce Specialist, he kept moving toward his goal of employment.

Together, they revisited a field he knew well, home health care. Securing work brought new challenges, including one unique obstacle. His shift ended an hour past the local shelter's curfew. To support his progress, the Workforce Specialist worked with shelter staff to create an exception so he would still have a safe place to stay while continuing to work.

That advocacy for a small accommodation made a big difference. Today, his progress shines as an example of resilience. He is now living in his own supported housing apartment, working two home



health care jobs, and preparing to earn his driver's license and buy a car. What once felt impossible is now his reality, proof that hope and hard work can lead to lasting change. We are proud to share this story as a reminder of what's possible when individuals are empowered to take the next step forward with employment!

This story illustrates several core IPS principles. A person-centered approach helped identify the field in which the individual was most likely to succeed. Collaboration between behavioral health providers and housing support allowed for the necessary flexibility to maintain employment. Most important, the program focused on the individual's desire to work rather than waiting for 'stability.' By supporting employment despite ongoing substance use and housing challenges, the program helped create the foundation for his recovery.

We include information on IPS in each of our newsletters. Keep following us for more.

## **We Want to Hear From YOU!** Do you have a success story to celebrate or an important rehabilitation-focused initiative happening in your program?

The *Adult Psychiatric Rehabilitation Newsletter* is a space to highlight the incredible work happening throughout New York State. Whether it's an innovative program development, a best practice worth sharing, or a powerful recovery journey, your insights can inspire and inform others. If you'd like to be considered for a feature, fill out our [feature article submission form](#). We look forward to showcasing the great work happening in adult rehabilitation services throughout New York State!

# When Seasons Shift, So Can Mood:

## Recognizing and Supporting Individuals with SAD

As the days grow darker, many of us struggle to maintain motivation and energy to make it through the Winter season.

It's common to feel 'off' during the colder months, especially with holiday schedule changes and disruptions to routine. However, if you or someone you support experiences a clear shift in mood or functioning that consistently appears during certain seasons, it may be a sign of **Seasonal Affective Disorder**.

According to the [National Institute of Health](#), SAD is a type of depression characterized by a recurrent seasonal pattern. Symptoms of SAD may not be addressed by the participants current treatment plan and/or missed due to similar symptoms of a co-occurring mental health diagnosis.

### Recognizing Possible Symptoms of SAD

People experiencing SAD may notice several changes in how they feel or behave, including:

- Ongoing sadness or a low mood most days.
- Feeling hopeless, discouraged, or unusually irritable.
- Increased frustration or restlessness.
- Low self-esteem or feelings of guilt.
- Losing interest in activities that normally feel enjoyable.
- A noticeable decrease in energy or increased fatigue.
- Difficulty focusing, remembering things, or making everyday decisions.
- Changes in sleeping or eating habits, sometimes accompanied by weight changes.
- Physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach discomfort, or unexplained aches.
- Thoughts about death or suicide.

For individuals whose symptoms follow a **winter pattern**, additional concerns may include:

- Sleeping much more than usual.
- Eating more than normal, especially craving carbohydrates.
- Pulling away from social activities or feeling like 'hibernating.'

### Common Treatment Options

Several approaches can help people manage SAD. Health professionals may recommend one or more of the following:

1. **Light therapy**, which involves exposure to bright artificial light at specific times of day.
2. **Psychotherapy**, to explore coping skills and address mood changes.
3. **Antidepressant medication**, when appropriate and prescribed by a provider.
4. **Vitamin D supplementation**, if recommended after medical evaluation.

Before changing any treatment or routines, it's important to speak with a healthcare provider to understand potential benefits and risks.

### How CORE Services Can Help

A CORE Agency offering Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment can assist with managing medications and provide individual psychotherapy for those experiencing symptoms of SAD. If CPST is not available through your agency, the person's primary care provider or other members of their care team can help with assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning.

Together, by staying aware of seasonal mental health needs and connecting people to appropriate support, we can help our community move through the darker months with greater resilience and stability.



## 2025 Recovery and Rehabilitation Academy

On November 20 and 21, more than 200 people from the provider community came together in Albany for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Recovery and Rehabilitation Academy.

The Academy featured inspiring and informative sessions on leadership, integration of best practices, community-based services, and innovations in operations. It also provided a wonderful opportunity to network with colleagues, training partners, and OMH.

As we begin to plan for the 2026 Academy, we welcome any feedback or ideas you may have to ensure another successful conference.

## New York Psychiatric Rehabilitation Training Academy

Funded by NYS Office of Mental Health



We are excited to announce that enrollment is now open for the next cohort of training in the New York Psychiatric Rehabilitation Training Academy!

The academy is a three-year Statewide training initiative funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health and offers training for individual practitioners, supervisors, and agency leadership to support improved outcomes for the people who participate in psychiatric rehabilitation services.

The academy also offers practitioners an opportunity to accrue training hours that lead to certification through the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association for the Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner credential, which is recognized nationally.

For more information or to sign up for the next training cohort, please go to [New York Psychiatric Rehabilitation Training Academy Registration Form – Fill out form.](#)

## Resources

### CORE Resources

- [Community Oriented Recovery and Empowerment](#) OMH webpage.
- In collaboration with MCTAC, there is a CORE Services Special Initiative page on their website that is a collection of training offerings for CORE Service providers, as well as other specific recorded webinars discussing CORE and the benefit of these services to individuals currently being served in other service types. This site can be found at: <https://www.ctacny.org/special-initiatives/CORE/>.
- Anyone interested in making a referral for an eligible individual to a designated CORE providers can look at the [CORE Services Designation](#) page for both the New York City and Rest of State CORE Services Designation lists. On each list are the names of designated providers, the services they are designated to provide and the counties they are designated to provide this service. After identifying the service and agency you would like to refer to the best contact information for the agency is also listed with telephone and email contacts.
- [core-services@omh.ny.gov](mailto:core-services@omh.ny.gov) – email to send questions specific to OMH Hosted CORE Services.
- [pimc@oasas.ny.gov](mailto:pimc@oasas.ny.gov) – email to send questions specific to OASAS Hosted CORE Services.

### PROS Resources

- [Personalized Recovery Oriented Services](#) - OMH PROS Webpage. This page includes a general description of the PROS program and services, links to guidance documents, and other program resources.
- [pros@omh.ny.gov](mailto:pros@omh.ny.gov) – email to send questions specific to PROS programs.

### SAFEP Resources

- [Supported Employment Services](#) - OMH supported employment webpage. This page includes information on program types, IPS, and New York Employment Services System.
- [employmentservices@omh.ny.gov](mailto:employmentservices@omh.ny.gov) - email to send questions specific to employment services.