



Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network

1660 Oak Street SE, Suite 230 ■ Salem, Oregon ■ 97301

PHONE: (503) 361-2647 ■ FAX: (503) 585-4989 ■ www.mvbcn.org

CONSUMER-ADVOCATE Position Description

At MVBCN, we actively encourage and support consumer/survivors, family members and other advocates in planning, developing, implementing, operating and evaluating services provided within our Network. One way we involve Advocates is by appointment or through participation on our committees and workgroups.

We believe all Advocates have individual talents and passion that add to committees and workgroups and we know that for some Advocates, this will be a new experience. Please know that the combination of strengths is unique to each person and different Advocates carry out the same role in their own ways. For this reason, we encourage and support each Advocate's own path of development. The Consumer Affairs Specialist can work with you to brainstorm and problem-solve your situation to find ways to support your own development and involvement.

We recognize and seek diversity among all advocates, ranging from perspective and skills to life experiences. Given the potential for such a variety of advocates, it's helpful to understand the *key role* of the Consumer-Advocate. The following information is provided to describe the activities, responsibilities and skills needed for successful, effective, and meaningful participation on committees and workgroups.

1. Activities: What the Advocates does in committees/workgroups

- a. Share your story to inform and educate this Network
- b. Express a recipient's point of view and ideas
- c. Share in problem solving
- d. Learn the provider's point of view
- e. Read advance material to prepare for committee work
- f. Discuss and debate topics and issues
- g. Participate in consensus decision-making
- h. Keep track of the dates, times and location of meetings
- i. Attend Consumer Advocates Team (optional)

2. Abilities: Talents that help Advocates be successful in this position

- a. Maintain positive relationships with other Advocates, committee facilitators, staff or guests
- b. Speak in a group from direct experience as a consumer/survivor, family member of a consumer/survivor (child, youth or adult)
- c. Value the philosophy of Recovery (Recovery from mental health conditions or addictions)
- d. Participate in lengthy discussions and complex decision-making

- e. Absorb information previously reviewed and apply it to current issues
- f. Ask questions to help yourself understand complex issues and technical materials
- g. Inform staff or the committee facilitator if you need other accommodations to support your participation
- h. Have some knowledge about Oregon Health Plan mental health services or addiction services

3. Requirements: Commitments the Advocate makes when accepting a position

- a. Attend BCN 101
- b. Regularly attend meetings
- c. Give advance notice if you can't attend
- d. Actively participate (including speaking up in a group)
- e. Meet the requirements of the committee for which you are applying

NEXT STEPS

The Consumer Affairs Specialist will talk or meet with anyone interested in collaborating, changing and improving services in our Network. For more information, please feel free to contact Helen Lara:

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