

# SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Specialist

## Job Posting

The Howard County Mental Health Authority (HCMHA) is seeking a full time SOAR Specialist.

### **Title: SOAR Specialist**

The SOAR Specialist submits SSI/SSDI applications using the SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access & Recovery) model for individuals experiencing severe mental illness and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who are being discharged from state hospitals. The SOAR Specialist also liaises with representatives from Social Security Administration, Disability Determination Services and state and local agencies to identify and resolve issues related to federal disability benefits.

### **Principal Responsibilities and Duties:**

1. Collaborate with state hospital staff to identify individuals who require support in applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
2. Conduct assessments and obtain necessary information including medical records to enable the preparation of high quality SOAR applications
3. Undertake SSI/SSDI applications using SOAR principles and techniques and provide follow-up assistance to individuals both prior and after discharge from state hospitals in a timely manner
4. Develop and maintain relationships with state hospital staff, government agencies and local health organizations to achieve more rapid disability assistance determinations for eligible persons
5. Demonstrate and share knowledge of the eligibility processes for SSI/SSDI
6. Track and report information on interventions, encounters and the progress of applications, completing record keeping in a timely and effective manner
7. Submit outcome data as requested by Program Director
8. By the end of the financial year, achieve a minimum approval rate of 71%
9. Participate in quarterly SOAR workshops sponsored by Behavioral health Administration
10. Participate in regular local SOAR work group meetings and/or regular meetings with the relevant SOAR State/Local Lead and comply with the locally agreed quality review processes
11. Complete the SOAR certification process and obtain full SOAR certification within 6 months of taking the position
12. At the time of application, seek the applicant's written consent to be contacted at three months and twelve months after a decision has been made on their case
13. Undertake follow up surveys with SOAR applicants as required
- 14.

### *Additional Responsibilities:*

- Display enthusiasm and spark the same enthusiasm in others
- Model a high-performance work ethic and constant self-improvement
- Promote the mission and vision of the program
- See opportunities for creative problem solving while staying within the parameters of good practice

### *Teamwork*

- Share information and expertise, work together to solve problems and put team success first
- Actively participate in meetings and present client cases to the team for guidance. Share successes with the team
- Contribute original and resourceful ideas to enhance the mission of the program
- Build rapport with staff and beneficiaries through effective listening, discussion and problem solving
- Provide support for other staff when needed
- Work collaboratively with multiple teams and make connections amongst teams as necessary

### **Seeking Individual with the Following:**

- **Education**
  - Bachelor's Degree in mental health, human services, human relations, social work, psychology or a related field
  - Master's Degree in Social Work, Counseling or Psychology or related field preferred
  - Licensed as an LGSW preferred
- **Experience**
  - Knowledge and experience of federal disability (SSI/SSDI) application process, using SOAR principles and techniques
  - Experience working with underserved populations, including homeless individuals, preferred
- **Skills**
  - Excellent verbal and written communication skills, particularly compelling and comprehensive written communication skills
  - Ability to research policy information as needed
  - Strong interpersonal skills necessary to work with disadvantaged and underserved populations
  - Well-developed interpersonal skills necessary to promote positive relationships with state hospitals, community agencies and other key partners
  - Able to work with ill, disabled, emotionally upset and sometimes hostile individuals
  - Able to cope with interruptions, be flexible, and be a team player
  - Exceptional organizational skills and proven ability to work to tight deadlines
  - Ability to work autonomously with demonstrated creativity, initiative and commitment

Salary is dependent on qualifications and subject to the availability of funding. Benefits include health insurance.

The position will be primarily based at Springfield Hospital Center, Sykesville, Maryland.

Send resume and cover letter to [cschaffer@hcmha.org](mailto:cschaffer@hcmha.org) or mail to:

CHRIS SCHAFFER Howard County Mental Health Authority 8930 Stanford Boulevard Columbia, MD 21045

Position is open until filled