

CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS: HOW THEY HELP THEIR PEERS IN RECOVERY AND A LOOK AT THE STRUCTURE FOR THEM TO DO SO

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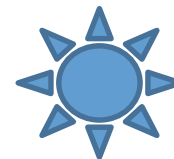
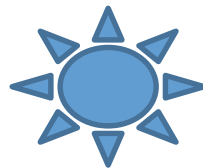
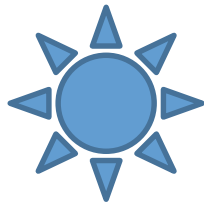
Origins of CPRS services

- Peer support has taken place informally and in small settings for many years.
- People's experiences with mental illness and its treatment many times has prompted them to gather together and share their hopes, struggles, strengths & successes.
- Today, peer support services are being formally organized and reimbursed.
- Peer support services are now an evidence based practice.



Health Benefits of Peer Support

- The use of Peer Support Specialists as part of a treatment team has been shown to have a range of favorable **results**. (Davidson et al., 2003; Felton, Stanstny, Shern, Blanch, Donahue, Knight & Brown, 1995; Mead & MacNeil, 2006).
- Information provided by peers can be seen as more credible than that provided by mental health professionals. (Woodhouse & Vincent, 2006).



Health Benefits of Peer Support (continued)...

- When peers are part of hospital-based care, the results indicate shortened lengths of stays, decreased frequency of admissions, and a subsequent reduction in overall treatment costs. *(Chinman, Weingarten, Stayner & Davidson, 2001).*
- Other studies also suggest that the use of peer support can help reduce the overall need and use for mental health services over time. *(Chinman, et. al, 2001; Klein, Cnaan, & Whitecraft, 1998; Simpson & House, 2002).*



The Fastest-Growing Service for People in Recovery

- The 1999, the Surgeon General's Report presented findings that showed self-help and mutual support, from which peer support services have evolved, was the fastest growing service for people in recovery.
- According to a May 2016 Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) presentation on peer support, this is still true. More than 15,000 peer specialists have been trained in the U.S. over the past 15 years. And more than 400 have been certified in Minnesota since 2009 through the Department of Human Services.



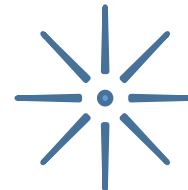
SAMHSA on Peer Support and Social Inclusion

- Peer support services are delivered by individuals who have common life experiences with the people they are serving. People with mental and/or substance use disorders have a unique capacity to help each other based on a shared affiliation and a deep understanding of this experience. In self-help and mutual support, people offer this support, strength, and hope to their peers, which allows for personal growth, wellness promotion, and recovery.

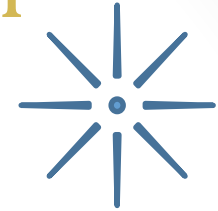


SAMHSA on Peer Support and Social Inclusion (continued)

- Research has shown that peer support facilitates recovery and reduces health care costs. Peers also provide assistance that promotes a sense of belonging within the community. The ability to contribute to and enjoy one's community is key to recovery and well-being. Another critical component that peers provide is the development of self-efficacy through role modeling and assisting peers with ongoing recovery through mastery of experiences and finding meaning, purpose, and social connections in their lives.



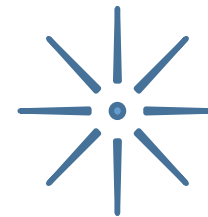
SAMHSA on Peer Support and Social Inclusion (continued)



- SAMHSA's Recovery Community Services Program (RCSP) advances recovery by providing peer recovery support services across the nation. These services help prevent relapse and promote sustained recovery from mental and/or substance use disorders. For more information, visit SAMHSA's [What Are Peer Recovery Support Services? – 2009.](#)
- **SAMHSA** = Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA on integrating Peer Specialists into the workplace & helping them to be effective in their roles...

- Building a peer workforce is not only about creating positions for peer specialists – it is also about updating and adjusting your agency's culture and workflows to ensure peers can make the most of their role. <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/workforce/team-members/peer-providers>
- Who are Peer Providers?
- Roles of Peer Providers in Integrated Health
- Billing for Peer Provided Services
- Strengths Peer Providers Add to the Integrated Health Workplace
- Tips for Promoting Roles of Peer Providers in Integrated Health
- Sample Job Descriptions
- Whole Health Action Management Training
- General Resources



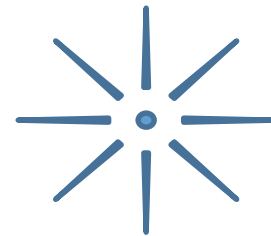
In Minnesota...

- In 2007, the Minnesota Legislature passed legislation calling for the training of and developing of employment opportunities for certified peer specialists in our state. Implementation began in **2009**, with trainings and employment opportunities in some agencies.
- Since then, the Minnesota Department of Human Services' Adult Mental Health Division has developed policy and structure around peer specialist services for peer specialists and their employers.



The four areas in which peer specialist services are Medicaid reimbursable for providers in Minnesota...

- Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS)
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)
- Intensive Rehabilitative Treatment Services (IRTS)
- Crisis services



Peer specialists in Minnesota are also providing other services, such as...

- Operating Warmlines
- Working at drop-in centers and club houses
- Supporting Medica patients leaving hospital settings and transitioning back home and to community
- Providing employment support
- Providing housing support
- Working on hospital floors
- Being hired by various agencies who appreciate what a peer specialist can bring to a number of different situations providing direct support and other services.

MN DHS Certified Peer Specialist Qualifications

- To be employed as a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) Level I, an individual must meet the following criteria:
- Is at least 21 years old • High school diploma or equivalent • Has or has had a primary diagnosis of mental illness • Has received or is currently receiving mental health services • Is willing to share his or her experience of recovery • Successfully completes the Department of Human Services approved Certified Peer Specialist training and certification exam • Is certified by DHS



State Requirements for Certified Peer Specialists

- To be employed as a Certified Peer Specialist Level 2, an individual must meet all of the qualifications of a Certified Peer Specialist Level I (on previous page) and meet one or more of the following:
 - Is qualified at the Mental Health Practitioner level as defined by Minnesota Statute 245.462, subdivision 17.
- Has at least 6,000 hours of supervised experience in the delivery of peer services to persons with mental illness
- Has at least 4000 hours of supervised experience in the delivery of services to persons with mental illness and an additional 2000 hours of supervised experience in the delivery of peer services to persons with mental illness

More on State Requirements for Certified Peer Specialists

- Amount, Duration and Scope of Service: Certified peer specialist services have the same threshold as other mental health rehabilitative services. The current threshold is 300 hours of service per year per service recipient.
- Certification is valid for two years from the date of certification. To retain certification, every two years, peer specialists must complete and provide documentation to DHS of 30 hours of continuing education in areas of mental health recovery, mental health rehabilitative services, and peer support.

DHS Assistance for CPS Employers

- Technical assistance for employers will be provided by DHS Adult Mental Health Division staff. Staff will assist agencies in understanding the requirements to incorporate these services within their existing program. Billing and reporting systems will differ for each service type. For more information, please contact Shelley White at shelley.white@state.mn.us or 651-431-2518.



MN DHS Certified Peer Specialist Website Page & Training Info

- http://dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_149185
- Or Google: MN DHS Peer Specialist Services (that always gets me there!)
- Also to learn more about peer support services or to apply for the training visit www.peerslinktohope.org.
Or contact Judy Benham at
jbenham@northlandcounseling.org or 218-910-6223.

Peer Support Specialist Services Expansion

- Peer support is being written into many service provision requirements within the mental health system, such as on ACT teams, in housing support programs, and on integrated care teams.
- The trend for peer support is emerging in many areas and “fields.” See next slide for an example.



Peer Support for Farmers!

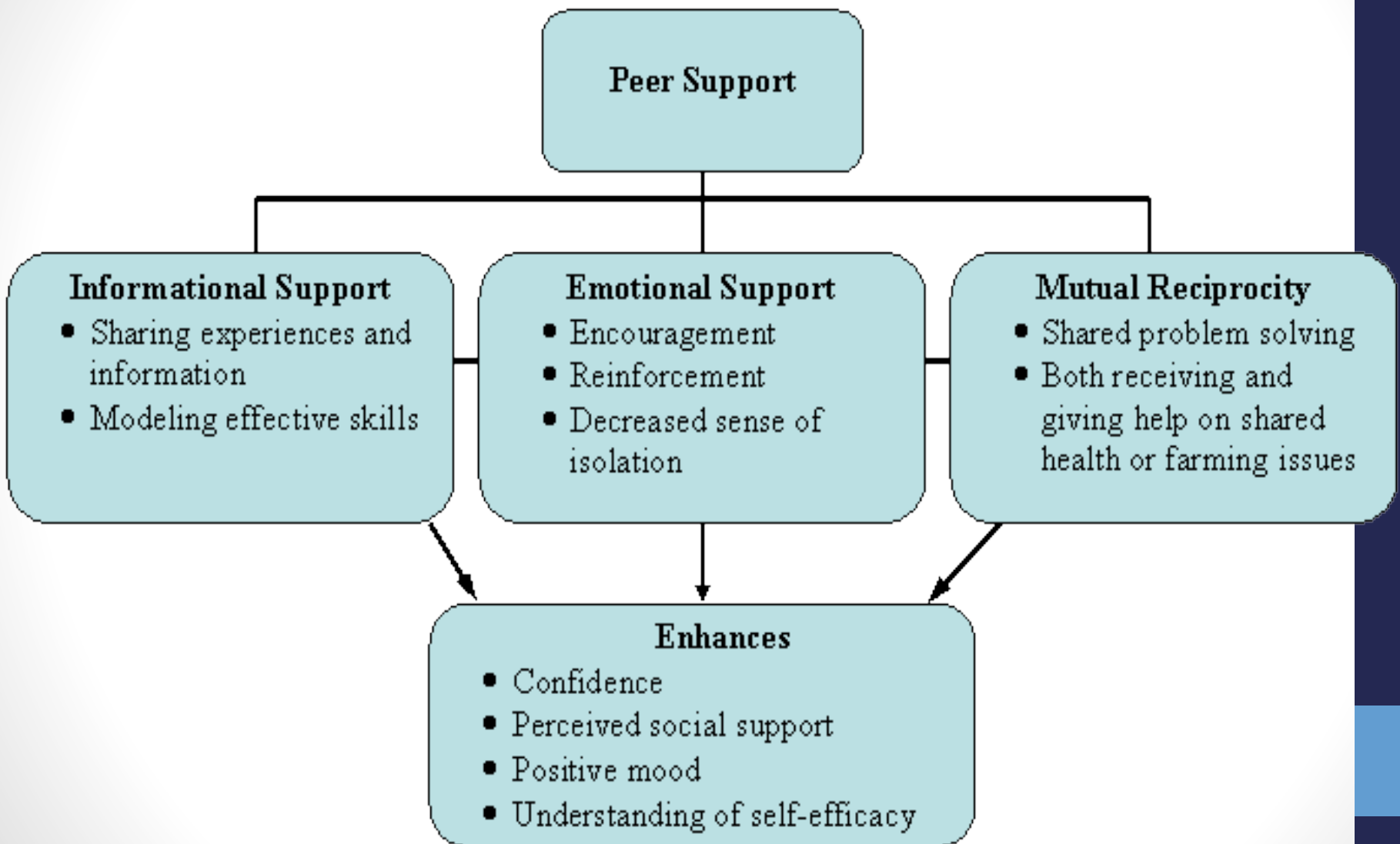


Diagram Source Information

- [AgrAbility » Peer Support Resources](#)
- Figure 1: The Benefits of Peer Support. Adapted from: Heisler, M. Building Peer Support Programs to Manage Chronic Diseases: Seven Models for Success.

According to the National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters...

- Peer support is voluntary, mutual and reciprocal, equally shared power, strengths-focused, transparent, and person-driven.
- Peer supporters are open-minded, empathetic, respectful, honest, and direct.
- Peer supporters facilitate change.
- *Visit this link to access a downloadable copy of the National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters:*
<http://inaops.org/national-standards/>

Peer Employment Training in MN

- Peer employment trainings in our state are coordinated by:
 - Shelley White, CPS policy person at DHS
 - Recovery Innovations International, Inc., based in Arizona
 - Northland Counseling, based in Grand Rapids, which now has a contract with DHS to help manage trainings and
 - Northern Pines Mental Health Center, which employs two of the three Minnesota-based certified training facilitators.
- Several trainings have been held each year since the first one in July 2009. Up to 20 students graduate from each class. Six trainings were done around the state in the last fiscal year.
- DHS is the lead entity in terms of funding for certified peer specialist trainings. Most of the dollars for it come from federal block grants.

Peer Employment Training

- Peer employment trainings are typically held on a two-week timeframe. 76 hours is the required amount of in-class time for certification. A good deal of homework is also required.
- To complete the course successfully and graduate, trainees must pass a mid-term take-home exam, an oral role-play skills test, and a written final exam.
- A great deal of interaction happens in class, with lots of discussion and exploration of concepts, principles & practices.
- Skills for interacting with peers as a peer specialist is a big focus.
- Also important in class is the process of recognizing and understanding what it is we have learned from our own experience and how to put that to effective use in peer support.

Peer Employment Training Curriculum

The Peer Employment Training Curriculum Modules include...

1. Recovery
2. The power of peer support
3. Developing self-esteem
4. Community, culture and environment
5. Meaning and purpose
6. Emotional intelligence
7. Telling your story
8. Employment as a path to recovery
9. Communication skills
10. Conflict resolution
11. Understanding trauma
12. Substance use
13. Integrated care
14. Being with people in challenging situations
15. Peer support in action

Definition of Recovery

- Recovery Innovations International, Inc.'s peer specialist training curriculum, which is used for peer specialist certification in Minnesota, defines recovery as...
- Remembering who you are and using your strengths to become all you were meant to be.

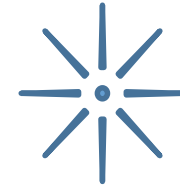


Recovery, continued

- Recovery Innovations cites a favorite definition of recovery by Dr. William Anthony (1993)...
- Recovery is a deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitude, values, feelings, goals, skills, and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, contributing life. Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one's life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of psychiatric disability.



Patricia Deegan, Modern Day Recovery Pioneer

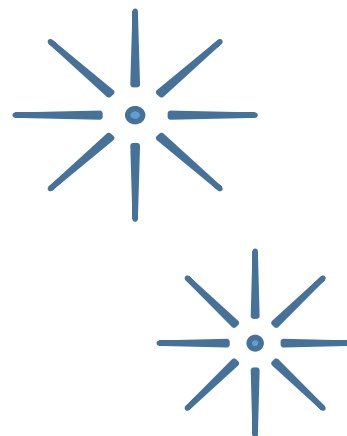


- Peer support is a natural human response to the alienation and adversity associated with being given a psychiatric diagnosis. Wherein the diagnosis marks us as ‘different’ and separates us from the community, peer support creates common ground and the opportunity for inclusion.” Patricia Deegan, PhD
- Patricia Deegan is a contemporary pioneer in the peer support movement today. She was diagnosed with schizophrenia as a teenager. See her website for more information:
www.patdeegan.com/blog/posts/legacy-peer-support



Services that peer support specialists provide their peers can include...

- Relationship building
- Mentoring
- Role modeling recovery
- Facilitating positive change
- Providing support and advocacy
- Goal setting
- Linking peers to resources
- Skills building
- Group facilitation
- Connecting peers to the community
- Other recovery oriented support work identified by an individual and/or their plan of care

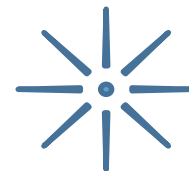


The significance of mutuality and relationship in peer support

- Peer support is based on mutuality and relationship. This creates a milieu of equality and respect. It also puts the peer receiving services in an empowered role in their own search for wellness and a fulfilling life. They become a seeker. This inspires motivation and it also inspires a belief in oneself and one's own abilities in terms of finding our own best way to the life we want. This doesn't mean we don't need others, but that we direct our own lives.



The Power of Story



- Another foundational pillar of peer support is the sharing of one's personal story, and the experience of living with a mental health and/or substance use disorder, and recovery. In addition to educational aspects, peer support specialists help others through story and connection, which are very heart-based. Because things we learn stick more when there is emotion attached to it, this makes for a powerful mode of learning.
- Story is a powerful thing. As humans, we have both a need and a desire for stories. Stories are memorable and connect us to one another. We learn deeply through stories. We are biologically driven to listen to stories and integrate them into our own way of looking at ourselves, others, the world, and the universe we live in.

How peer specialists help & motivate their peers: Peer support recovery practices and principles are based on...

- **Hope**, which permeates so many aspects of recovery
- Holding a **loving attitude** toward our peers and others
- **Listening**, listening, listening - without judgment
- **Choice** – reminding our peers that they always have choices
- **Strengths** – rediscovering & building upon our own strengths
- Helping others identify and tap into their own **strengths**
- **Recovery environment** which we want to seek for us & others

How peer specialists help & motivate their peers: Peer support recovery practices and principles are based on...



- **Finding meaning & purpose** in our lives.
- **Empowerment** through resilience, creativity and persistence
- **Belief** in one's own power to move forward in recovery
- Finding the **best life** we can for ourselves; we may have limitations yes, but still limitless possibilities exist. We can discover and pursue them.
- Recovery is **wanting to be you** and not anyone else!



My Experience & How it Relates

- I was in the first certified peer specialist graduating class in Minnesota in July 2009. I have been immersed in peer support work ever since.
- My illness (panic disorder, agoraphobia, generalized anxiety disorder and clinical depression) began when I was in my early teens and continued, despite a continual search for effective help from the time I was 15 years old, until I was in my 40s.
- Part of the problem, in terms of the duration of my illness, was due to a general lack of knowledge about truly effective treatment, which eventually developed over time.
- Part of my story involves trauma. This is true for many peer specialists. So we try to be fully on board with trauma informed care.

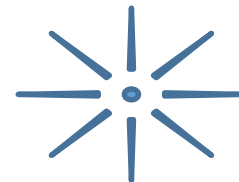
My Experience & How it Relates (continued)



- I was in my fifties when I was invited to attend the peer specialist training. My participation in it took me to a whole new level in my recovery and my ability to help others.
- I came to understand that my illness was not at all due to weakness on my part. In fact, it takes a tremendous amount of strength to live with a mental illness and to fight like hell to be well and stay alive.
- I learned to trust myself more. And I take every opportunity I get to help & encourage others do the same.
- Peer support values and practices became very real to me. I embraced them and they continue to help me grow and hopefully act as a good model for others. This is important to me.

The importance of shared experience and becoming experts on ourselves

- Shared experience creates a bond between people. And that bond has healing powers and embodies a sense of belonging. These are powerful tools in motivating us to work hard for ourselves. The work we do on and for ourselves also benefits others. So being true to ourselves is of utmost importance.
- One of the keys to recovery, as taught in the training, is to become an expert on ourselves. And that can take us a long way. The hope is that others support us in doing so too.

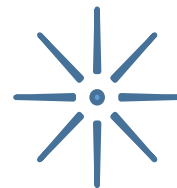


Closing thought...

“Genius is eternal patience.”

- Michelangelo

In the peer employment trainings I facilitate, I share and discuss this quote with the class. Patience, and other skills such as being fully present and active listening, are often underestimated when it comes to their power to transform. My hope is that we tap into this power as much as we can, with ourselves and others.



Contact Information

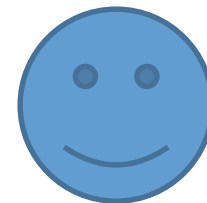
Holly Biggins – hbiggins@npmh.org

Northern Pines Mental Health Center

P.O. Box 367

Little Falls MN 56345

- Thanks for watching!



Peer-Based Recovery Support Services at Minnesota Recovery Connection

*How we began to develop PBRSS's, how we involve our
peers, and how we've evolved*



MINNESOTA  RECOVERY CONNECTION
connect. recover. advocate. serve.

www.minnesotarecovery.org

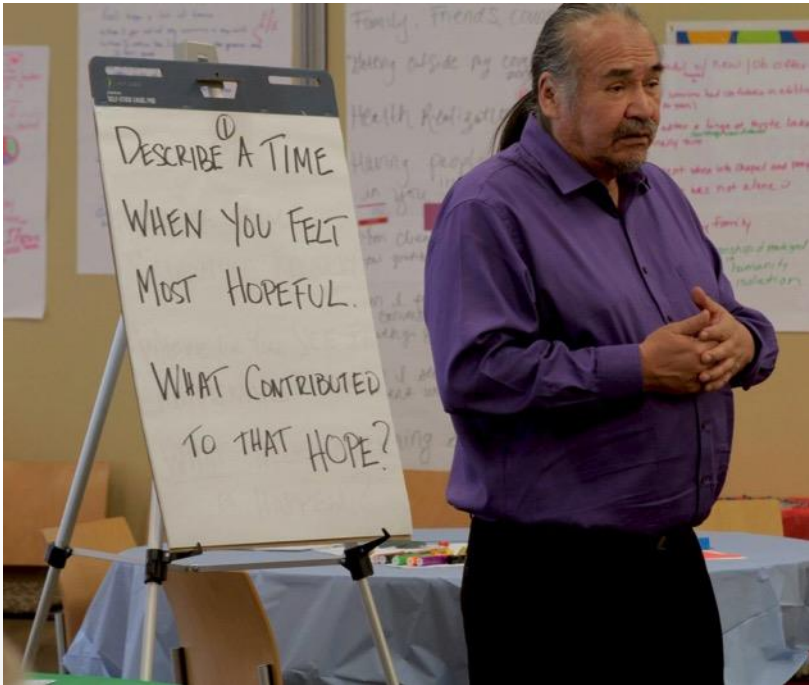
Who we are... a small, core staff

- *Kris Kelly - Director of Healthcare and Wellness*
- *Julia Alexander-Director of Special Projects*
- *Linda Bittner - Volunteer Administrator*
- *Jim Freunds Schuh-Lead Volunteer*

Our work is fueled by volunteers...

- Our trained volunteers make over 300 calls weekly, through our Telephone Recovery Support program
- Trained Peer Recovery Specialists facilitate 7 All Recovery Meetings in the Twin Cities
- Volunteers serve as ambassadors for MRC through our outreach and education

Staying Responsive to the Recovery Community



Peer-Based Recovery Support Services

What?

- Services to help individuals and families initiate, stabilize, and sustain recovery
- Non-clinical, distinguishes an RCO from an addiction treatment provider
- Strength-based and peer-driven

When?

- Pre-contemplation (Pre-Recovery)
- Contemplation (Recovery Initiation)
- During treatment (Recovery Initiation/Stabilization)
- After treatment (Recovery Initiation/Stabilization)
- In lieu of treatment (Action)
- Maintenance (Recovery Maintenance)

Peer Recovery Specialist Training

The Peer Recovery Specialist mission is promoting long-term recovery from substance abuse disorders by providing experienced peer support and advocating for self-directed care.

Peer Recovery Specialist Training

- 46-hour training held over one week
- Participants apply, interview, and then are accepted/denied

Peer Recovery Specialists...

- **Personal guide and mentor** for individuals seeking to achieve or sustain long-term recovery from addiction, regardless of pathway to recovery
- **Connector** to instrumental recovery-supportive resources, including housing, employment, and other professional and nonprofessional services
- **Liaison** to formal and informal community supports, resources, and recovery-supporting activities

Peer Recovery Specialists are not...

- Sponsors
- Counselors/Therapists
- Nurses/Physicians
- Clergy

Embedding Peer Recovery Support Specialists

- Ramsey County Detoxification Center
- Hennepin County Drug Court
- Ramsey County Adult Substance Abuse Court

Ramsey County Detoxification Center

- Continuum of Care
- Withdrawal Management services (“Detox”) are a part of the full continuum of care for improving health
- Withdrawal management must include preventive services, peer support, and a trauma-informed focus
- “Wellness Management” should be the underlying message throughout the continuum of care
- Services should be seamless and provided for as long as the person needs them

Ramsey County Detoxification Center Recoveree Survey

Did the services help you...	A lot	A little	Not at all
Stay in recovery?	75%	25%	0%
Feel supported?	75%	25%	0%
Learn about community resources?	67%	25%	8%
Make healthier choices?	58%	42%	0%
Connect to community resources?	58%	25%	17%
Feel more in control of your recovery?	58%	25%	17%

Ramsey County Detoxification Center Recoveree Survey

- 58% had abstained from drugs or alcohol
- Of the 42% that had not abstained, all
- reported a decrease in use
- 75% reported coaching support helped them “some” or “a lot” in reducing use or abstaining

Ramsey County Detoxification Center Recoveree Survey

Current status	Great	Good	Okay	Bad	Missing
Physical health	0%	50%	42%	0%	8%
Mental well-being	0%	58%	33%	0%	8%

Improvement since receiving support	Gotten better	Stayed the same	Gotten worse	Not sure*
Physical health	92%	0%	0%	8%
Mental well-being	75%	17%	8%	0%

Hennepin County Drug Court

- Currently 2 part-time Peer Recovery Specialists
- Working with up to 13 recoverees each
- Challenges and opportunities

Ramsey County Adult Substance Abuse Court

- Currently 2 half-time Peer Recovery Specialists
- Building on learned experiences
- Challenges and opportunities

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- *Plan accordingly and maintain flexibility*
- *Find allies early, beginning with people who want to support you*
- *Integrate evaluation early and make use of the results*
- *Focus on sustainability planning early and continually*
- *Further increase/diversify volunteers' roles*
- *Celebrate successes*
- *Temper the desire for growth with an understanding of capacity*