What is Community Integration?

Community Integration is the opportunity to live in the community and be valued for one's uniqueness and abilities, like everyone else. (Salzer, 2006) *

Community integration encompasses:

- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- Health Status
- Leisure/Recreation
- Spirituality/Religion
- Citizenship and Civic Engagement
- Valued Social Roles (e.g., marriage, parenting)
- Peer Support
- Self-Determination

Community integration (or, the opportunity to live like everyone else) should result in community presence and participation of people with psychiatric disabilities similar to that of all others without a disability label. * (Salzer, et al)

Why should I promote Community Integration?

- Community Integration provides a road map to recovery by creating an environment that facilitates individual well-being.
- Community Integration is the right of all people. Below are some of the legal and policy foundations for community integration:
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) - Title II: requires governments to give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all programs, services, and activities
  - Department of Justice “Integration Regulation”: services, programs, and activities must be delivered in a way that enables individuals with disabilities to interact with non-disabled people to the fullest extent possible
  - Supreme Court Olmstead decision (1999): unnecessary institutionalization is a form of discrimination prohibited by the ADA
  - Bush Executive Order (2001): requires federal agencies to work with states to ensure community integration
What is Community Integration? (continued)

How can I promote Community Integration?

• Identify barriers to community integration and target obstacles that prevent people from being full members of their communities

• Provide supports which bring about meaningful changes in the lives of people with psychiatric disabilities (i.e. – Supported Education, Supported Employment, Self-Help Groups, Parenting Classes, etc.)

• Expand the range of opportunities for people who have mental illnesses to participate in their communities as active, equal members

How can the UPENN Collaborative Help?

The UPENN Collaborative faculty are available to provide technical assistance and consultation on the following topics:

• Community Integration Framework and Principles
• Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Community Integration and Recovery
• Increasing the Utilization of Mainstream Supports and Resources
• Promoting community Integration in Specific Life Domains
• Building and Maintaining Provider Competencies and Skills

Please contact Katy Kaplan (katykap@mail.med.upenn.edu or 215-746-6713) for more information about the technical assistance and consultation available from the University of Pennsylvania Collaborative on Community Integration.