



Promoting wellness and recovery

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To: All Interested Parties
From: Jody Lynch, Deputy Director, Office of Treatment and Recovery
Date: August 11, 2014
Re: Update on Peer Support Status

Peer support services are and will continue to be a key part of the recovery continuum for both mental health and addiction services. As such, the purpose of this communication is to provide information about [Ohio Peer Supporter](#) training and to clarify the status of previously certified peers as OhioMHAS continues to work to support this emerging service.

The Ohio Peer Supporter Training curriculum was developed through the [BRSS-TACS Policy Academy workgroup](#) and with technical assistance from SAMHSA. This curriculum works with persons in recovery from substance use disorders and/or mental illness and values lived experience as a tool to assist others in the recovery process. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, identify their lived experience, and complete the 52-hour mandatory training which consists of a 12-hour online pre-course training and 40-hour in-person core training. Once the training is completed, the applicant can take the Ohio Peer Supporter exam. A passing score is required on this exam to achieve the Peer Supporter Certificate. OhioMHAS will provide a Certificate of Achievement and Completion to individuals who have completed the training and obtained a passing score on the exam. Since the first training in August 2013, 164 individuals have earned the OhioMHAS certificate.

In addition, please note the following:

- Recognition as a peer supporter may be in the form of a Mental Health Peer Specialist certificate that was issued through Ohio Empowerment Coalition (OEC) prior to the development of the integrated peer supporter curriculum in August 2013 and/or the OhioMHAS Peer Supporter certificate obtained through the Ohio Peer Supporter Training. Mental Health Peer Specialist certificates are renewable through [OEC](#).
- Peer recovery coaches continue to be valued and recognized as part of the peer support initiative. These individuals may be trained through Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) Model and/or receive the Ohio Peer Supporter Training and obtain the OhioMHAS Peer Supporter certificate.
- The use of the Ohio Peer Supporter Training curriculum is strongly encouraged. Currently, OhioMHAS does not have the statutory authority to mandate the use of a specific training curriculum or to credential peer supporters. In the event OhioMHAS receives this authority, stakeholder recommendations for a grandfathering process for current certificate holders will be considered.

A great deal has been accomplished to advance and value the work of individuals working in a peer capacity. I look forward to working with local communities to establish or strengthen peer support programs. Please direct all inquiries to peersupport@mha.ohio.gov should you have questions or if you would like additional information.