



SAARA of Virginia

SAARA of Virginia has played an active role in the development and subsequent implementation of DBHDS's Creating Opportunities Plan for advancing community-focused services in Virginia and as such, support the following initiatives that focus on addressing the needs of individuals with substance use disorders:

Emergency Response Services – By providing a basic array of emergency and crisis response, we are much more likely to avoid more costly interventions such as hospitalization and incarceration. Increasing the use of peers in crisis situations has proven to be highly effective, both in cost and positive outcomes.

Resources for medically supervised detox are very limited. This has been identified by the VACSB Substance Abuse Council as a major priority.

Increase Peer Services and Supports – DBHDS has limited resources to staff and provide support to the peer recovery support movement. Mental Health and Substance Abuse peer leaders have been collaborating for over two years to develop a certification process that is both acceptable to BBHDS and DMAS (in the event that peer services were to become a reimbursable service under the Medicaid plan-22 states already have this).

Increasing the statewide availability of Substance Abuse Treatment Services – In general, resources for medically assisted treatment, detox services, outpatient services, case management services and peer support are inadequate.

Addressing Housing Needs for individuals with Substance Use Disorders – Clean and sober housing for individuals in early recovery is fundamental. Funding for housing has always presented a tremendous challenge because it has often fallen outside of the scope of the service providers.

Create Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders – Barriers associated with gaining meaningful employment are plentiful, yet critical to the recovery process in order to establish one's sense of self-worth and independence. Most applicants are screened out of the process from the very beginning simply by indicating that they have a criminal record.