Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood:
A Knowledge Translation Online Program
for Transition Service Providers

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METHODOLOGY

Development of PPPA. A national advisory group of young people, family support specialists, service providers, educators, and researchers formed the Pathways Transition Training Collaborative (PTTC) to design capacity-building training for service providers working with emerging adults with behavioral health needs. Following an extensive literature search combined and with guidance from the PTTC, a set of 10 core competencies was developed as a basis for KT efforts (Brennan, Jivanjee, & Roser, 2010). To meet the widespread need for specialized training, PTTC members developed free, nationally-available asynchronous online training.

PPPA Content. Ten hour-long online modules were developed through an iterative process using pilot tests, reviews by peer support providers, cultural specialists, and service providers; each module was aligned with one or two of the core competencies. The skill-building trainings are based on a positive youth development and empowerment framework (Walker, 2015), and highlight empirical research findings that can be directly applied to practice. In line with current best practices for online education, PPPA incorporated video segments featuring young people with behavioral health service experience, service providers, and family members, interactive exercises, knowledge tests, and downloadable resources and references (Dimeff et al., 2009; Ruzek et al., 2014).

DISCUSSION

Best practices in workforce development emphasize the need for education and training relevant to the conditions service providers encounter in practice (Hoge et al., 2005). The current pilot research reveals the potential for online training for service providers working with young people with mental health concerns to enhance their capacity to serve this group. Current research on the effectiveness of online training also points to the need for additional supports to maximize the gains from online KT efforts, and the importance of enacting lessons learned in practice settings (Lyon et al., 2011). In order to improve training results, the **Pathways Transition Training**

ABSTRACT

Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood is an online knowledge translation (KT) initiative designed to build the capacity of direct service providers working with emerging adults with behavioral health needs. We report on the development, content, KT supports, and pilot evaluation results of this 10-module training program. Provider self -ratings of competency to perform transition-focused activities improved significantly in pilot tests of two modules. The added benefits of additional KT supports are also considered. Addressing gaps between current knowledge and practice is an urgent concern in health, mental health, and related

Pathways Transition Training Modules	
Module 1: Partnering with Youth and Young Adults	Module 6: Providing Individualized and Developmentally Appropriate Services
Module 2: Promoting Recovery	Module 7: Developing Healthy Relationships
Module 3: Increasing Cultural Awareness and Building Community Support	Module 8: Planning Partnerships with Providers of Other Services and Collaborating to Bridge Service Gaps
Module 4: Fostering Resilience and Family Supports	Module 9: Promoting Support from Family, Peers, and Mentors
Module 5: Promoting Cross-Cultural and Intergenerational Relationships	Module 10: Using Evidence-supported Practices and Individualizing Interventions

Pilot Evaluation Efforts. Pilot evaluations were conducted for Modules 1 ($n1 = 42$) and 2 ($n2 = 21$), using the Transition Service Provider Competency Scale (TSPCS; Jivanjee, et al., 2011), and specific questions about the helpfulness of specific module components on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all helpful) to 5 (very helpful). Pilot test participants for both module 1 and 2 who completed both pre-tests and posttests were generally Non-Hispanic White females, with some college education, who worked in mental health, transition services, family support, or education.

Partnership of 20 organizations providing services to young people and their families is currently comparing the effectiveness of online training only to online training with organizational supports (Jivanjee et al., 2016). The research team has designed supports such as interactive face-to-face application exercises, online coaching, and implementation assistance to assist teams of service providers to apply their learning in their local community and organizational context (Beidas et al., 2011; Dalston & Turner, 2011) to test for their enhancement of training results, and the improvement of knowledge translation.

services (Glasgow et al., 2012; Gray & Schubert, 2012; Proctor et al., 2009). There is also an increasing focus on knowledge translation (KT) methods to close these gaps between knowledge and practice (Straus et al., 2009). **Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood** (PPPA) is a knowledge translation initiative designed to build the capacity of direct service providers to work with young people aged 14-29 who have behavioral health difficulties. We studied the feasibility and acceptability of this online training program for service providers working with young people and their families.

RESULTS

Module 1 total TSPCS scores increased significantly from pretest ($M = 1085.07$, $SD = 388.83$) to post-test ($M = 1253.28$, $SD = 310.63$), $t(41) = 4.71$, $p < .001$. Similarly for Module 2, overall TSPCS scores rose significantly from pretest ($M = 1236.10$, $SD = 209.74$) to post-test ($M = 1339.57$, $SD = 143.72$), $t(20) = 4.38$, $p < .001$. Video clips of young people and service providers were rated highest in helpfulness of all module components for both pilot tests, and module-specific content also received mean helpfulness ratings between 3.65 and 4.05 from participants.

FUNDERS

For more information, please visit:
http://pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/proj-pttp