

Fidelity Level Peer Services

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DEFINITION OF A PEER

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines disability in the following way: "The term 'disability' means with respect to an individual a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; b) a record of such an impairment; or c) being regarded as having such an impairment." This definition, as it applies to individuals with psychiatric disabilities, is also considered when determining who qualifies as a peer.

The following 4 slides are courtesy of the Peer Accreditation Association

A Peer is someone who has been affected by:

- A psychiatric label and the prejudice associated with it.
- Determination by other (e.g. relatives, service providers) to lack competency and negative valuation as a result of diagnosis.
- Discrimination from family, friends, treatment providers and society in general.
- Major life disruptions such as homelessness, repeated unemployment, extended isolation, loss of important relationships, childhood and adult trauma and/or abuse, problems in pursuing dreams and personal goals, loss of civil liberty through institutionalization or other forms of confinement.
- Major, protracted experiences such as disabling fear, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, helplessness, stemming from having a diagnostic label or from traumatic life events and inhumane mental health treatment.
- Significant, positive altered states associated with energy, creativity, spirituality, and other like phenomena

- RECIPIENT
- CONSUMER
- EX-PATIENT
- SURVIVOR

Peers have lived with and survived experiences such as:

- being labeled with a psychiatric diagnosis
- being subjected to treatment over time that did not fit our needs, and which, in many instances, has been inadequate, disenfranchising, defeating, coercive, disrespectful and harmful; which has created dependency and failed to provide choice and promote self-determination
- being denied choices of where to live, how to spend our time, and who to spend it with
- being detained against our wills in hospitals, jails, other types of institutions and even in private homes
- severe and prolonged abuse and trauma
- poverty and homelessness, and the accompanying degradations

NOT A PEER....

A peer is not someone who has sought couples and/or individual counseling to resolve passing difficulties; who has engaged in therapy at a time of major life transition; who has used antidepressants or tranquilizers to ease discomfort at certain times of life. Nor do family members of individuals with diagnoses fit the definition of peer.

Consumer-Operated Services have different names

- Consumer-Operated Service Program (COSP)
- Consumer-run organizations
- Peer support programs
- Peer services
- Peer service agencies

What are PEER-Operated Services?

Independent	Owned, administratively controlled, and managed by mental health consumers
Autonomous	All decisions are made by the program
Accountable	Responsibility for decisions rests with the program
Consumer controlled	Governance board is at least 51% mental health consumers
Peer workers	Staff and management are people who have received mental health services

Peer Services Are Unique

- Peer services are not simply mental health services delivered by Peers.
- They have a different worldview, structure, and approach to “helping” than traditional treatment services.

What is the evidence that they help?

- Greater levels of independence, empowerment, and self esteem
- Improved sense that participants can make their own decisions, solve problems, and help others
- Improved quality of life
- Increases in social support, employment skills, education

- Decreases use of high cost emergency services

— Key findings from SAMHSA peer-run service demonstration projects, 1988-1992

The New York Peer Specialist Certification

What are the Benefits of Certification?

- Certification identifies professionals who are specialists in their field
- Certified professionals are recognized by professional affiliations, state, and national legislation
- Certified professionals are provided with the opportunity for peer networking, in addition to involvement and impact through NYPSCB sponsored education opportunities and committee work
- Certification increases professionalism in the field
- Certification provides a strong basis for employment hiring and professional advancement
- Programs utilizing certified professionals to provide peer support services may be qualified to bill Medicaid

Who Benefits from Certification?

- Certification assures competent, professional services while continuously improving the quality of service being provided to the client and family members.
- Certification promotes standards of training and competency that will meet standards required for licensing, accreditation, and third-party payers.
- Certification provides recognition of competency and a marketable credential that will enhance the role of the professional.
- Certification provides opportunity whereby the highest professional standards can be established, maintained, and updated.

SAMHSA COSP Multisite Research Fidelity Tool: FACIT

- Across all programs in a national study, similarities were found.
- These “common ingredients” distinguish Consumer-Operated Services from other services.
- They form the basis for a fidelity assessment tool, the FACIT.

FACIT: Fidelity Assessment Common Ingredients Tool

- Fidelity assessment tool for Consumer–Operated Services
- Elements
 - Structure
 - Environment
 - Belief systems
 - Peer support
 - Advocacy
 - Education

FACIT: Common ingredients

Program structure:

How programs are organized and operated

- Consumer control
- Membership-run
- Participatory leadership
- Voluntary participation
- Sense of physical and emotional safety

FACIT: Common ingredients

Guiding values:

Core belief systems and worldview

- People can and do recover from psychiatric difficulties
- To help others is to also help one's self
- Choice, empowerment, and responsibility
- Acceptance and respect for diversity
- Reciprocity, mutuality in relationships
- Social action

FACIT: Common ingredients

Operational process:

Services offered and methods of providing those services

- Peer support through relationships and informal and structured interactions
- Interactive decision making
- Meaningful roles and opportunities for everyone
- Peer mentoring and teaching

Why should you be interested in Consumer-Operated Services?

Consumer benefits:

- Well-being
- Recovery
- Community-building
- Empowerment
- Enhancements/alternatives

Why should you be interested in Consumer-Operated Services?

Mental health system benefits:

- Enriched service choice and array
- Expanded availability
- Expanded access
- Reaching underserved persons
- Preserving services
- Value

Why should you be interested in Consumer-Operated Services?

Community benefits:

- Community education and “de-stigmatization”
- Collaborative networks
- Public health promotion
- Energizing community

Quote

Consumer-Operated Services translate into real gains to the mental health system.

Clinicians want and need people to be partners in their treatment.

Often Consumer-Operated Services help motivate people, help them to find their voice. They come to believe they can contribute to their own care and make a difference in their own lives.

Everyone wins.

— Mental health center director

Quote

Consumer-Operated Services are present and vocal members of our service provider community.

They are equal to other providers in our forums.

Their presence has challenged us, but also strengthened us.

We are learning to work together in productive and mutually beneficial ways.

— Mental health center director



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