

## **WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT? <sup>1</sup>**

Offering and receiving help, based on

- Shared understanding
- Respect
- Mutual empowerment

Between people in similar situations

### **Peer Support is Recognized as an Evidence Based Practice**

Research<sup>2</sup> suggests that peer support has a transformative impact on both individuals and systems.

The data shows that peer support:

- Improves quality of life
- Improves engagement and satisfaction with services and supports
- Decreases hospitalizations and inpatient stays
- Lowers overall costs of services
- Improves whole health, including physical health

### **Peer Support Specialists**

- People who have been successful in the recovery process and who have received training to help others experiencing similar situations.
- Through shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment, peer support workers help people become and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of relapse.
- Peer support services can effectively extend the reach of treatment beyond the clinical setting into the everyday environment of those seeking a successful, sustained recovery process.

### **What do Peer Support Workers do?**

- Inspire hope that people can and do recover.

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<sup>1</sup> [SAMHSA Definition](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Mental Health America](#)

- Walk with people on their recovery journeys.
- Dispel myths about what it means to have a mental health condition or substance use disorder.
- Provide self--help education and link people to tools and resources; and
- Support people in identifying their goals, hopes, and dreams, and creating a roadmap for getting there.

### **Peer Respite Centers<sup>3</sup>**

A peer respite is a voluntary, short-term, overnight program that provides community-based, non-clinical crisis support to help people find new understanding and ways to move forward. It operates 24 hours per day in a homelike environment. Successful peer respites are currently operating in California, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

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<sup>3</sup> [Directory of Peer Respites](#)