

Download & Discuss Clubhouse International Standards Review Process

Learn About One of the Most Inclusive Review Processes in Psychiatric Rehabilitation
Today: Q & A with ICCD Standards Review Chair, Larry Marshall

The ICCD Standards Review process engages over 300 Clubhouses from 30 countries worldwide. It is the process by which the International Clubhouse Standards are reviewed in a systematic method that affords all Clubhouse stakeholders an opportunity to propose new Standards, submit changes to existing Standards, and/or review the proposals of other Clubhouses.

The International Standards define the Clubhouse Model of rehabilitation. They are at the heart of the Clubhouse community's success in helping people with mental illness to stay out of hospitals while achieving social, financial and vocational goals. The Standards also serve as a "bill of rights" for members and a code of ethics for staff, board and administrators. Thus, the process in which these Standards undergo change is a critical one that affects over 50,000 of our stakeholders.

The following interview was conducted with the chair of the Standards Review Committee, Mr. Larry Marshall. Larry is the Director of Pioneer House in Peabody, Massachusetts and has been involved with this Committee for 15 years.

What is this group and who is on it?

"The Standards Review Committee (SRC) is a group of members and staff from the ICCD and strong ICCD certified Clubhouses from around the world that are selected to be on the Committee based on their knowledge and experience in our work. The Committee's role is to consider proposals from Clubhouses, and facilitate a process for amending Standards. The group currently consists of highly experienced people from the ICCD and members and staff from strong Clubhouses in Europe, Australia and North America.

How does a proposal become a Standard?

"We work on a rotating cycle of two years that coincides the International Seminars. Committee members consider each proposal in relation to several criteria: general applicability, universality of concern, and congruence with Clubhouse values and practices. If a proposal can meet those criteria it is then sent out to every ICCD Clubhouse for consideration and comment. Let me back up a bit to give more detail to the process.

"Six to nine months after the conclusion of each International Seminar, the ICCD sends out a letter to ICCD member Clubhouses soliciting their proposals. The SRC allows three months for Clubhouses to respond. The SRC meets by teleconference and e-group to organize and discuss whether each proposal meets the preliminary criteria. Committee decisions are arrived at through a consensual process.

“If a proposal doesn’t meet the preliminary criteria, it is rejected. If something is unclear to the Committee, we go back to the proposing Clubhouse and ask for clarification.

“This next step usually brings us to about three months out from the Seminar. We mail out the proposals that have met the criteria out to the international Clubhouse community and ask for feedback to determine if this proposal should move on. The SRC then collects the responses from Clubhouses.

“At the International Seminar, we repeat the process to allow for even broader feedback. Standards Review sessions are conducted, with each participant having a handout of all currently active proposals. The SRC facilitates these sessions in which the Committee’s primary role is to carefully listen to feedback from Clubhouses on each proposal.

“We then move the feedback loop to consideration by the ICCD Faculty, the group charged with peer review certification. Every two years, the ICCD Faculty holds its annual meeting immediately after the Seminar. The Committee, some of whom are on the Faculty, share the feedback that we have received thus far and ask for additional responses from this highly experienced group of approximately 100 members and staff from strong ICCD Clubhouses.

“Then, the SRC takes all this feedback from these various sources and looks for patterns of consensus. Only those proposals that have achieved a high degree of consensus then make it to the next level.

“These final proposals are then mailed out to the entire worldwide Clubhouse community again for a final opportunity for feedback. We ask Clubhouses one last time if these proposals should be adopted. We allow two to three months for feedback so that Clubhouses that need to translate the documents have ample opportunity to do so and give these proposals a full hearing in their respective Clubhouses.

Finally, based on the final feedback, the SRC makes a final decision about the surviving proposals. Every two years, a new edition of the Standards is published, including any changes that have been adopted as a result of this process. These revised Standards then become the basis for Clubhouse training and accreditation.

That is quite a process to manage. How do people get on the Standards Review Committee?

“We do take pride in being very inclusive and providing ample opportunities for all members, staff and stakeholders to be a part of this process. The Standards define who we are and I do not know of another process in mental health that is this broad and inclusive of all its constituents.

When is the next opportunity to participate?

“In the next few months we will be sending out the group of proposals that will have survived the first screening. This is a terrific opportunity for each Clubhouse to meet together to discuss the various proposals and then to send us your feedback. This is the

way that every Clubhouse in the ICCD Clubhouse community can have an integral part in the development of these Standards that play such an important role in each of our Clubhouses.