

August 19, 2013

Overview of the CRS survey and its possible workforce implications

In an effort to understand our current Certified Recovery Specialists workforce and their perspective on how people with addictions are being served, a statewide survey of the CRS workforce was completed. At the point we ended the survey in June 2013, we had received 85 responses or roughly 25% of the CRS labor force holding credentials with the PCB.

The typical CRS survey respondent was a 50 year old, Caucasian male holding a Bachelors degree or higher, working at an outpatient or residential treatment facility and in recovery, with between 3 and 10 years of work experience.

As SAMSHA indicated in their 2007 Action Plan for Workforce Development, there is a notable lack of racial and cultural diversity among the national workforce which needs to address. We believe that the CRS portion of the workforce more closely matches the community of persons served in Pennsylvania and needs to be considered as a vital aspect of our overall workforce development plan.

We found that:

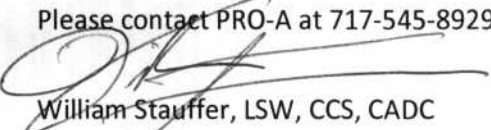
- In respect to Gender, we found that a greater percentage of CRS are male than a similar survey of the Counselor workforce in Pennsylvania that PRO-A recently completed. This CRS survey identified 51.8% of respondents were males compared to 35.3% in our counselor survey.
- In respect to race and ethnicity, double the percentage of responding CRS identified themselves as being other than Caucasian in comparison to our recent counselor survey. 40.5% of the respondents to our CRS survey self-identified as being other than Caucasian compared to 22.2% in the counselor survey.
- In respect to recovery status, a significantly higher percentage of CRS respondents self-identified as in recovery. Roughly two-thirds of the respondents to the CRS survey identified themselves as in recovery versus one third in the counselor survey.
- 22% of the drug and alcohol Counselor workforce surveyed indicated that they will be leaving the field within five years, which is more than double the rate identified in this CRS survey.
- In relation to the quality and frequency of supervision, a combined total of 22 or 39.3% of the respondents indicated that they did not get supervision as often as they would like, in as good quality as they need, or at all.
- The survey would suggest that while many people seeking help for from Certified Recovery Specialists are served consistently and appropriately, about one third do not get consistent or appropriate services, with funding being an identified barrier to care in a number of the comments. 24 of the 66 respondents to this question or 36% indicated that only some or none of the individuals served are getting consistently and appropriate services.

Preliminary recommendations from the survey:

- These results may very well suggest in addition to expanding recovery support resources, which in and of itself is a vital objective, the CRS segment of the workforce could be a critical asset to assist in sustaining and developing the drug and alcohol service system into the future as people advance within the field.

We consider the CRS survey as a preliminary report to DDAP. As advocates for recovery, we understand the critical importance of having a strong and functioning drug and alcohol service system to serve our communities into the next generation. The CRS workforce offers important opportunities to assist in the recovery process for many Pennsylvanians and their families.

Please contact PRO-A at 717-545-8929 or billstauffer@rcn.org if you are interested in a copy of the complete report.


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