



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

ATTC

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Our Expanding Workforce – Peers

Recruitment and Retention

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What is a Peer ?

- Peers are people who have been successful in the recovery process who help others experiencing similar situations.
- Through shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment, they help people become and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of relapse.
- Peer support services can effectively extend the reach of treatment beyond the clinical setting into the everyday environment of those seeking a successful, sustained recovery process.

SAMHSA, retrieved 7.12.18 from:

[SAMHSA Peer Support Services](#)





Peers Are Experientially Credentialed

- A peer support worker is someone credentialed first by the lived experience of recovery from a mental health condition, substance use disorder, or both.
- They provide support to others experiencing similar challenges. They provide non-clinical, strengths-based support and are “experientially credentialed” by their own recovery. journey (1,2).

* specialist = certified



A Peer is NOT

- A counselor, social worker, case worker, psychologist, judge, lawyer, police officer, roommate or best friend
- A sponsor
- A priest or member of clergy as such
- A replacement for formal counseling or treatment
- A cheaper alternative to treatment

See: Recovery Guide Manual, Focus on Friends Recovery Center, Findlay, Ohio, (419) 423-5071 or focus@focusrwc.org



Peer Self Description

“I’d like for you to extend your hand across to me – not down to me. In the warmth of your clasp I want to sense you saying, “As one human being to another, we are in this fight together. We are joined in problems that in one form or another continue to pester me, too. When this happens and you have come alive as a person, then I’ll be in a lot better mood to listen to what you have to offer.”



Recruitment of Peers

Peers are best recruited from those who have successfully achieved recovery, e.g. by:

- Age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, co-occurring disorders, prison experience, family experience, veterans or other identity shaping life experiences
- What constitutes a peer is defined by each individual, rather than by an organization.
- A peer may be agency employed OR volunteer



Prior to Recruitment of Peers (1)

- Commit leadership to the integration of peer staff.
- Prepare Organizational Culture – Phila. Peer Tool kit and SAMHSA Behavioral Workforce Recruitment and Retention Tool kit:
https://dbhids.org/wp-content/uploads/1970/01/PCCI_Peer-Support-Toolkit.pdf <http://toolkit.ahpnet.com/Home.aspx>
- Identify a peer support champion.
- Hire more than one peer support staff member.



Recruitment of Peers (2)

- Solicit perspectives of people in recovery
- Recruit peer support staff who have a desire to work directly with clients.
- Address concerns of existing staff
- Clearly define staff members' roles before integration.
- Clarify expectations – and limits – of peers
- Ensure supportive, regular supervision.



Retaining Peers (1)

1. Education- Core competencies (1)

Certification (42 states) (2)

Employment/salary (\$16/\$31,704) (3)

Practice guidelines/clinical supervision (4)

Building Career ladders (5)

Career satisfaction (6)

2. Building of Peer Networks for mutual support

3. Inclusion in the solution and leadership

Integrate peers into staff and workforce at all levels



Retaining Peers (2)

- Opportunities for family/spouse
- Creating a sense of belonging and of community in work
- Create supportive work environment
- Transportation
- Activity support (\$\$)
- Stability, flexibility of schedule and appreciation



Refined Evolution of Specialist Peers

- Peer Recovery Supports
- Peer Recovery Coach
- Family Peer Support



Are Peers Effective?

Yes!

Two rigorous systematic reviews examined the body of published research on the effectiveness of peer--delivered recovery supports published between 1995 and 2014. Both concluded that there is a significant positive impact on participants (3,4).

Peers: reduce stigma, increase engagement, attendance and compliance to treatment, improved clinical outcomes, staff morale and person centered care, ...



... and Hope

By sharing their experiences, peers bring hope to people in recovery and promote a sense of belonging to individuals and self-empowerment and hope within the community.



Resources

1. Core Competencies

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/core-competencies.pdf

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/recovery_to_practice/slides-peersupport-20150810.pdf

2. Certification and Retention

<http://www.dbsalliance.org/pdfs/training/Peer-Specialist-Training-and-Certification-Programs-A-National-Overview%20UT%202013.pdf>

3. Salary

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=peer+recovery+support+specialist+salary&FORM=QSRE1>

4. Practice guidelines and Supervision

<http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/pr/ROSC%20Practice%20Guidelines%20CT%202006.pdf>

<http://www.pillarsofpeersupport.org/POPS2014.pdf>

5. Career Ladders

https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/about-us/June_Webinar_Peers_06.24.16.pdf

6. Bringing Peer Based Recovery Supports to Scale – BRSS-TACS

<https://www.samhsa.gov/brss-tacs/about>

7. Recovery to Practice Initiative (RTP)

<https://www.samhsa.gov/recovery-to-practice/about-recovery-practice>

8. Great Lakes ATTC

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4. Reif, S., Braude, L., Lyman, D.R., Dougherty, R.H., Daniels, A.S., Ghose, S.S., Salim, O. and Delphin-Rittmon, M.E., 2014. Peer recovery support for individuals with substance use disorders: Assessing the evidence. *Psychiatric Services*, 65(7), pp.853-861.

