



## Commitment to Recovery Services: A Key Response to the MISCC Plan

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### OASAS Strategies to Support Recovery

- Recovering persons and their families in any defined community, be it a geographic or a community of commonality or affiliation, represent a wide range of life experience and time in recovery.
- Successful recovery involves a three-part approach: personal recovery involvement and support; safe, affordable permanent housing, often with ongoing supportive services; and stable, full-time employment at a living wage.
- OASAS has expanded its commitment to prevention and treatment of addiction to include **recovery services**. The two newest Bureaus in the Agency are the Recovery Services Bureau and the Bureau of Housing & Employment Services.
- The **core values** of all Recovery-oriented efforts are: 1) **recovery** comes first in all that is done; 2) **inclusion** is critical; 3) **authenticity**, using one's own life experience as guidance in defining problems and finding solutions; 4) a **participatory process** that reaches out to all members; and 5) **leadership development** that enriches the community and ensures the community's growth.
- Consistent with national experience, OASAS believes that the following characteristics are critical for recovery services:
  - **Choice** – services must be tailored to meet individual needs, and be flexible and open to modification as the person moves forward in his/her recovery.
  - **Voice** – “nothing about us without us,” direct involvement in planning and carrying out programs and services is a critical component for success.
  - **Empowerment** – case management and counseling services must not simply do for individuals and families, these interventions must educate and empower people to make their own informed choices in matters affecting their lives and to accept responsibility for those choices.
  - **Dignity and respect** – all services and all communications should be built on tangible evidence of dignity and respect for all persons involved.
  - **Hope** – recovery of hope is essential for recovery from addiction, co-occurring psychiatric disorders, and life trauma. Recovery from these life problems is an achievable goal that in turn makes all other quality of life goals possible.

- OASAS established an ongoing **Recovery Implementation Team (RIT)** in January 2008. RIT members include, persons in recovery, representatives from the prevention, treatment, and recovery systems, other systems (including child welfare, mental health and faith-based) and OASAS staff. Team members meet quarterly and work together to develop recovery-oriented services. The RIT has formed several workgroups, with membership from across New York State. Focus groups have been conducted. The **Civic Engagement Workgroup** is seeking to increase the visibility and strength of the growing recovery constituency. A workgroup is developing a statewide **Recovery Conference** and another workgroup is providing direction for the OASAS effort to develop **Recovery Community Centers**. In addition, a major focus OASAS' efforts to develop a Recovery Oriented System of Care is **Integration Workgroup** which is working to develop a plan integrate recovery-oriented policies, practices and linkages into the existing prevention and treatment system.
- OASAS will be implementing a new initiative in our 2008-09 Budget to establish four Recovery Community Centers this year, one in New York City, one in an upstate city, and two in rural communities.

**Recovery Community Centers** were first established through the efforts of the federal **Center for Substance Abuse Treatment** in 2001. The Centers provide social supports that meet the “stage-appropriate” needs of people in recovery and their families, from early recovery to long-term sustained recovery. Services include:

- emotional support, such as peer-mentoring and peer-led support groups;
- informational support, such as peer-led skills training in areas like parenting and job-seeking, or wellness information such as on smoking cessation or nutrition;
- instrumental support such as helping with transportation or helping people complete applications for services; and
- affiliation support, helping people to establish positive social connections and to learn social and recreational skills in an alcohol-and-drug-free environment.

## Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Employment Services

- The **OASAS Vision** --- Safe, affordable housing and stable employment are critical to successful long-term Recovery. The **Services Package** includes:
  - 1) Rental Subsidies at the full HUD Fair Market Rental for each community, with the expectation that individuals and families participating in the program will contribute financially to the actual rent due to landlords;
  - 2) Apartment leases can be “turn-keyed” to the recovering individual or family when their income is sufficient to assume full rental responsibility;
  - 3) Recovery case management services are available not just during daytime hours, but in the evening and on weekends; and
  - 4) Employment counseling services include custom job development, job coaching, post-employment support groups, and access to skills training to aid career growth.



The **Program Model** emphasizes scatter-site rentals of apartments in clusters of five to 10 apartments in any given building, with the recovery case management and employment counseling services coming to the housing sites. Congregate sites will also be developed, especially in those buildings that provide permanent housing to several different special needs groups.

The **Program Scale** focuses on projects with approximately 25 units, so that no one neighborhood becomes saturated, the staff really can establish meaningful work relationships with program participants, and job development and job placement can be accomplished not just with a few large employers, but with the many and diverse micro-enterprises and small businesses that are present across the state. Rural communities will begin this initiative with approximately five to 10 units.

**Program Components** include:

- 1) **HUD Shelter Plus Care** Rental Subsidy Program that OASAS operates in New York City, the New York metropolitan counties, and in upstate communities (approximately 900 apartments) coupled with OASAS case management funding for all sponsoring agencies;
- 2) **New York/New York III** scatter-site rental subsidy program for homeless single adults who have completed some level of substance abuse treatment (approximately 325 units on line between July and October 2008), and a more modest congregate site program of up to 50 additional units to go on line in late 2009; and
- 3) **Upstate Permanent Supportive Housing** initiative that will also be scatter-site rental subsidies for at least 125 units for upstate cities and rural communities, to be implemented through a planning supplement RFA to be released no later than September 2008, with contracts to be executed no later than January 2009.

