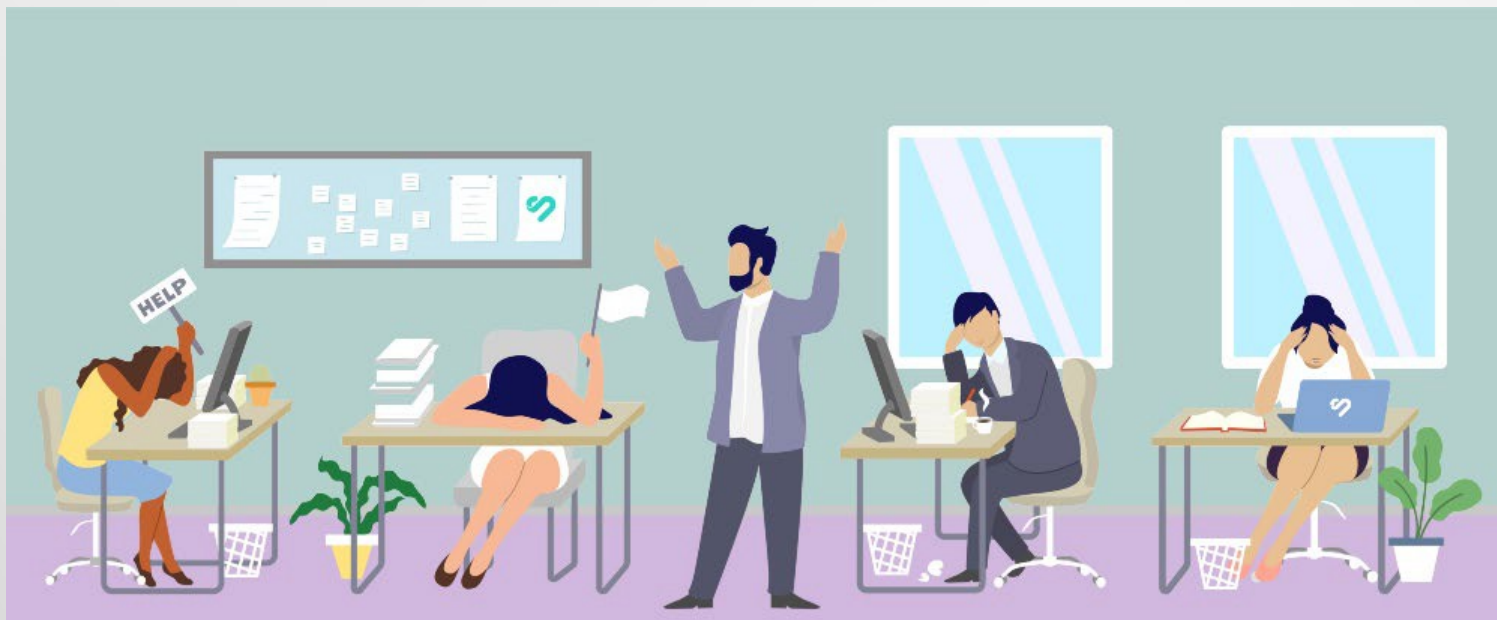




"This document is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$26.8 million with 100 percent funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government."

Transition Support Teams: A Peer Support Perspective

- A systems-level, non-direct service perspective
- Jordan Smelley, MHPS
- IDD Peer Support Specialist

Purpose of This Presentation

- Briefly introduce what Transition Support Teams are
- Clarify Peer Support Specialist's Role on TST Team
- Highlight benefits and challenges for having Peer Support Specialist on TST team

What Is a Transition Support Team (TST)?

- Supports systems serving people with IDD
- Focus on preventing transition into institutional settings and transitioning from institutional settings back into the community
- Works mainly with LIDDAs, providers, and other professionals

Scope of Transition Support Teams: HHSC Guidance

- Transition Support Teams do NOT provide direct services
- TSTs assist by identifying/sharing resources and evidence-based practices, hosting educational activities, and provide formal case reviews for providers and other professionals that support persons with IDD upon request
- Services are indirect and systems-focused

• **Source: Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/local-idd-authority-lidda/lidda-transition-support-teams>

TEXAS

Eight Transition Support Teams (TST)

TST Service Area 2: StarCare Specialty Health Center

- Central Plains Center
- StarCare Specialty Health Center
- Texas Panhandle Centers

TST Service Area 3: MMHR Tarrant

- Betty Hardwick Center
- Center for Life Resources
- Helen Farabee Centers
- MMHR Tarrant
- Pecan Valley Centers for Behavioral and Developmental HealthCare

TST Service Area 4: Metrocare

- ACCESS
- Andrews Center
- Burke
- Community Healthcare
- Denton County MHMR Center
- Lakes Regional Community Center
- LifePath Systems
- Metrocare
- Spindletop Center
- Texoma Community Center

TST Service Area 1: Emergence Health Network

- Emergence Health Network
- MHMR Concho Valley
- PermianCare
- West Texas Centers

TST Service Area 6: Alamo Area Council of Governments

- Alamo Area Council of Governments
- Camino Real Community Services
- Gulf Bend Center
- Hill Country MHDD

TST Service Area 7: Nueces Center for Mental Health & Intellectual Disabilities

- Border Region Behavioral Health Center
- Coastal Plains Integrated Health
- Nueces Center for Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities
- Tropical Texas Behavioral Health

TST Service Area 8: Texana Center

- Gulf Coast Center
- The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD
- Texana Center
- Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare

TST Service Area 5: Integral Care

- Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley
- Central Counties Services
- Heart of Texas Behavioral Health Network
- Integral Care

- Transition Support Team Location
- Transition Support Team Boundary



Map Prepared by: Texas Health and Human Services Commission.
Office of Data, Analytics and Performance (DAP), MRL.
September 19, 2024

Important Role Clarification for TST Peer Support Specialist

- Peer Support Specialist does NOT provide direct services
- Role is systems focused, resources focused, technical assistance focused, and educational activities focused
- Aligned with Texas HHSC guidance on Transition Support Team scope (non-direct services)



3 Core Functions of Peer Support Specialist on a TST

1. Educational activities

The Peer Support Specialist supports educational activities by:

- Integrating **lived-experience perspective** into provider trainings
- Helping providers understand how:
 - Transitions impact individuals with IDD
 - Systems decisions are experienced by people receiving services
- Reinforcing **person-centered thinking** and recovery-oriented language
- Supporting trainings related to:
 - Co-occurring IDD and mental health
 - Trauma-informed supports
 - Communication, dignity, and autonomy

Key Clarification:

Education is delivered to providers, systems, caregivers, and LARs — not as direct instruction or services to individuals with IDD.

2. Technical Assistance

The Peer Support Specialist provides technical assistance by:

- Offering **lived-experience-informed consultation** to providers and teams
- Assisting providers in:
 - Interpreting policies and practices through a human-impact lens
 - Identifying **evidence-based and community resources**
 - Strengthening existing supports rather than replacing them
- Supporting teams to:
 - Consider alternatives to institutional placement
 - Address barriers that impact quality of life
- **Key Clarification:**
- **Technical assistance focuses on capacity-building for providers and systems, not individual service delivery.**

3. Multidisciplinary case consultation

During case consultations, the Peer Support Specialist:

- Supports the **care team**, not the individual directly
- Brings a lived-experience perspective to:
 - Reframe behaviors often labeled as “challenging”
 - Highlight the emotional and psychological impact of transitions
- Helps teams consider:
 - Least restrictive environment options
 - Dignity of risk
 - Person-centered alternatives
- Supports caregivers and LARs **when they are present** by:
 - Validating concerns
 - Clarifying systems language

Key Clarification: The Peer Support Specialist does not provide ongoing support, counseling, or services to the individual discussed in the consult.

Benefits for Providers

- Lived-experience perspective
- Person-centered reframing
- Improved understanding of transitions



Benefits for Caregivers and LARs'

- Validation and normalization
- Better system understanding
- Support during consults and trainings



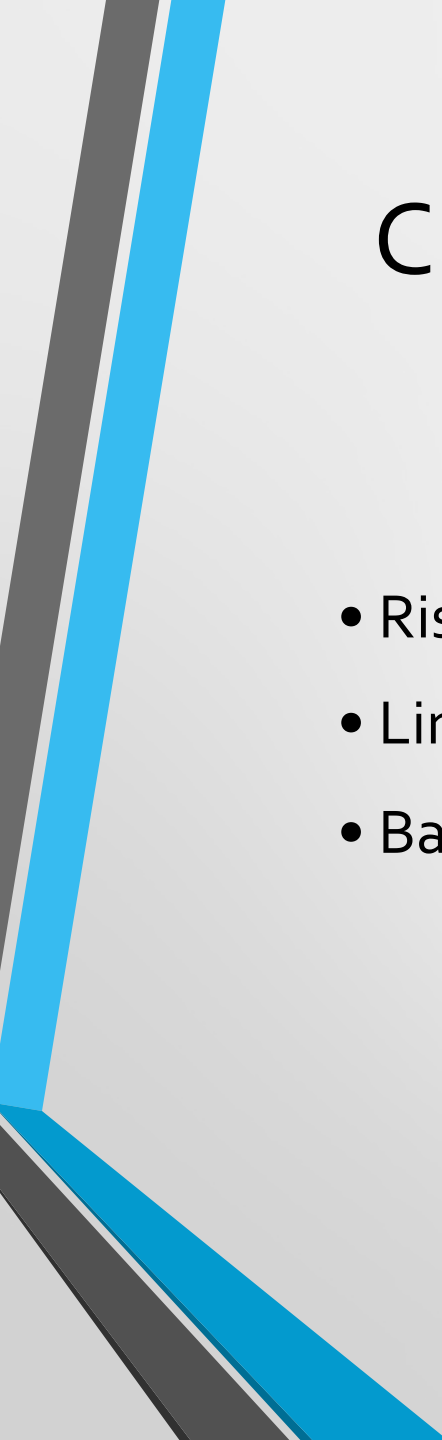
Benefits for Systems

- Improved collaboration
- Trauma-informed decision-making
- Focus on least restrictive environments



Challenges: Role Clarity

- Managing expectations
- Explaining non-direct role
- Maintaining HHSC-defined scope boundaries



Challenges: Systems-Level

- Risk-focused environments
- Limited follow-up
- Balancing advocacy and remaining neutral



Challenges: Emotional & Ethical

- Exposure to system harm
- Supporting without intervening
- Preventing burnout



Why Peer Support Belongs on TSTs

- Improves decision-making
- Humanizes systems
- Strengthens outcomes

Closing

- Peer support at the systems level creates safer, more humane transitions

Questions?/Contact info

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