



Self-Directed Care: An Innovative Approach to Recovery

Government and industry leaders like the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA) have recognized that self-direction is a key component of mental health recovery.¹ However few mental health programs actually incorporate self-direction into their day to day practices.

Magellan has embraced the self-directed care (SDC) approach through four unique pilot programs underway in Iowa, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. Though the program varies from state to state, each has the following core components: person-centered planning, life coaching, individual budgeting, financial management, expanded provider networks and services as well as oversight, quality improvement and program evaluation. Participants have access to a one-time credit to purchase approved goods and services that support their identified recovery and resiliency plan. The following examples demonstrate how consumers and family members are achieving their recovery and resiliency goals through these innovative programs.

“I feel a lot better about myself and I like myself more.”
- An Iowa SDC participant

Iowa SDC Program:

Focus on Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation (IPR)

Prior to participating in the Iowa SDC program, one individual lived in a series of mental health institutions and nursing homes. Through the SDC program, he was able to purchase needed items he could not otherwise afford and in June 2006, he moved into his first real home, a four-room apartment.

This is just one example of how 25 Iowa program participants are achieving recovery and resiliency goals that include moving from group to independent living, gaining employment and increasing their monthly income. Since the inception of the program in 2006, participants have been reporting positive satisfaction and the preliminary data shows that many are attaining their overall IPR goal.

“We have been able to get things that most insurance won’t pay for. [Our daughter] has made several new friends. None of this would have happened if we had not received this grant.”

- Mother of child with autism

Pennsylvania SDC Program:

Focus on Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Since early 2007, 26 Pennsylvania families of children with autism spectrum disorders have been able to make purchases to help them achieve resiliency goals such as keeping their children safe and furthering their children’s socialization and communication skills thanks to Magellan’s self-directed care program.

Tennessee SDC Program:

Focus on Adults with Serious Mental Illness in Memphis and Chattanooga

In 2007, Magellan launched self-directed care programs in eastern and western Tennessee enabling as many as 70 adults with serious mental illness to establish individual recovery plans and begin working toward their personal recovery goals. In one notable instance, a participant in western Tennessee developed an individual recovery plan that included his life long dream of finishing high school. Through the SDC program, the participant was able to get his tuition paid and successfully completed an online equivalency course. Since then, the participant has graduated from high school and is gainfully employed in a fulfilling job in his community.

By enabling consumers and families to play an active part in establishing their personal recovery plan, they are able to build the resiliency they need to rebound from mental illness and other stresses in life. Simply put, Magellan's self-directed care programs are empowering individuals to succeed in life.

1. SAMHSA National Consensus Statement on Mental Health Recovery. <http://download.ncadi.samhsa.gov/ken/pdf/SMA05-4129/trifold.pdf>