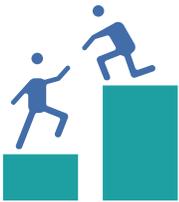


Recognized Peer Support Specialists



Outline:

About Peers



Supporting Research



Responsibilities of a Peer



Contact Us



About Peers:

What is a Recognized Peer Support Specialist?

A Recognized Peer Support Specialist (RPSS) is a person in recovery from a behavioral health condition (mental health, substance use or co-occurring disorders) who provides mentoring, guidance and support services and offers their skills to others who are experiencing behavioral health challenges and receiving behavioral health services. The RPSS's role within the behavioral healthcare system is to provide supportive services and work in sync with clinical treatment providers. While Peer Support Services greatly enhance the efficacy of clinical services, they are not clinical in nature. RPSS support individuals with behavioral health conditions in their recovery. RPSS work in places like recovery centers, nonprofit organizations, behavioral health programs, crisis centers and other behavioral health programs.

Our Mission

Peer Support Services are person-centered services that assist individuals or families in initiating and maintaining the process of recovery from mental health and/or substance use disorders. Peer Support Services help bridge the gap between provider and individual in recovery and help individuals and families develop self-advocacy skills. Peer Support is primarily rooted in the development of a relationship based on shared lived experience and support. Recognized Peer Support Specialists have common life experiences with the people they are serving, and so offer a level of acceptance, understanding and validation.

Empathize

Engage

Empower

Qualifying Factors

The qualifications for RPSS are consistent with SAMHSA national standards:

- **Lived Experience**

Peer Support Specialists must have lived experience with a behavioral health diagnosis. A behavioral health diagnosis can include a diagnosis with mental health challenges, addiction challenges or co-occurring disorders.

- **Educational Standards**

Peer Support Specialists must have a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED. (A copy of the highest diploma, degree and/or transcript must be submitted with the application.)

- **Age Requirements**

Peer Support Specialists must be at least 18 years of age.

- **Time in Recovery**

Peer Support Specialists must have at least 12 months of continuous demonstrated recovery as indicated by [SAMHSA's working definition of recovery](#): "A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life and strive to reach their full potential."

Training Requirements:

Applicants shall:

- Meet the minimum qualifying factors stated above
- Submit applications to pst@theextramilerregioniv.com
- Pay the \$500 registration fee (limited scholarship opportunities available)

Supporting Research:

Trust



Peer Support improves engagement with services.

“A Mental Health America and Kaiser Permanente Peer Support Pilot Study showed participants who received peer support had increased trust in services and increased team collaboration.”

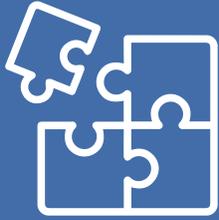
Peer support improves the quality of life.

“Individuals receiving peer support are more likely to have employment.”

Quality



Whole



Peer Support increases whole health and self-management.

“The preliminary study findings of the Peer Support Whole Health and Resiliency (PSWHR) randomized controlled trial demonstrated that 100% self-reported reaching their whole health goal.”

Testimonials

Peer Support is an evidence-based practice that is impactful in many ways. The following testimonials express the value of RPSS.



Katherine Penton, RPSS

“Recovery is hope ... We should always have hope for everyone. There is no person that anyone could say will never recover. I just believe there is hope for recovery for everyone. The more that the world and community will embrace recovery the better able people will be to recover ... I give of myself and empty my cup, but I get so much back from being a peer. Being a peer gives me life. It helps me to keep going when I’m able to help people find recovery.”



Carol Montgomery, RPSS

"Take all the pain, all of that you went through with your lived experience and use it now to be a blessing to others. Use it purposefully. Whatever life's challenges may be, don't give up. If you never stop putting a foot forward, you can always get to your next journey. My thing is to encourage anyone going through lived experiences: Don't give up, don't stop. There's hope on the other side. You can do it."



Brent Ambacher, RPSS

"One of the things about peer support is that every individual is an expert of themselves ... As a peer, I am professionally sober. I want my life to be open because it was closed for so long. I don't care who knows my story because I am proud of my story ... I am somebody who looks for those who need comfort."

Responsibilities of a RPSS:

Role of a RPSS:

Recognized Peer Support Specialists aid in the clinical process by performing duties such as:

- Identifying goals
- Assisting with treatment planning
- Life skills coaching
- Resource referral

- Conducting recovery groups
- Assisting with discharge planning

***** A RPSS cannot provide clinical services. *****

Core Competencies:

Core competencies are the governing principles of the Recognized Peer Support Specialists. A RPSS:

- Engages in collaborative and caring relationships
- Provides support
- Shares lived experiences of recovery
- Personalizes Peer Support
- Supports recovery planning
- Links to resources, services and reports
- Provides information about skills related to health, wellness and recovery
- Helps peers to manage crisis
- Values communication
- Supports collaboration and teamwork
- Promotes leadership and advocacy
- Promotes growth and development

Continuing Education Units

Continuing Education Units (CEUs), are a nationally recognized standard for documenting successful completion of non-credit programs and courses intended to improve the knowledge and skills of working adults. Recognized Peer Support Specialists must complete a minimum of 10 CEUs per calendar year. Three of these CEUs must be in the area of Ethics. The other seven shall be in the core competencies related to peer support.

Where Do RPSS Work:

- Inpatient facilities
- Emergency rooms
- Recovery centers
- Primary care offices

Contact Us:

Email: OBH.peers.programs@la.gov (Jamie Tindle)

Apply to become a RPSS here:

<https://theextramileregioniv.com/peer-certification-application>

Citations:

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<https://www.mhanational.org/sites/default/files/Evidence%20for%20Peer%20Support%20May%202018.pdf>

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