

Doors to Wellbeing Quarterly

Newsletter

NEW PILLARS OF PEER SUPPORT WEBSITE

SAMHSA REPORT CALLS FOR 4693% INCREASE OF THE PEER SUPPORT WORKFORCE

READ MORE ON PAGE 2

The Pillars of Peer Support provides ongoing resources to promote Peer Support Services in state mental health systems of care. The original Pillars of Peer Support Summits brought together nationally-recognized experts from across the U.S. to identify fundamental elements that greatly facilitate the use of Peer Support Services. Each Summit produced a unique toolkit for building a foundation for the successful implementation of peer support services.



CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE WEBSITE!

The name Pillars of Peer Support was chosen in 2009 by the first Peer Support Summit members, as the word Pillar means person, structure, and resource essential to hold up something.

<https://www.pillarsofpeersupport.org/>



BEHAVIORAL HEALTHWORKFORCE REPORT

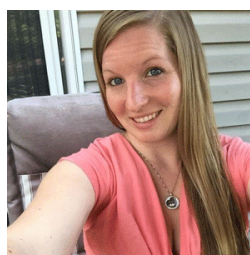
In 2020, SAMHSA conducted research and published the [Behavioral Health Workforce Report](#) that recommends peer support as a critical component to all models of treatment. Millions of Americans have unmet needs within mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) care. The Report outlines evidence-based models of care and the composition of the teams that provide that care. Of the 13 mental health and 3 Substance Use Disorders models of care described, ALL of them recommend at least one Peer Support Specialist as part of the care team. These models include both adult and children/youth treatment care teams.

Through data collected from the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health, in 2017, the number of Peer Support Specialists in the behavioral health workforce nationwide is approximately **23,507**. Doors to Wellbeing (D2W) recognizes that this number is significantly lower than the actual number of peer specialists in the workforce. Not only is this data a few years old and only includes peer specialists that are certified, there currently is no actual method for capturing this data on a national level. Each state has different methods for accounting for the number of peers in the workforce. Some states have no method for calculating this information.

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and implement a national campaign to educate the public about the need for behavioral health providers and encourage students to pursue careers in behavioral health.
2. Provide funding to health care practitioner education programs to embed information on care and treatment of serious mental illness and substance use disorders into standard undergraduate curriculum.
3. Encourage clinical placements/practicums in mental health and substance use disorder settings to increase the knowledge base of practitioners in behavioral health services.
4. Increase loan forgiveness programs for all behavioral health specialties to encourage entry to the field.
5. Increase the peer professional workforce and make these providers an integral component of behavioral health services. Require insurers to reimburse for peer professional services.

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Article written by Amey Dettmer, Doors to Wellbeing's Program Manager.

The report details that in total **1,126,845** Peer Support Specialists are needed to meet the needs of behavioral health service recipients. The report calls for an outstanding percentage of **25% of the entire behavioral health workforce to be Peer Support Specialists.**

SAMHSA notices the critical importance of peer supporters as part of the behavioral health workforce, in both adult and youth serving systems. One of the five recommendations this report outlines is to; ***“Increase the peer professional workforce and make these providers an integral component of behavioral health services. Require insurers to reimburse for peer professional services.”*** As a system, a lot of work needs to occur for Peer Support Specialists to exist **in the way that is needed.** A **4693%** increase of the peer support workforce is recommended to adequately meet the needs of the people of the United States. D2W, as a National Consumer Technical Assistance Center, aims to support these efforts through providing peer specialist education, implementation strategies, and resources.

[Click here to view this document!](#)

Citation: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). *Behavioral Health Workforce Report.*

PEER SUPPORT PRACTICE GUIDELINES SCAVENGER HUNT!

Match a guideline to a value and practice using the *National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters*

Example:

Guideline: Peer supporters respect an individual’s right to choose the pathways to recovery individuals believe will work best for them.

Answer

Value: *Peer Supporters are Open-Minded*

Practice: *Withhold Judgment About Others*

Guideline: Peer supporters help those they support explore areas in need of change for themselves and others.

Guideline: Peer supporters understand that even though others may share similar life experiences, the range of responses may vary considerably.

Guideline: Peer supporters encourage peers to fulfill a fundamental human need - - to be able to give as well as receive.

Guideline: Peer supporters respect the rights of those they support to choose or cease support services or use the peer support services from a different peer supporter.

Guideline: Peer supporters practice patience, kindness, warmth and dignity with everyone they interact with in their work. 3

[Click here to view the document!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROJECTS

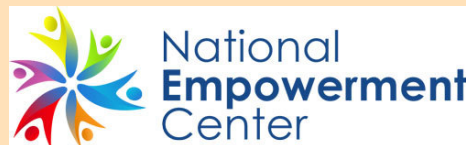
Doors to Wellbeing encourages all young adult peer specialists (those 30 and under) to consider contacting Kate Fox, a doctoral student at Drexel University, who is doing an advocacy project with the [Temple University Collaborative on Community Inclusion](#) and Doors to Wellbeing to create guidance for behavioral health systems and organizations on how to be more welcoming of the young adult peer specialist perspectives and contributions in program and policy development and implementation. Any ideas you have would be welcome. Please contact Kate at kef94@drexel.edu if you are interested in sharing your thoughts.



COLLABORATION CORNER

A key to this work is collaboration! Check out the amazing work of our fellow National Technical Assistance Centers!

Click on a logo for more information!



Peer Specialist Webinar Series

Check out our monthly webinars - last Tuesday of each month!

Click here to view our webinars

Doors to To Wellbeing is a Program of the Copeland Center



LOOK FORWARD TO OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER! ...OCTOBER 2021

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