

**JOHN F. KENNEDY, JR. INSTITUTE
FOR WORKER EDUCATION**

INTRODUCTION TO WELLNESS COACHING CERTIFICATE

City University of New York

**Non-credit Certificate Program
Spring 2010**

Agency Materials

Introduction

The City University of New York through a partnership with an OMH/NYS Department of Labor Initiative is offering a free-of-charge certificate program in Wellness Coaching for recipients of services in mental health programs. Those who complete the certificate program will be qualified to assume wellness coach or similar positions in mental health agencies. Agencies may sponsor applicants provided the applicant has met the qualifications of the OMH/DOL initiative, has successfully completed the CUNY course admissions process, and the agency has agreed to make all good faith efforts to employ the applicant in an identified position. The section on **Agency Responsibilities** below spells out these requirements in detail.

Wellness Coaching

Persons with serious mental illness are dying 20-25 years younger than their peers without serious forms of mental illness due to co-morbid medical disorders.¹ Excessive weight gain, Type II diabetes, hypertension, and related metabolic syndrome disorders are leading contributors to early mortality. Also contributing are potentially modifiable lifestyle factors that include smoking, poor diet, medication side effects, and a sedentary

¹ Parks, J., Svendsen, D., Singer, P., Forti, M.E., & Mauer, B. (2006, October). *Morbidity and mortality in people with serious mental illness [Technical report]*. Retrieved June 12, 2008 from <http://www.nasmphd.org>

lifestyle. Wellness coaches are trained to help peers link to primary health care and health promotion activities.

The *Introduction to Wellness Coaching Certificate* is a non-credit, 2 course certificate program offered by The City University of New York (CUNY) that will prepare students to apply the principles of wellness and wellness coaching to their own life, as well as in their work environment and community. The certificate program is appropriate for qualified mental health recipients interested in becoming wellness coaches.

Wellness Coaching Can Help People:

- Create a self-defined wellness lifestyle
- Gain awareness and insight into their personal situations
- Find solutions for health problems and concerns that individuals face
- Become motivated to achieve their wellness goals
- Become successful in accomplishing their wellness goals

Introduction to Wellness Coaching (45 hours) – Start Date: April 14, 2010

This course will meet one day per week for 5 hours over the course of 9 weeks. It will cover topics such as: role of a wellness coach, lifestyle factors for health and wellness, metabolic syndrome, smoking cessation, nutrition, exercise, oral health, medication side effects, coordination of care, and documentation of services.

Practicum in Wellness Coaching (120 hours) – Start Date: June 16, 2010

After successful completion of the *Introduction to Wellness Coaching Course*, students will begin the *Practicum in Wellness Coaching* course. Students will complete a 100-hour practicum at a participating agency over a period of 6 weeks. Each student will be given the opportunity to practice and apply the skills that he or she has learned in the classroom within a community setting.

As part of this 6-week course, students will also be required to attend a practicum seminar and participate in 3 tele-coaching sessions (20 hours). These sessions will give faculty an opportunity to reinforce the basic skills and processes learned in class. This will also allow students to practice using the phone as a coaching tool.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be a current recipient of mental health services
- Be interested in becoming a Wellness Coach
- Qualify for the OMH/Department of Labor Initiative
- Meet CUNY Eligibility requirements including:
 - Have a High School Diploma or GED
 - Demonstrate appropriate reading , writing and critical thinking skills
 - Participate in a group interview

Agency Responsibilities:

Participating sponsoring agencies are required to:

- Complete and submit the attached OMH/Department of Labor Initiative Eligibility Certification for each applicant, specifying the tentative position of employment the applicant will assume. The agency agrees to make all good faith efforts to hire the applicant in the specified position. For further information contact Lorraine Washington at OMH, 518-473-6579 or email her at coralxj@omh.state.ny.us
- Assist the applicant in completing the CUNY admission application to the course and submit the Agency Recommendation Form (both attached). Any questions about the CUNY courses should be directed to Abigail Nelson, 212-652-2053 or email her at Abigail.Nelson@mail.cuny.edu

The Wellness Coaching Practicum

Agencies have the option of serving as the supervised fieldwork practicum site for the applicants they are sponsoring. [Note that paid work cannot be used for fieldwork purposes.] As described above, the practicum consists of 100 hours of fieldwork over a six-week period plus 20 hours of off-site seminar and tele-coaching sessions. If any

agency does not wish to serve as a practicum site, CUNY will place the student in an alternate site.

Agencies that are willing to serve as a practicum site make the following commitments:

- Provide the 100 hours of supervised fieldwork over the 6-week period
- Release the student for 20 hours of practicum seminar and tele-coaching sessions
- The fieldwork supervisor designated by the agency will attend a supervisor's training session at CUNY and will provide feedback to CUNY on the student's fieldwork experience.

CUNY Wellness Coaching Program
Agency Recommendation Form

Part A: To be completed by applicant

Date: _____

Name of applicant: _____

Address: _____

Applicant signature: _____

Part B: To be completed by sponsoring agency

Name of person providing reference: _____

Agency Name: _____

Agency Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

How long have you know the applicant? _____

Instructions: Please attach a letter of recommendation. This should be completed by an agency representative that can objectively state the student's interest and ability to complete the coursework. This letter should also state why the applicant would be a good wellness coach. Please address the following areas, if possible: maturity, organizational skills, interpersonal skills, knowledge of wellness concepts, ability to engage with others, and knowledge of community resources. **This letter of recommendation must be submitted at the time of application.**