

# BRSS TACS

Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER STRATEGY

**Kathleen “Cathi” Valdes**  
**Consultant**  
**New Mexico Office of Peer Recovery and Engagement**

Cathi began her 44-year career in New Mexico state government in 1971 as a welfare worker for the Health and Social Services Department and was promoted to statistician for the state’s Medicaid program. In the 1980s, Cathi established four Medicaid Coordinated Community In-Home Care Waiver Programs, including the ground-breaking Medicaid waiver for persons with AIDS.

Cathi served as the executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters in Santa Fe from 1992 to 1997, then returned to the Health and Social Services Department as chief of the Medical Assistance Division’s Planning Bureau. She later served as the division’s deputy director of finance. During this time, she was also a research fellow for the University of Minnesota’s Balancing Long-Term Care Services Project.

Cathi became the deputy director of the Child Support Enforcement Division in 2003. During her tenure, New Mexico received one national and two western state awards for the most improved state child support program. She also served as president of the board of directors for the Western Interstate Child Support Enforcement Council.

Before her retirement in 2017, Cathi was the planner for New Mexico’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Block Grant.

Cathi is a person in recovery from depression and anxiety. In June 2017, she became a Certified Peer Support Worker (CPSW) and an instructor for the CPSW program. She is currently a consultant to the Behavioral Health Services Division for the SAMHSA Mental Health and Substance Abuse Block Grant application and annual report, provides administrative support for the Behavioral Health Planning Council, manages the Senior Jubilee Celebrations for the Office of Peer Recovery and Engagement, and is the lead facilitator of New Mexico’s Certified Older Adult Peer Specialist Endorsement.