

Understanding the Impact of Trauma

Choice
TRUST
Empowerment
Collaboration

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A cultural shift is underway throughout Cazenovia Recovery Systems. This year, our agency began transitioning to an environment immersed in Trauma-Informed Care (TIC). This model asks program participants, “What happened to you?” instead of asking, “What’s wrong with you?” and will provide staff and residents with the tools to understand and cope with past traumas.



Alyssa Warden, Trauma Coordinator

Andrea Irizarry, Clinical Services Director, stated that the transition will involve becoming even more “open to residents’ trauma and how it contributes to their substance use.” This process will develop slowly over a period of two years, though it isn’t just resident-focused. The agency’s culture and interactions among staff will begin to reflect the five principles of TIC: safety, trust, collaboration, choice, and empowerment.

One of the first major changes involved hiring Alyssa Warden to serve as Trauma Coordinator, and she will help direct this agency-wide transition. Her position is

being generously funded through a grant from The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation. She has a master’s degree in Social Work from the University at Buffalo where she interned at the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care. Alyssa’s experiences at UB, including her introduction to TIC while studying, shaped her professionally. She explained TIC as “a lens through which to see how we provide care. Once you learn it, you’re able to see everything through it.”

Residents can expect to see an increased focus on personal wellness in their daily routines, trainings on understanding trauma throughout their history, more choices in their programming, and more.



Andrea Irizarry, Director of Clinical Services

Staff will also begin to see “a common language throughout the agency,” according to Alyssa. She hopes that this implementation leads to “an organization full of people who love coming to work.” She has already begun sending out emails

Staff Spotlight

Let’s Congratulate:

Irish Scott is now a Counselor Associate at Ivy House

Let’s Welcome:

Claudia Rejman, Comptroller, at Admin

Alyssa Warden, Trauma Coordinator, at Admin

Cazenovia Creators & Catchers:

Kathy Todd nominated Venus Wiggins for exceeding expectations in her interactions with the finance department regarding the financial discharge process.

Mary Beth McCormick and Becky Stefanik nominated Michelle Harvey at TPH for excelling with new admissions, OASAS compliance, and her incredibly positive energy.

Debbie Franz nominated Ed Cichon for always being willing to help out coworkers.

Congratulations to Angela Angora for winning this quarter’s Cazenovia Creators & Catchers drawing!

The next drawing will be held in September.

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to staff members promoting things like better sleep, lunch breaks, and other topics related to well-being. She'll even be helping out with the new "Trauma-Informed Care Corner" in upcoming newsletter issues.

We are the first human services agency in Western New York to create a specific position for trauma coordination. Alyssa hopes "to empower others to take the lead in implementing TIC." Allowing the entire agency to feel ownership of this process is critical. According to Andrea, the transition to Trauma-Informed Care "isn't just dependent on one person. It's going to take everyone together to make this work."



Part of our TIC Training Team

Merger with Fellowship House

Cazenovia Recovery has a proven track record of turning troubled programs from other agencies into something successful. In a show of confidence for our expertise, Fellowship House approached us to manage and transfer licenses of their four programs in Niagara County to our agency. The license transfer will become official as of January 1, 2016, when we will grow by another 18% upon taking over their beds. Currently, Cazenovia Recovery's executive and management teams are providing consultation services to Fellowship House in order to make the transition more efficient and seamless at the end of the year.



Cazenovia Recovery & Fellowship House will merge next year

Cazenovia Recovery on the Miss Buffalo

Dozens of employees attended our cruise on the Miss Buffalo on Thursday, June 18 that was presented by the Wellness Committee. We welcomed the Fellowship House employees who joined us. Briana Petersdorf, Program Director, set up the Miss Buffalo event and presented Years of Service pins to employees who have been with the agency for some time. The cruise was a relaxing journey around Buffalo's waterfront that featured music by Den of Lions, dancing, and food. More pictures are available for viewing on our website and Facebook page.



Cazenovia Recovery staff on the Miss Buffalo

Agency-Wide Hydration Challenge

This month began our Wellness Committee's first contest, the Hydration Challenge. In an effort to promote healthy living through drinking water, participating employees are drinking at least 64 ounces of water per day. Those who complete the challenge will be entered to win one of three gift cards for health-related businesses. The challenge was introduced on the Miss Buffalo, where Cazenovia Recovery water bottles were given to anyone who signed up. Our Hydration Challenge runs through Sunday, July 19.

