

Peer Recovery Services in the Emergency Department

What is a peer support specialist?

Peer support specialists, also known as Certified Recovery Mentors or *peers*, are people trained to provide recovery support based on their own lived experience of substance use and/or mental health disorder and recovery.

PEER SUPPORT SPECIALISTS



Engage people in collaborative and caring relationships



Provide tools and information related to harm reduction, health, and wellness



Share lived experiences of recovery



Help people manage crises



Support recovery planning



Support collaboration and teamwork



Link to resources, services, and supports



Promote leadership and advocacy

What is a peer support specialist NOT?

Peer support specialists offer a very specific service so it is important to know what they can offer and what is outside the scope of their role. Common misconceptions incorrectly equate a peer support specialist with an:

untrained volunteer



counselor or therapist



case manager



12-step program sponsor



What are the peer certifications in Oregon?

The 3 types of peer certification in Oregon are based on experience, education, and training.

PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST (PSS)

CERTIFIED RECOVERY MENTOR (CRM)

PEER WELLNESS SPECIALIST (PWS)

- Completion of OHA-approved training program (40 hours PSS and CRM; 80 hours PWS)
- Minimum 2 years recovery
- Pass a criminal background check
- Continuing education and recertification every 3 years

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What are the benefits of peer support services?

Most published studies indicate that peers promotes positive outcomes for consumers of mental health and substance use recovery services.^{1,2}

PEER SUPPORT IS ASSOCIATED WITH



Reduced inpatient service use



Improved relationships with providers



Increased engagement with healthcare and other services



Higher levels of empowerment









Reduced stigma associated with seeking and providing care



Higher levels of hopefulness for recovery

Why should we bring peer support services into our ED?

Peer support specialists offer uniquely specialized contributions for people with substance-related concerns:

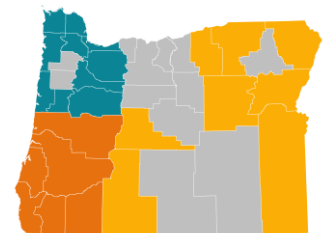
-  **RAPPORT BUILDING**
Because peers have their own lived experiences, they can help build trust that encourages engagement in other support services.
-  **TRAUMA-INFORMED, PATIENT-CENTERED SUPPORT**
Peers are a particularly valuable resource for people who feel judged, discriminated against, or unwelcome in medical settings.
-  **BRIDGING TREATMENT GAPS**
Peers can serve as a connection between hospitals and continued recovery care by setting up appointments and supports.
-  **HARM REDUCTION SUPPORTS**
Peers can provide overdose prevention support, naloxone, and linkage to safer use supplies to save lives and reduce repeat ED visits.
-  **REDUCING STIGMA**
Peers can educate hospital staff about recovery by sharing their experiences, offering trainings, and cultivating relationships with staff.
-  **ADDITIONAL ED SUPPORTS**
Peers can assist case managers and social workers with discharge planning and provide warm handoffs to community services.

How do I connect my ED to peer services in Oregon?

PRIME+ operates in 24 of 36 counties. Contact the statewide implementation team to connect with a local PRIME+ team:

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To see a list of PRIME+ sites and other overdose-related initiatives by county click the map or use a browser to search for "oha county service summary"