Power of Peer Support
Peers Here, There, and Everywhere:
Recovery in Integrated Heath Care

• Keris Jän Myrick, MBA, MS
  • Chief, Peer Services
  • Los Angeles Department of Mental Health
“I want a job, a house and a social life”
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Don’t Expect Everyone to Understand Your Journey, Especially if They’ve Never Had to Walk Your Path!
Peer Support Here
Peer Provider: Referenced by Many Titles

- A person who uses his or her lived experience of recovery from mental illness and/or substance use disorder, \textit{plus} skills learned in formal training, to deliver services in behavioral health settings to promote mind-body recovery and resiliency.

- \textbf{Some examples of titles}

  \textbf{Mental Health:}
  - Certified Peer Specialist
  - Peer Support Specialist
  - Peer Specialist
  - And more

  \textbf{Substance Use:}
  - Peer Recovery Coach
  - Peer Recovery Support Specialist
  - And more

Source: Chapman, Blash and Chan (2015); Daniels and Ashenden (2014)
Evolution of Certified Peer Specialists

• **1999:** First Medicaid billable Peer Support Service
• **2001:** Georgia first to develop Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) Program
• **2007:** CMS letter to State Medicaid Directors endorsing Peer Support
• **2012:** Georgia first to bill for peer support in whole health
• **2013:** CMS expanded peer support services for mental illness and substance use disorders
• **2014:** 36 states known to bill Medicaid for peer support services
• **2016:** 41 states and the District of Columbia have established programs to train and certify peer specialists
• **Today:** GA has approximately 1700 CPSs
• Other agencies engaged in peer workforce efforts

Source: Chapman, Blash and Chan (2015); Kaufman, Kuhn and Manser (2016)
Current State of Peer Specialist Training & Certification

Source: Kaufman et al, 2016
And Peer Support Here: Family Peer Support

- A parent provides experiential knowledge with a parent receiving support (Robbins, et al., 2009)
- Offers hope, guidance, advocacy and camaraderie for parents and caregivers
Peer Workforce and Peer Core Competencies

SAMHSA assigned BRSS TACS to:

• Identify and refining a set of core competencies

• Provide technical assistance to promote strategies aimed to increase the number of peers in the workforce

http://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs
Role of Peer Support

To access the Peer Support Briefs visit:
https://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs/recovery-support-tools/peers
DOES PEER SUPPORT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Emerging research shows that peer support is effective for supporting recovery from behavioral health conditions. Benefits of peer support may include:

- Increased self-esteem and confidence (Davidson, et al., 1999; Salzer, 2002)
- Increased sense of control and ability to bring about changes in their lives (Davidson, et al., 2012)
- Increased sense of hope and inspiration (Davidson, et al., 2006; Ratliff, McDermott, Marti, & Rapp, 2006)
- Increased empathy and acceptance (companionship) (Coatsworth-Pusaqoy, Forchuk, & Ward-Griffin, 2008; Davidson, et al., 1999)
- Increased engagement in self-care and wellness (Davidson, et al., 2012)
- Reduced hospital admission rates and longer community tenure (Chinn, Weingarten, Stayner, & Davidson, 2001; Davidson, et al., 2012; Forchuk, Martin, Chen, & Jenson, 2009; Min, Whitecraft, Rothbard, & Salzer, 2007)
- Increased social support and social functioning (Kurtz, 1990; Nelson, Ochoa, Janes, & Trainer, 2006; Ochoa et al., 2006; Trainer, Shepherd, Boydón, Left, & Crawford, 1997; Yarnos, Primavera, & Knight, 2001)
- Decreased psychotic symptoms (Davidson, et al., 2012)
- Decreased substance use and depression (Davidson, et al., 2012)
- Raised empowerment scores (Davidson, et al., 1999; Dumont & Jones, 2002; Ochoa, Nelson, Jensen, & Trainer, 2006; Resnick & Rosenheck, 2005)

HOW DOES PEER SUPPORT HELP?

The role of a peer support worker complements, but does not duplicate or replace the roles of therapists, case managers, and other members of a treatment team. Consider someone who received a prosthetic arm after an accident. Clinical staff would explain how the new arm works, how to take it off and put it on, and how to care for it. A peer supporter who shares the experience of losing a limb, however, would be able to empathize with the person about what it is like to receive a prosthetic arm, the experience of introducing it to one’s family, and how it feels to go out in public with it.

Peer support workers bring their own personal knowledge of what it is like to live and thrive with mental health conditions and substance use disorders. They support people’s progress towards recovery and self-determined lives by sharing vital experiential information and real examples of the power of recovery. The sense of mutuality created through thoughtful sharing of experience is influential in modeling recovery and offering hope (Davidson, Bellamy, Guy, & Miller, 2012).
IS PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT EFFECTIVE FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS?

The research on peer support in mental health systems is still emerging, but findings are promising. The research to date suggests that peer recovery support may result in:

- **Increased social functioning** (Walker & Bryant, 2013)
- **Increased empowerment and hope** (Chinnam, et al., 2013; Cook, et al., 2010; Repper & Carter, 2011)
- **Decreased costs to the mental health system** (Trachtenberg, et al., 2013)
- **Decreased hospitalization** (Davidson, et al., 2012)
- **Decreased self-stigma** (Corrigan, et al., 2013)
- **Increased quality of life and life satisfaction** (Bologna and Pulic, 2010; Felton, et al., 1995)
- **Increased community engagement** (Min, et al., 2007)
- **Increased engagement and activation in treatment** (Druss, et al., 2010; Short, et al., 2012; Bellamy, et al., 2012)

**Reduced use of Inpatient services** (Chinnam, et al., 2014; Min, et al., 2007; Sledge, et al., 2011)

**REFERENCES**


IS PEER RECOVERY COACHING EFFECTIVE?

People who have worked with peer recovery coaches provide strong testimonies of the positive impacts of peer recovery support on their own recovery journeys. The research supports these experiences. While the body of research is still growing, there is mounting evidence that peer recovery coaching is effective in reducing substance use, improving on a range of recovery outcomes, or both. Two rigorous systematic reviews examined the body of research on the effectiveness of peer-delivered recovery supports published between 1995 and 2014. Both concluded that there is a positive impact on participants (Bassuk, Hanson, Greene, Richard, & Laudet, 2016; Reif et al., 2014).

More rigorous studies are needed to better understand the key elements of successful peer recovery support, as the field moves toward adopting evidence-based practices. Taken as a whole, the current body of research suggests that people receiving peer recovery support may experience:

- Improved relationship with treatment providers
- Increased treatment retention
- Increased satisfaction with the overall treatment experience
- Improved access to social supports
- Decreased emergency service utilization
- Reduced re-hospitalization rates
- Reduced relapse rates
- Reduced substance use
- Decreased criminal justice involvement
- Greater housing stability

REFERENCES


Parent support services include the following benefits:

- Increased sense of collaboration: Receiving skills training and support from parent support providers helps family members collaborate effectively with treatment professionals.
- Increased sense of self-efficacy: Family support services increase family members’ confidence in their abilities to care for their child.
- Increased empowerment to take action: Receiving education about service systems, navigation skills, advocacy skills, and rights helps empower families to become active participants in their child’s services.
- Decreased internalized blame: By providing education and connections with others, parent support services help family members reframe their experiences and debunk damaging myths about behavioral health conditions and emotional distress.
- Recognition of the importance of self-care: Parent support providers help families increase their awareness of the need for self-care.

“...I don’t know what I would have done without our parent support provider. She understood what I was going through, and she didn’t judge me. She was available whenever I needed her, not just during business hours. She helped my family get back on our feet.”

—Stacey

REFERENCES


[Sources: O’Conner et al., 2011]
Outlook of the Peer Workforce

How many certified peer specialist are in the US?

- Peers work in a number of roles in a variety of settings
- Efforts continue to integrate peer providers in the workforce – Not as a standalone
- Gathering information on the overall increase in the peer workforce across most of the states is needed
Defining Peer Roles and Status Among Community Health Workers and Peer Support Specialists in Integrated Systems of Care

Albert S. Daniels, Ed.D., Sue Bergeson, Keris Jän Myrick, M.A.

Crewman-targeting integrated models rooted in behavioral health work aimed primarily at improving the coordination of care and expanding supportive services, algorithmic discussion between [the] at-risk groups and communities provided the backdrop for community-based solutions. Engagement, activation, and empowerment of community health workers (CHWs) and peer support specialists (PSSs) have primarily been chronicled in general medical care and PSSs in behavioral health care. Understanding the unique characteristics of CHWs and PSSs make for health promotion and wellness and improved population health outcomes an important challenge. This Open Forum reviews the four elements of peer status as a way to help illustrate the differences between these workshops and the same degree of integration required for these two groups to successfully deliver key support roles provided by the CHW and PSS workforces.


### Peer Here and Peers There

**Appendix 1. Primary Roles and Peer Status of CHW and PSS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Roles of CHW and PSS</th>
<th>Education and Connection to Treatment Services</th>
<th>Prevention to Avoid Illness</th>
<th>Addressing Hopelessness and Trauma of Illness Conditions</th>
<th>Activation to Support wellness and Health Improvement</th>
<th>Promoting Self-care, Shared Decision-making, and Care Plan Adherence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Worker (CHW)</td>
<td>CHW - Primary Roles and Peer-status High &gt; Low</td>
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<td>Peer Support Specialist (PSS)</td>
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<td>Peer Status CHW and PSS</td>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Similarities</td>
<td>Cultural Similarities</td>
<td>Living in the Same Community</td>
<td>Common Life Situations</td>
<td>Common Health Conditions</td>
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</tbody>
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Pillars of Peer Support Specialist Supervision (2014)

1. Peer Specialist Supervisors are Trained in Quality Supervisory Skills.
2. Peer Specialist Supervisors Understand and Support the Role of the Peer Specialist.
3. Peer Specialist Supervisors Understand and Promote Recovery in their Supervisory Roles.
4. Peer Specialist Supervisors Advocate for the Peer Specialist and Peer Specialist Services Across the Organization and in the Community.
5. Peer Specialist Supervisors Promote both the Professional and Personal Growth of the Peer Specialist within Established Human Resource Standards.

www.pillarsofpeersupport.org
SB906 and Beyond....
Thank you!

Keris Jän Myrick, MBA, MS
Chief, Peer Services
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Email: kmyrick@dmh.lacounty.gov