

Forensic Peer Mentor Collaboration



DBHDD

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Power in Partnership

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health &
Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)

Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network (GMHCN)

Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC)

Georgia Department of Community Supervision (DCS)

Peer Mentor Movement

- Over the past 20-30 years, peer support has expanded and is now recognized as a vital element in an individual's recovery process.
- Peer support has become increasingly integrated into reentry and diversion programs. States including New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Oregon, and now Georgia are successfully using forensic peer specialists/forensic peer mentors.
- What is a forensic peer mentor?
 - Individuals with histories of criminal activity and behavioral health needs who help people who are leaving jails or prisons successfully reenter the community
 - Forensic peer mentors are key in interrupting the cycle of recidivism.
 - Unique qualifications: shared, lived experience, credible models of recovery, engagement skills

Forensic Peer Mentorship

The Need for Peer Support within the Criminal Justice System

The U.S. Department of Justice reports that about 16 percent of the population in prisons or jails at any given time has a behavioral health diagnosis, and over the course of one year, approximately 10 million people enter U.S. correctional facilities.

In Georgia, as of September 2014, there were 9,055 people with a mental health diagnosis out of a total of 54,904 incarcerated in the correctional system (about 16 percent). Between July 2013 and January 2014, 730 people were released from the Georgia correctional system with a behavioral health diagnosis.

Forensic peer support would be offered to individuals with psychiatric and/or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses (level 3 and 4), who are incarcerated and in the transition phase of their preparation for release.

Training

- Certified peer specialist/certified addiction recovery empowerment specialist, plus lived experience in the correctional system
- 5 full days of training
 - Sequential Intercept Model: how to interface with the criminal justice and mental health systems
- Effective engagement
- Boundaries
- Orientation to the GDC and DCS systems
- Overview of community resources for mental health and substance abuse

Forensic Peer Mentor Goals

- Participate in transition planning
- Mentor
- Small caseload (1:20)
- Bridge between returning citizen and community
- Link participants to services and supports
- Reduce recidivism
- Reduce psychiatric hospital re-admission

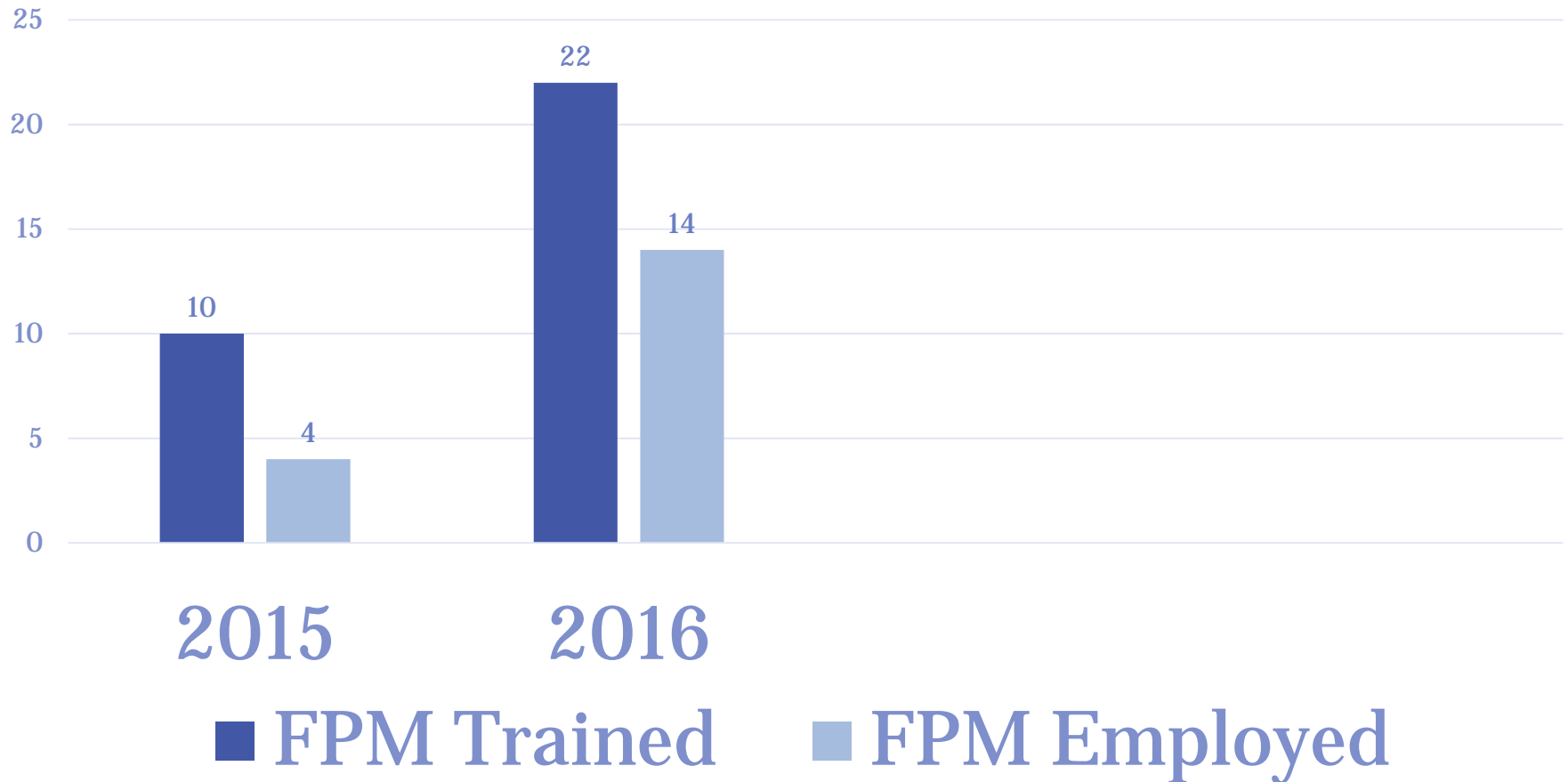
Forensic Peer Support

- Support people during in the criminal justice system
- Promote recovery principles, including self-advocacy
- Advocate for recipients of behavioral health care when they are unable to advocate for themselves
- Educate all stakeholders in the criminal justice system about behavioral health recovery
- Inspire hope through shared life experiences
- Develop positive relationships that facilitate reintegration
- Assist individuals with understanding and navigating the criminal justice system

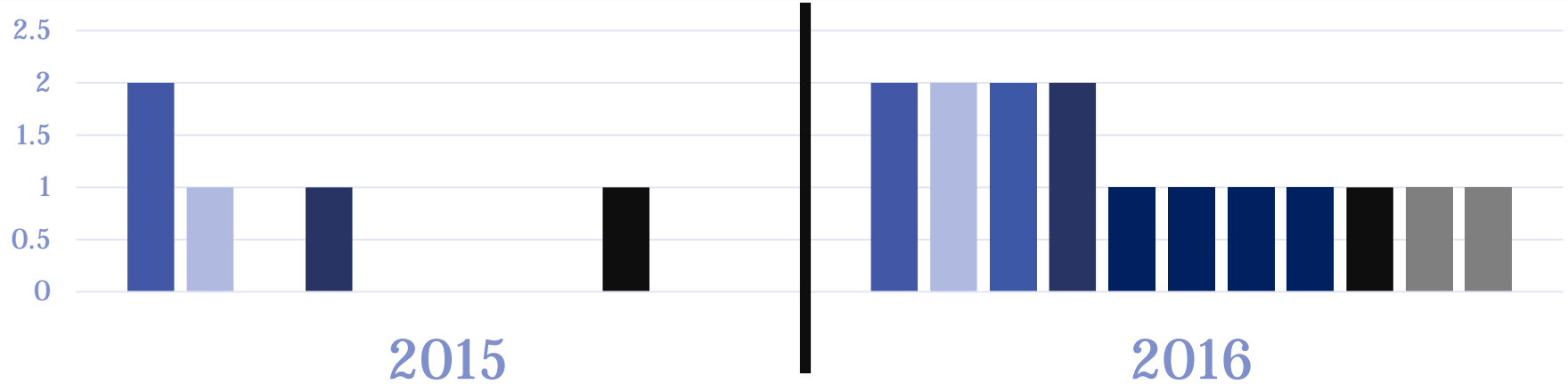
Forensic Peer Support

- Aid in finding and using resources to support behavioral health needs
- Educate individuals about recovery
- Aid individuals to complete parole/probation requirements
- Reduce the time behavioral health consumers stay in jail/prison due to the lack of community supports, housing options, and resources
- Focus on the needs of individuals with serious psychiatric disorders and/or co-occurring challenges
- Offer an effective base of services provided by competent, supportive staff
- Incorporate wellness tools (crisis plans, WRAP, SMART)

Forensic Peer Mentor Workforce



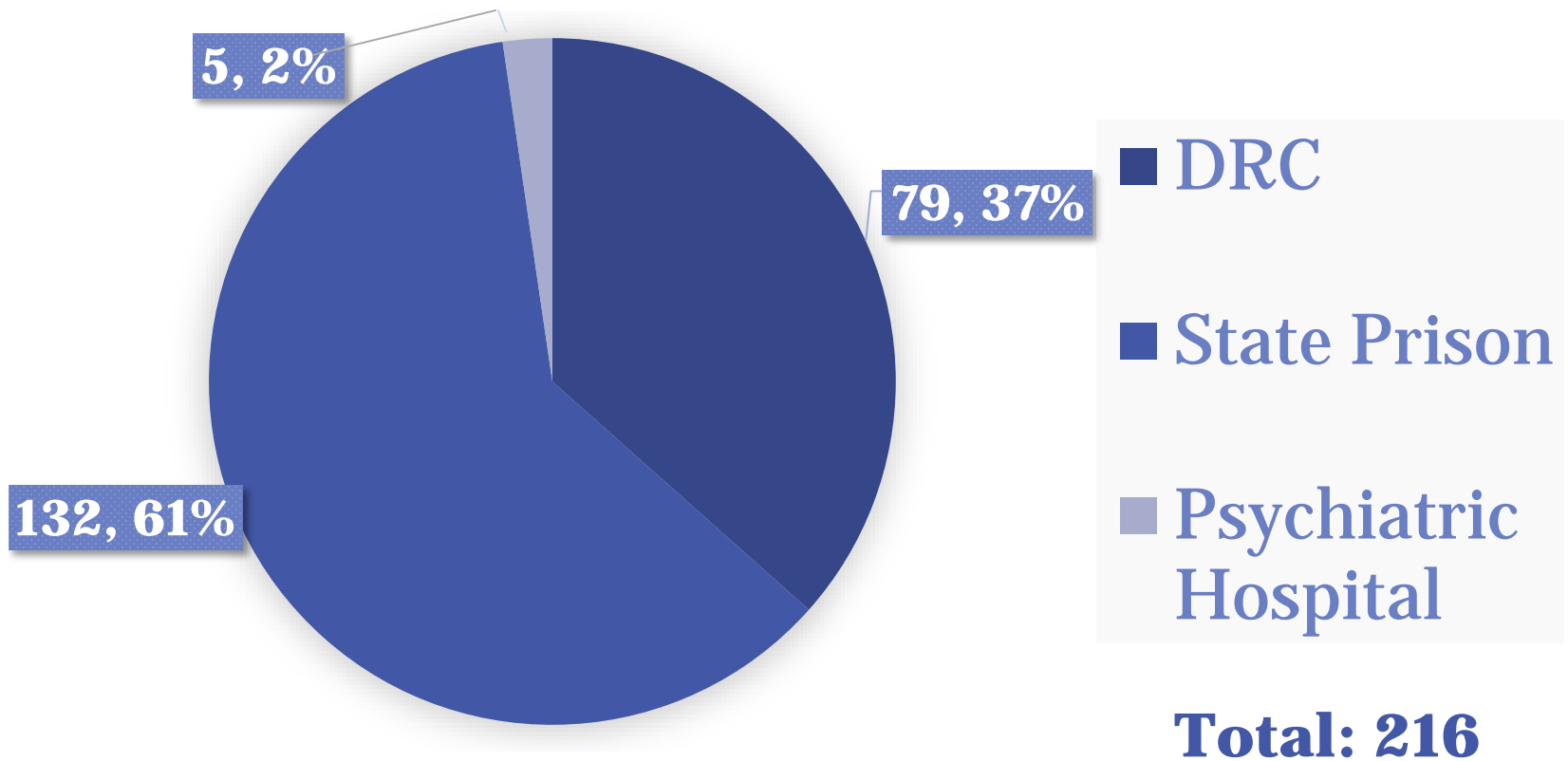
Forensic Peer Mentor Worksites



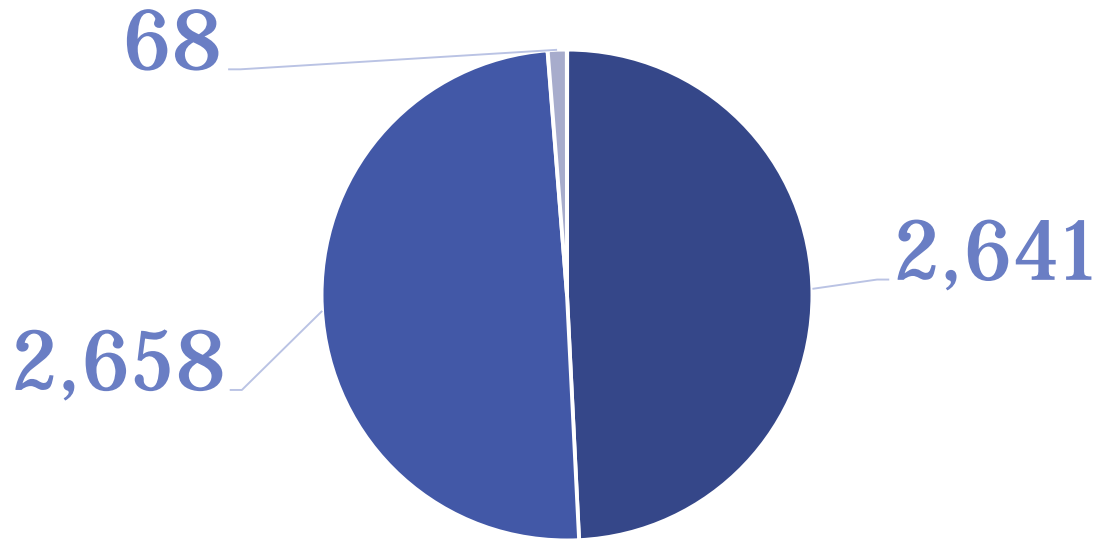
- Lee Arrendale SP
- Baldwin SP
- Griffin DRC
- Morrow DRC
- GMHCN
- Cobb Co MH Court

- GRHA
- Atlanta DRC
- Athens DRC
- Macon DRC
- AJC MH Court

FY16 Enrollment through May 2016



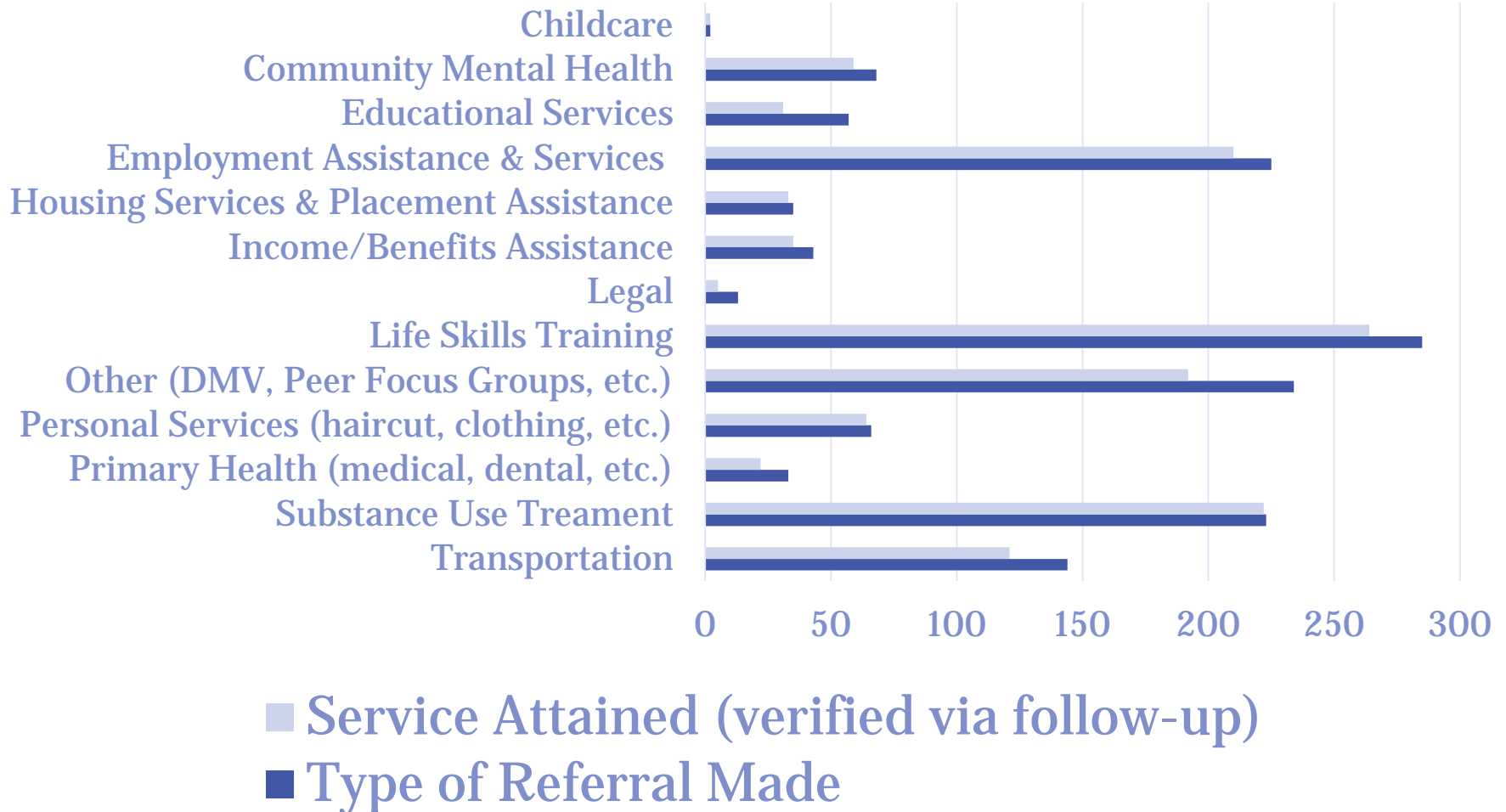
FY16 Discharge/Transition Planning Sessions Completed through May 2016



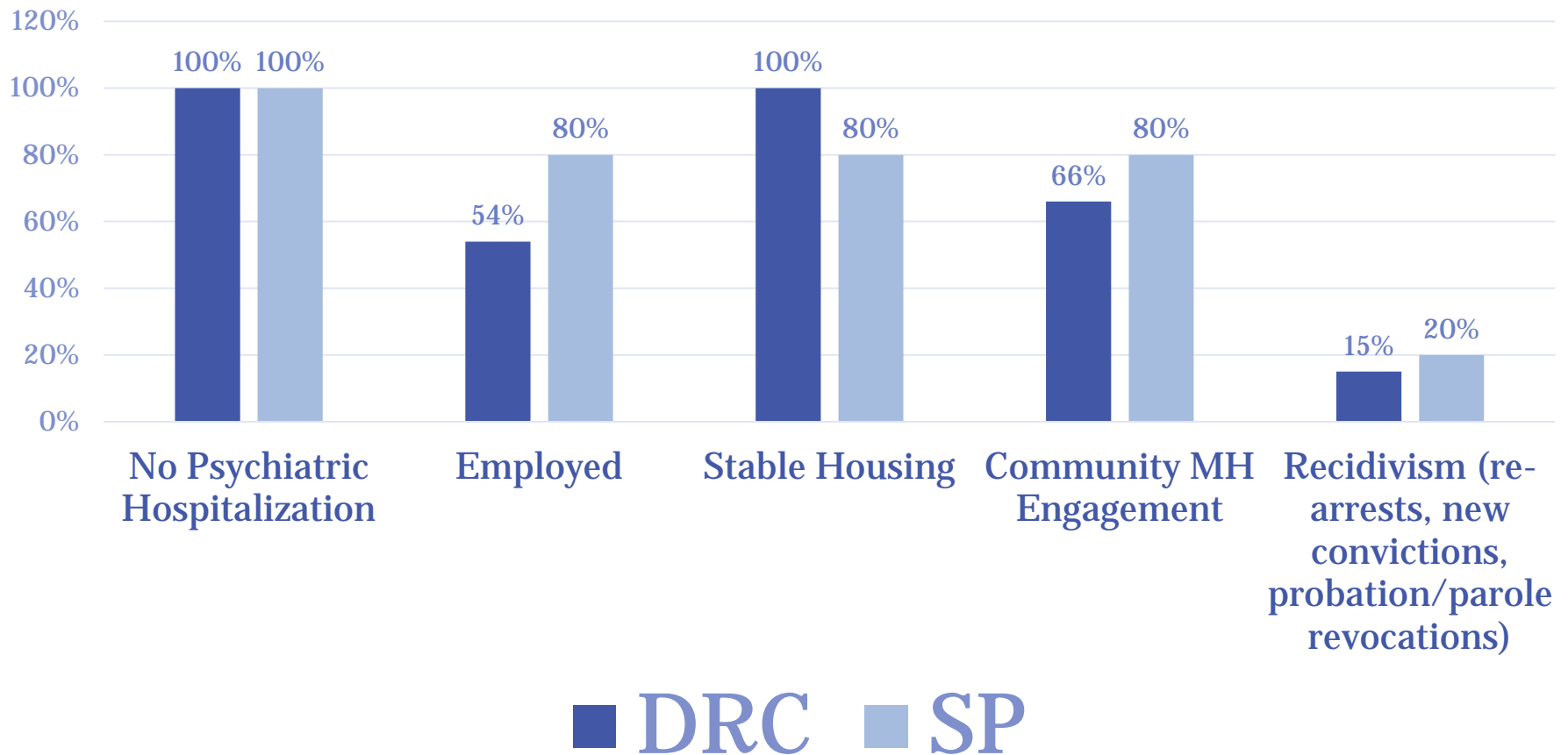
Total: 5,367

- DRC
- State Prison
- Psychiatric Hospital

Post-Release Referrals & Linkages



FY16 Post-Release Outcomes through May 2016



Returning Citizens' Successes



30-year-old female stated that she has a new outlook on life since beginning to work with FPM; she never knew that recovery was possible with mental health and substance abuse; she has been clean for 2 consecutive months for first time.



30-year-old male obtained court ruling in his favor to keep his infant child overnight; he said that the FPM was the only person who believed in him and actually stood up with him on his behalf to go to court and share with the judge the recovery skills that he has gained.



26-year-old female went on her first ever job interview; she said that she was prepared due to the FPM assisting her with filling out job applications, creating a resume, and role-playing in mock interviews.



45-year-old female was able to develop a monthly budget and save up enough money to reinstate her driver's license, which she had not had in 10 years; she is now creating a budget to save up for a used car.



Three returning citizens started certified peer specialist training on June 13, 2016.

Additional Information

www.dbhdd.ga.gov

- **Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL)**
 - 24/7 crisis intervention, outpatient scheduling, and more
 - (800) 715-4225
 - mygcal.com
- **Adult Mental Health Resource Directory**
 - <http://dbhdd.georgia.gov/adult-mental-health>