Hidden Barriers to Person-Centered Support in SEMP: Mental Health Diagnoses, Role Definitions, and Systemic Gaps in Vocational Rehabilitation

Summary:
This article examines how DSM-5 diagnostic interpretations can create hidden barriers in Supported Employment (SEMP).
It also looks at the misalignment between actual duties and SOC 21-1015 Rehabilitation Counselors.
Stigma, structural gaps, and undervaluation of VR job coach roles can further weaken autonomy, limit choice, and lower staff morale.

Purpose:
To identify and address systemic and diagnostic barriers that interfere with person-centered planning in SEMP settings, ensuring that individuals with IDD and the staff who support them are valued, respected, and effectively engaged.

Highlights:

- DSM-5 diagnoses are often misinterpreted, leading to stigma.
- Protective or trauma-related behaviors may be mislabeled as defiance.
- Supervisors may prioritize compliance over collaboration.
- VR job coach roles are undervalued despite alignment with SOC 21-1015 duties.

Key Recommendations:

- Provide trauma-informed training on DSM-5 interpretation.
- Align job roles with SOC 21-1015.
- Focus on individual strengths and voice in planning.
- Support VR job coaches with role-specific training and advocacy.
- Promote two-way inclusion for staff and individuals.

Toward Standardization:
This article supports the creation of a future AMSI standard with SOC-aligned guidance to address systemic and diagnostic barriers in SEMP.

Request Full Publication:
Free via the AMSI website's **"Request a Standard or Send a Message"** form.