

RECOVERY

*The official newsletter of the
Fletcher Group Rural Center Of Excellence*



THE NEED FOR MODERN TOOLS

2

HOW TO CREATE A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

3

HOW TO ADMINISTER MAR

4

BETTER TOOLS, BETTER OUTCOMES

by Founder and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ernie Fletcher

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Benjamin Franklin once said, “The best investment is in the tools of one's own trade.” A more recent insight comes from Jeff Duntemann: “A good tool improves the way you work. A great tool improves the way you think.”

As a field catalyst for the social change needed to assist millions of Americans on their journey of recovery, the Fletcher Group generates a wealth of science-based data with which to document outcomes, identify patterns, ensure accountability, and promote learning. But tools—precisely because they translate knowledge into action—are just as important, especially in an industry where they've been lacking. And they're even more important in rural areas where information and resources are typically hard to come by..

Described on pages 3 and 4 are two new tools introduced at our most recent webinar by Fletcher Group Rural Specialists Anne Shields and Vicki Jozefowicz. We hope you'll check them out as well as the many other exciting new tools described on page 2 that can be quickly and easily accessed on our Home Page at www.fletchergroup.org.

THE NEED FOR MODERN TOOLS

As a marketplace for ideas and a framework for action, the Fletcher Group Rural Center Of Excellence works to identify missing skill sets, address critical capability gaps and spot the white space for breakthrough change that can help society see substance use issues through a public health, rather than a punitive, lens. As part of that effort, we currently conduct over 30 in-house research projects to define Best Practices for rural recovery home operators, many of whom are in desperate need of expert guidance.

Tools come in all shapes and sizes. Our new Recovery Housing Website at www.recovery-housing.online offers two: A **Housing Locator** where people can instantly find the best facility for themselves or a loved one, and an **Online Learning Center** where recovery home operators, staff and residents can access modularly designed courses that conveniently accommodate even the busiest schedule.

Numerous other new tools can be accessed from our Home Page at www.fletchergroup.org. They include our new **State Resources** web page where visitors can click on an interactive map to instantly find out about foundations and opioid settlement funds, and our **County Resources** web page where a new Recovery Ecosystem Index summarizes the needs, programs and supports of every American county.

Our new **Build Housing** web page describes how the Fletcher Group model of recovery housing is funded and created. And our new **Recover the Arts** page shows how social enterprise combined with art can aid recovery.

Two tools of specific interest to rural recovery home operators are available through new partnerships with **SMART Recovery** and **Contingency Management**. The former offers evidence-based LifeSkills Training at no expense to rural recovery homes while the latter launches the nation's first-ever study of CM in a rural recovery home setting. Other tools can be found on our Home Page such as our series of **Monthly Webinars**, ongoing **Podcasts**, and our YouTube channel with over 40 **Videos**.

The **Tools** section of our website contains a wide range of communications tools including a score of inspiring **Success Stories**, 30-plus issues of our **Newsletter**, **Flyers** publicizing our work and that of partners, **Brochures** such as those described on pages 3 and 4, and a wide range of **Maps**, **Charts**, **Infographics**, **White Papers**, and **Presentations**.

Last but not least, the **How-To Guides** in the "RH Management" section of our Tools page include the following titles:

- How To Build Rural Recovery Housing
- How To Choose the Right Program for your Residence
- How to Select a Site for Recovery Housing
- How to Hire an Executive Director
- How to Encourage Staff and Residents to Get Vaccinated
- How To Create a Rural Community Needs Assessment
- How To Implement Medication-Assisted Recovery in Rural Residential Settings
- How to Handle NIMBYism
- How Post-Overdose Response Teams (PORT) Save Lives
- How Quick Response Teams Benefit Rural RH
- Webinar Best Practices

All these tools—and many more to come—are created to help rebuild lives, reunite families, and protect the health and well-being of America's precious rural communities.

Please contact us if you need help using any of these tools or if you desire a new tool to help you in the good work you do.

HOW TO CREATE A RURAL COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A Community Needs Assessment enables rural recovery homes to accurately set goals and determine next steps based on a careful study of locally available resources. In the Fletcher Group's January 2023 webinar, Rural Recovery Specialist Vicki Jozefowicz explained the vital importance of such assessments and the methodology used to create one.

Because the job can be challenging, especially in rural areas where resources may be limited, Vicki shared at the webinar a new How-To Guide created by the Fletcher Group that can help rural RH developers and operators complete the assessment as quickly and efficiently as possible.

It all begins, says Vicki, with a clear understanding of the home's purpose followed by the collection of an extensive body of critical information regarding everything from local services, supports and employment opportunities to zoning laws and public opinion challenges, including NIMBYism and stigma.

The assessment may also require engagement with a range of data-collecting entities—hospitals, health departments, community action agencies and Head Start programs—as well as the people you may want on your Community Assessment Team, such as elected officials, clergy, doctors, judges, local law enforcement personnel, individuals in recovery, family members, and any other stakeholders directly affected by Substance Use Disorders in your community.

Having systematically collected, reviewed, and analyzed all the available data, the next step, says Vicki, is to create a written Action Plan addressing any gaps, discrepancies, needs and challenges revealed by the assessment.

For more information, watch a video of Vicki's January webinar by clicking on the button to the right. If, after watching the video, you still have questions or need additional help, feel free to call the Fletcher Group at 606-657-4662 or email us at www.fletchergroup.org/contact/



Vicki Jozefowicz has received numerous awards acknowledging her three-decade contribution to rural recovery housing, including the Kentucky Housing Corporation's Award for Outstanding Service in Non-Profit Housing, the Robert Straus Award for Excellence, and the Eastern Kentucky University Distinguished Service Award. She has served on the Recovery Kentucky Task Force as well as the Governor of Kentucky's Housing Policy Advisory Committee and is a past board member of Community Action Kentucky, the Richmond Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, and the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky.



To watch our January webinar hosted by Vicki and Anne Shields.

HOW TO MANAGE MEDICATION-ASSISTED RECOVERY

According to SAHMSA, the intense cravings created by fentanyl and other synthetic opioids drove a 50-fold increase in American overdose deaths between 1999 and 2020. The "Fentanyl Era" has also created significant challenges for recovery residences, especially those opposed to the use of medication.

In the Fletcher Group's most recent webinar on January 5, Rural Recovery Specialist Anne Shields highlighted the effect on rural communities where opioid deaths between 1999 and 2015 quadrupled among young people age 18 to 25 and tripled among women. Anne also noted that, though many object to Medication-Assisted Recovery, data clearly indicates that it saves lives. That's why Anne not only made the case for MAR at the webinar but also created a new brochure describing the practices, policies and procedures for safely implementing MAR in rural recovery homes.

Anne addresses in both the webinar and the brochure the Fair Housing Act (FHA) that requires recovery houses to accommodate those receiving MAR. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) also requires residences to grant "reasonable accommodation" for such individuals, provided it doesn't require major financial or administrative commitments that would be considered an undue burden.

According to Anne, compliance is not difficult. Recovery homes can easily supplement existing 12-Step programs or update their curricula to accommodate MAR. Residences can also establish formal or informal partnerships with healthcare providers without detracting from resident-driven peer support and mutual-aid interactions that focus on personal responsibility.

For more information, download the new How-To Guides created by Anne and Vicki Jozefowicz by clicking on the button to the right. If, after doing so, you still have questions or need additional help, feel free to call the Fletcher Group at 606-657-4662 or email us at www.fletchergroup.org/contact/



Winner in 2020 of the President's Volunteer Service Award, Anne Shields has worked extensively with just about every entity involved in the adoption and spread of integrated health and housing strategies, from SAMHSA and other federal agencies to tribes, state governments, state Medicaid administrations, foundations, academic centers, community health centers, behavioral health organizations, housing providers, senior centers and payers. Example: At the University of Washington AIMS Center for Advancing Integrated Mental Health Solutions, Anne led a team of psychiatrists, behavioral health clinicians, nurses and others in order to provide training and technical assistance across a diverse range of healthcare settings.

CLICK HERE



To view and download the new How-To Guides created by Anne and Vicki Jozefowicz.