Fidelity and Quality Improvement Tools for Community Transition Sites:
Overview of Tools

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Version: March 10, 2012

We have developed a variety of fidelity and quality improvement tools for working with community transition sites in the implementation and sustaining of the *Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model*. The NNYT toolkit assists sites in building on the strengths of their agencies, while ensuring that the transition system is effective in improving the progress and outcomes of youth and young adults with emotional/behavioral difficulties (EBD) -- and its responsiveness to their families.

A given site does not need to use all of these tools; rather, we guide sites in selecting tools that can meet their current program development and fidelity assessment needs as cost-effectively as possible. Some tools are less resource demanding (e.g., administered locally at relatively low cost), while others require more external assessment and data analyses (e.g., fidelity for Site Certification is conducted by two NNYT Certified Transition Fidelity Assessors).

The following fidelity and quality improvement tools are available for use at sites where NNYT faculty are actively collaborating with sites on implementing and sustaining transition programs or on the assessment of their transition sites.

Fidelity and Quality Improvement Tools for Transition Sites:

1. ***Fidelity QI Probes on TIP Model Practice Implementation*** – The *Fidelity QI Practice Probes* involve periodic (e.g., quarterly, bi-annual) interviews with three or more Transition Facilitators. The probes are a series of five tools organized by transition domain (i.e., Employment/Career, Education, Living situation, Personal Effectiveness/Wellbeing, and Community-Life Functioning). The probes review the Transition Facilitator's knowledge of a selected young person's goals, strengths, skills, needs, risk behaviors and risk factors. This section is followed by items that assess the Transition Facilitator's application of TIP model core practices in working with a particular youth or young adult (i.e., Strength Discovery/Needs Assessment, Futures Planning, Rationales, SODAS Problem-Solving Method, In-Vivo Teaching, WHAT'S UP Prevention Planning of High Risk Behaviors, & SCORA Mediation). The Probe also provides for a record review to verify the utilization of the reported TIP model core practices.

2. **Fidelity QI Survey on TIP Model Organizational Implementation** – The *Fidelity QI Organizational Survey/Interview* examines the extent to which TIP model organizational features are present in the transition system. This tool provides implementation ratings across categories such as accessibility of services, continuity of services and supports, staff management/supervision, and commitment and sustainability. The tool involves the independent completion of the survey by Transition Program Administrators/Supervisor and two Transition Facilitators. After the surveys are completed, the Assessor meets with the respondents to discuss their ratings and secure examples that illustrate the basis for the ratings. The Assessor then provides a summary rating for each of the organizational items and categories based on the "best fit" of the respondents' ratings and their validation examples.

The above Fidelity QI Tools yield fidelity percentage ratings on the extent of TIP model implementation, and together, the tools point the way to continuing quality improvement. Pilot study findings on the Tools have shown that these instruments discriminate between transition sites that are TIP Model Certified and others which are in various stages of implementation (Dresser, Clark, & Lee, 2012).

These Fidelity QI Tools can be administered by NNYT TIP Model Consultants or Assessors who have achieved inter-rater reliability on these instruments. Similarly, an agency's or community collaborative's quality assurance personnel and/or other external interviewers (e.g., evaluator from a local university or state department) may be engaged to administer the tools after they have been trained and achieve inter-rater reliability.

3. *Site Self-Study of TIP Model Implementation* – In contrast to Tools 1 and 2, the Transition Team uses this tool as a self-assessment of their perspective on how implementation is progressing across the TIP model principles, practices, and organizational features.

4. *Mini Fidelity Assessment* – The Mini Fidelity Assessment provides for continuing quality improvement of a transition program. A NNYT Certified Transition Assessor (or NNYT Consultant) and a local quality assurance or evaluation professional conduct the Mini Fidelity. This assessment involves at least 3 days of on-site data collection and yields an exit report in the form of a power-point presentation that illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of the site's application of the TIP model principles and practices. The Fidelity QI Practice Probes and Fidelity QI Organizational Survey/Interview may replace this Mini Fidelity Assessment if Tools 1 and 2 continue to prove to discriminate levels of implementation more efficiently.

5. *Transition Program Fidelity Assessment Protocol* – This Fidelity Protocol is administered to assess a site's eligibility for possible NNYT TIP Model Site Certification. It is conducted by two NNYT Certified Transition Assessors and involves at least 3 days of on-site data collection -- including focus groups with selected young people; a focus group of parents and other informal key players; interviews with TF, program managers, and program administrators; survey information from similar sources; and record reviews. After the data collection, extensive analyses are conducted to triangulate the data related to TIP model principles, practices, and organizational features. This Fidelity Protocol provides a written report that profiles the site's strengths and weaknesses -- and positions the site for continuing quality improvement and for possible certification.

Continuing Quality Improvement Strategies

Our evaluation and fidelity assessment efforts assist sites with continuing quality improvement of their transition service and support system. As indicated previously, we encourage sites to use selected fidelity and quality improvement tools that best meet their needs at a given point in time.

In order to provide a complete picture of the quality and effectiveness of a site, it is optimal to use the fidelity and quality improvement tools in conjunction with other data sources such as:

- **Service/support utilization data** that illustrate the application of supports and services to facilitate a young person's progress across relevant transition domains.
- **Helpfulness of, or satisfaction with, services from the perspective of young people** (also from parents' perspectives or the perspectives of other supportive key players).
- **Progress on the young person's own goals** (e.g., TIP Model Futures Planning; TAPIS Goal Achiever).
- **Tracking of progress and outcomes across the transition domains** (e.g., TAPIS Progress Tracker).

For more information, please visit our website or contact one of us listed below:

Website: *Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model*: **www.TIPstars.org**

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FILE: Fidelity & QI Tools for Transition Program Implementation SUMMARY