



# Peer Support - A Foundational Component for Better Outcomes

Council on Accreditation

Power of Collaboration

Alice Pauser

Patrick Cork

---



# COA Conference

## Power of Collaboration

July 2016

- Peer Support Programming
- Discuss value PS brings to mental health and substance abuse services
- Discuss primary outcomes of WI PS initiatives
  - Service outcomes
  - PS employment
  - Collaboration with Peers



# COA Conference

## Power of Collaboration

July 2016

### Peer Support Promotes Recovery

- Better Outcomes for People Served
- Workforce Support for Behavioral Health



# Shery Mead on Peer Support

- Peer support is the process of giving and receiving encouragement and assistance to achieve long-term recovery
- Peers offer emotional support, share knowledge, teach skills, provide practical assistance, and connect people with resources, opportunities, communities of support, and other people



# Peer Support: Research & Evaluation

## Outcomes of Consumer as Provider Services

- Types of PS
- Study Domains
- What does Research Reveal?



# Yale School of Medicine

- Statistically significant results for the Peer Specialist intervention in engaging clients, through establishing positive relationships and increasing clients' participation in treatment
- Client satisfaction with the peer engagement treatment is high



## **EARLY EVIDENCE SUGGESTS PEER SUPPORT & COACHING...**

- Reduces the number of admissions and days spent in hospitals and increased time in the community
- Reduces use of acute services (e.g., emergency rooms, detoxification centers)
- Increases engagement in outpatient treatment
- Increases active involvement in care planning and self-care
- Improves social functioning



# Continued...

- Increased hope, quality of life, and satisfaction with life
- Reduces substance use
- Reduces depression and demoralization
- Improves chances for long-term recovery
- Increases rates of family reunification
- Reduces average service costs per person





# WI Peer Support Initiative

- WI model
- Where peers are employed today
- Medicaid connection
- Specialized programming; community recovery services, peer run respite



## What is a WICPS?

- A person with the self-defined lived experience of recovery from a mental illness and / or co-occurring substance use disorder
- Has had formal training in how to support peers seeking recovery
- Is committed to serving as a role model of recovery and assisting others to find their individual paths to recovery



# The role of the WICPS

- Use personal recovery experience as a tool to inspire & support others
- Provide resource info
- Identify and support peers in crisis
- Facilitate self-direction & goal setting
- Communicate with other providers
- **Peer support is the core of all service provided by a WICPS**



# Work Environments

WI Department of Health Services & Facilities

WI Department of Veterans Affairs Facilities

WI Department of Corrections Prisons/Centers

Inpatient and Outpatient Services

Community Based Psychosocial Rehabilitation

Crisis Stabilization / Intervention



# Medicaid Connection

Peer Support is MA Reimbursable Service in  
Community Based Psychosocial Rehabilitation  
(Assertive Community Treatment Programs)

CPS Serve as Para-Professional Staff in Crisis  
Services, In-Home Counseling, Other  
Treatment Programs



# Peer Run Organizations

- Community Recovery Services
- Peer Run Respite
- Training
- Advocacy



# **Peer Specialists**

## *Igniting Recovery*

Improving Recovery Outcomes

---

# Peer Specialist Training...



- The new Peer Specialist curriculum has integrated both mental health and substance use disorders as part of the training.
- Trainings are a minimum of 40 hours and are held throughout the State. They are facilitated by state-approved trainers.
- Once an individual has successfully completed a training they are eligible to apply to take the Wisconsin certification exam.



---

# Peer Specialist Training...continued

*Trainings are based on the Core Competencies.  
And the certification exam is also based on these principles*

- Values
  - In-depth knowledge of recovery
  - Roles and responsibilities of a Certified Peer Specialist
  - Skills
-

---

# Training...Scope of Practice



## The Scope of Practice:

The primary function of the Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) is to provide peer support. The CPS engages and encourages peers in recovery from mental health and/or substance use disorders. The CPS provides peers with a sense of community and belonging, supportive relationships, and valued roles. The goal is to promote wellness, self-direction, and recovery, enhancing the skill and ability of peers to engage in their chosen roles. The CPS works with peers as equals.

---

# Training...Code of Ethics



## The Code of Ethics:

The principles will guide Certified Peer Specialists in their roles and relationships.

Example:

*“I understand that my primary responsibility is to help peers understand recovery and achieve their own recovery needs, wants, and goals. I will be guided by the principle of self-determination for each peer.”*

---

# Wisconsin Certification Exam...



Once an individual successfully completes the state-approved training they are eligible to apply to take the certification exam.

The exam is based on the Core Competencies. The passing score is 85%.

There are currently 62 multiple choice questions. This number will increase with the new exam which has been reviewed by UW-Madison statisticians and validated.

Certification means that a person has successfully passed the state-approved training.

The database for exams and recertification is housed at the University of WI-Milwaukee.

---

# Recertification...



After passing the certification exam Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists will need to complete 20 hours of continuing education every two years and submit the documentation to UW-Milwaukee using the required recertification forms.

Required areas of continuing education are:

- Cultural Humility
- Ethics and Boundaries
- Substance Use/Mental Health Specific
- Peer Specialist Specific

---

# Peer Specialist Certification Pathways

## Integrated Certified Peer Specialists:

A Certified Peer Specialist is a person who has not only lived the experience of mental illness and/or substance use disorder but also has had formal training in the peer specialist model of mental health and/or substance use disorder supports. They use their unique set of recovery experiences in combination with solid skills training to support peers. Peer Specialists actively incorporate peer support into their work while working within an agencies team support structure as a defined part of the recovery team.

*Certified Peer Specialists have been in place since 2010.*

---

---

# Peer Specialist Certification Pathways

## Certified Parent Peer Specialist

The role of the Certified Parent Peer Specialist is varied and can take on several forms of support and assistance to families experiencing social, emotional, behavioral and/or substance use concerns of youth. Although roles may vary in service agencies, it is generally recognized that Parent Peer Specialists provide the following services:

- Uses own family's resiliency experience as a tool
  - Presents resiliency information
  - Provides information about behavioral/emotional and/or substance use disorder resources
-

---

# Parent Peer Specialist...continued

- Assists in identifying and supporting families in crisis
- Facilitates family-directed services
- Goal setting and communicates effectively with treatment providers

*This is a new certification for Wisconsin and will begin trainings and certification exams in 2017.*

---



---

# Re-entry Peer Specialists

## Grassroots Empowerment Project (GEP)

Is developing a Re-entry Certified Peer Specialist (RPS) program. These State Certified Peer Specialists with the lived experience of incarceration and Mental Health and/or Substance Use Disorder will work with individuals coming out of the Wisconsin Prison System and re-entering the community. *“This project serves to support reentry and community integration of criminal justice-involved consumers through the development of a reentry peer specialist model in Wisconsin. Using Participatory Decision Making GEP will facilitate monthly meetings with individuals from multiple stakeholder groups to develop a model for reentry peer support. GEP will then train criminal justice-involved consumers and support them as they provide peer support.”*

[www.grassrootspower.org](http://www.grassrootspower.org)

---

---

# How to assure a successful program

Certified Peer Specialists are an integral part of a Peers recovery team.

It is important to remember that as a part of the team they need to be treated as equals in the person's recovery journey.

*“Aside from creating a receptive, welcoming community among existing staff, the provision of excellent supervision is arguably the most important aspect of sustaining your peer program. Good supervision allows peer specialists to identify and grow their unique strengths, effectively address areas for improvement, and truly flourish in their professional lives. Research also suggests that it contributes to staff retention.”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Whitley, R., & Drake, R. E. (2010). Recovery: A dimensional approach. *Psychiatric Services*, 61(12), 1248-1250

---

---

# How to Assure a Successful Program

Access to Independence in Madison, WI is developing an Employer Toolkit for Wisconsin for both the Certified Peer Specialist and Parent Peer Specialist models.

This toolkit will provide training on how to successfully hire, integrate and support Certified Peer Specialists in Wisconsin. This will include preparing staff for the addition of a Certified Peer Specialist in their organization and a tool to help determine how recovery-oriented the organization is and what their next steps will be.

Trainings will be held throughout the State in 2016 and 2017.



---

**ACCESS**  
TO INDEPENDENCE INC.

# Peer Specialists statistics...



Wisconsin currently has 431 Certified Peer Specialists (CPS)

According to the CPS that responded to the May 2016 employment survey:

- 63% are currently employed as CPS
- 36% are working full-time. This is a significant increase from part-time employment over the last year.
- 60% have more than one CPS working at their organization

# Strengths and Challenges...



Wisconsin has developed a strong training program and supports to prepare individuals to enter the workforce.

It is a challenge to employ CPS in more rural areas of the state. Through employer education these counties will see the benefits of hiring and supporting CPS in their organizations to provide mental health and/or substance use disorder recovery services.

Some larger metropolitan areas are finding there are not enough CPS to fill their job needs.

The new training curriculum will be important in providing qualified individuals to fill these positions.

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists Ignite Recovery!

# The Website...



## The Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative Website

[www.wicps.org](http://www.wicps.org)

- Career pages
- Employment
- Certification Exam information
- Links & resources





# Community Recovery Services

- 9 Programs in WI Located Across State
- Funded Mental Health Block Grant
- Peer Run Recovery Oriented Environment
- Collaboration with Local Communities
- Leadership Opportunities for Peers



# Peer Run Respite

- Peer Run Organizations
- Short Term Overnight Respite Services
- Warm Line
- Three Respite in WI
- State Funded



# Contact Information...



Alice F. Pauser, CPS, NCWF  
WI Peer Specialist Program Coordinator  
Access to Independence, Inc.  
3810 Milwaukee St  
Madison, WI 53714

[alicep@accesstoind.org](mailto:alicep@accesstoind.org)

608-242-8484 ext. 224

1-800-362-9877

Thank you!





# Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Patrick Cork, ACSW, LCSW

Administrator, Division of Mental Health and  
Substance Abuse Services

1 W. Wilson St. Madison, WI 53707

608 267 8929

[Patrick.Cork@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Patrick.Cork@wisconsin.gov)