



HealthyCities
Leadership
Academy

Changing the future of health

Chittenden
County
Opioid
Alliance



GE HealthyCities Leadership Academy Partnership

GE Award Winners

Atlanta, GA – Health Promotion and Prevention of Nutrition-Related Disease

Burlington, VT – Substance Abuse Recovery & Employment

Camden, NJ – Reducing Childhood Obesity

Charlotte, NC – Resources on Tobacco, Nutrition, and Exercise

Goodyear, AZ – Land Use Planning

Lebanon, NH – Innovations in Advance Care Planning with Employers

Pasadena, TX – Food Security

Miami, FL – Diabetes Assessment and Treatment

Burlington Team- Working Recovery

BLA Partners, LLC

The Howard Center

Community Health Centers of Burlington

Turning Point Center of Chittenden County

UVM Medical Center

VT Department of Health, Burlington District Office

United Way, NWVT

Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce

Guiding Principles

Mission: Working Recovery engages and inspires the Chittenden County business community to hire and support individuals in recovery.

Vision: Our community and local economy benefit from the long term, stable, and supported employment of individuals in recovery.

Values: Support the potential of every individual; Focus through a compassionate lens; Foster strong and supportive communities; Commit to excellence and innovation; Treasure a strong and local economy

Our Goals & Strategies

Goal #1: Increase the number of people in recovery who feel supported in their employment.

Strategies: Survey and interview Chittenden County business to identify workplace supports/barriers for individuals in recovery.

Goal #2: Determine support services preferred by individuals in recovery in workplace environments in Chittenden County.

Strategies: Conduct interviews/focus groups and surveys with people who are in recovery and who have employment experience.

Goal #3: Educate and bring awareness to local business community regarding best practices for hiring and retaining a workforce of people in recovery.

Strategies: Develop a best practices curriculum, outreach to local businesses and provide community trainings.

Accomplished-to-Date

- Formed Working Recovery Team
- **Met with Local Employment Specialists**
- Interviewed Local Businesses Who Actively Hire People in Recovery
- **Convened VT Human Resource Association professionals for discussion**
- Lived Recovery Focus Group
- **Literature Research**
- **GE Site Visit**

Vermont's Workforce Opportunity Op-Ed

“Develop, fund and proliferate the implementation of services for helping those Vermonters suffering from addiction to reenter the workforce...”



Why Companies Hire Individuals in Recovery

Deeply personal – many have been touched by addiction or witnessed its effects on family & friends

No one should be denied employment because of a mistake, especially if addiction no longer defines who an individual is now

For employers in recovery, this is an opportunity to be of service and honor and an integral part of their own 12-step work

Work is a second home, second chances should be given, and employees must be treated like family

Source: Local business interviews

Advantages

Hard working, grateful, loyal, and go the extra mile

Make fewer mistakes & learn quickly if one was made

Serve as mentors to newcomers in recovery

Make amends and financial restitution to those harmed while actively using

Translates to a reduction in criminal justice, healthcare and social service costs

Increase in tax revenue, mentoring and service to the recovery community and society as a whole

Source: Lit Review- journals, blogs

Identified Barriers

Criminal backgrounds

Incomplete or sporadic work history

Oral health issues and lack of teeth

Health issues

Housing

Scheduling difficulties for treatment and programming

Substance-free work social events

Lack of References

Source: Lit review, interviews

Successful Employment Practices

Have sober time under their belt, have a 12-step program or a significant support system (counselor, LADC, etc.)

Clear, concise and upfront expectations

Policies to address concerns and issues before they manifest at work

Establish a relationship with regular and very informal check-ins

Educate all employees on Substance Use Disorder

Accommodate needs for employee to meet with sponsor, meetings, LADC or counseling, drug testing or medication assisted treatment

Correct with kindness

If in recovery, share your story – creates sense of solidarity and togetherness

Source: Local business interviews

Next Steps

Opportunities for partnerships

Learning more from people in lived recovery

Learning more from local businesses

Sharing/Educating/Impacting

Sustainability