



Doors to Wellbeing Quarterly

Newsletter

COMING UP IN 2024!

Navigating Authentic Advocacy: Uplifting Black and Queer Communities By: Kris Locus

**January 30, 2024 2pm ET/1pm CT/12pm MT/
11am PT**

Black and Queer individuals experience unique challenges and systemic barriers that have significant impact on their mental health, well-being, access and quality of behavioral health care received, and more. In this webinar, we will gain a broader understanding of the stigmas, stereotypes and systemic barriers experienced by this community. Explore tangible strategies for how to engage in authentic advocacy that promotes equity, inclusion, justice, and diversity and the pivotal role of peer support. Join us in unraveling the complexities and fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment.

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PEER SUPPORT SUPERVISION IN PA

Recovery InSight, Inc. is a provider of mobile Peer Support Services in the Capital Region of Pennsylvania. We hold the distinction of being Pennsylvania's first stand-alone provider of Peer Support Services completely owned and operated by and for individuals with mental health diagnoses. Since 2010, we have passionately upheld our mission: to be involved in the process of making positive changes in people's lives by providing support with the highest integrity and compassion to individuals working towards recovery, by individuals in recovery, with similar experiences. We focus on the person and not the illness.

A strengths-based understanding of what it means to supervise peer professionals came quite naturally to Recovery InSight, as we have striven to staff the entire organization with employees who have personally experienced mental health challenges. We firmly believe the best practice for supervision of peer professions includes supervision by fellow peer professionals, preferably those providing direct support services.

Individual supervision of the peer workforce typically focuses on three areas: employee support and wellness, providing effective support to individuals using Peer Support Services, and the administrative tasks focused on documentation and meeting all internal, state, and local requirements.

PEER SUPPORT SUPERVISION CONT.



Focusing on employee wellness is foundational. This understanding does not stem from concern that peer professionals, who can only qualify for their role through their own personal challenges, are somehow more prone to “un-wellness” than other employees. It is widely recognized that employees who experience wellness are typically more productive, less prone to compassion fatigue or burnout, tend to become long-term employees, among other benefits. Do we routinely ask our employees, “How are you doing?” Do we ask, “What can we do to support you?” It is our hope that all organizations, both within and outside of the helping professions, incorporate similar workplace conversations. Peer supervision often aligns with the core principles of peer support; that is, we often offer a bit of peer support to the peer supporters. By helping peer professionals recognize their own strengths and identify what is contributing to success in their personal wellness and job performance, supervisors are modeling the very skills peer professionals use in their daily work—further strengthening those skills. Supervisors are responsible to establish an appropriate level of mutuality with peer professionals, while maintaining a professional balance between authority and “peerness.” Again, some of these tasks are mirrored in the relationships peer professionals create with those they support.

Supervision of the peer workforce also includes providing feedback on how best to support individuals using the service. This is a time to offer ideas on available resources, tips on boundary-setting, role-playing ways to have potentially difficult conversations with people using services, as well as other training opportunities and recommendations. Supervisors must be skilled listeners who validate the feelings and experiences of peer professionals. Recognizing and addressing some of the common pitfalls of most helping professions, such as over identification and difficulty recognizing when the words and actions of those receiving support have little to do with the peer professional (learning not to take things personally), is extremely important. Supervisors are excellent in-the-field resources to help peer professionals navigate challenging situations, demonstrate effective communication, and should generally be available to offer in-person support when needed and as appropriate.

Additionally, meeting all regulatory requirements is an integral component of supervision of the peer workforce. Supervisors review documentation for person-centered and strengths-based language, evidence of shared decision-making, and adherence to ethical codes of conduct. Similar to providing Peer Support Services, peer professionals are offered feedback that encourages personal growth and empowerment. Supervision that builds on the strengths of employees leads to more confident, resilient, and productive employees.

Supervisors play an integral role within organizations that offer Peer Support Services. They offer feedback, support, guidance, reassurance, education, and opportunities for growth. Supervision should mirror the core principles of and ethical guidelines of Peer Support Services, further reinforcing and modeling the role of peer professionals.

Click here to view our previously recorded webinar titled, *"What is Peer Support and How Do I Supervise a Peer Support Specialist?"* presented by Tiffany Elliot.



Article written by January Abel

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR NTAC NATIONAL SUPPORTED EDUCATION DIRECTORY!

What is supported education?

Supported education is an approach designed to address the higher education goals of individuals with psychiatric disabilities and/or mental health challenges and support their success in post-secondary settings like community colleges, technical schools, and universities.

Supported education can look different in different contexts, and there are a variety of approaches to helping students with mental health conditions succeed in higher education. Some programs are embedded within specific colleges or universities, while others are free-standing. Some focus on necessary classroom accommodations, some include linkages to care, and some even involve peer support. Whatever a supported education program looks like, the thing they all have in common is the goal of helping students succeed and enjoy the many benefits that accompany getting a degree or post-secondary certification.

The five SAMHSA-funded national consumer and consumer-supporter TA centers came together to create this directory of supported education programs and services for individuals experiencing psychiatric disabilities and/or mental health challenges across the United States and outlying territories. It is a great place to start if you are looking for programs that support the educational success of students with serious mental health conditions.

National Supported Education Programs



To read more about supported education, or to view our NTAC National Supported Education Directory, click [here](#)!

To view our previously recorded webinar titled, "*Strategies for Enhancing the Success for Peer Support on College Campuses*" presented by Kelly Davis and Mark Salzer, click [here](#).

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG ADULT PEER SUPPORTERS!



Temple University College of Public Health is looking for help to learn how young peer supporters can be best supported on the job.



You can scan the QR code to the left, or click here to open the survey!

For completion of the survey, you may be entered into a raffle to win cash prizes!

For more information, contact: Elizabeth Thomas (elizabeth.thomas@temple.edu) or Haley Payne (haleypayne097@gmail.com)



**DOORS TO
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**LOOK FORWARD
TO OUR NEXT
NEWSLETTER!
...APRIL 2024**



*Doors to To Wellbeing is a Program of
the Copeland Center*

Copeland Center
FOR WELLNESS AND RECOVERY

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N.A.P.S HAS A NEW JOB BOARD!



The National Association of Peer Support Professionals (N.A.P.S.) recently launched a new job board for peer support professionals seeking employment and employers seeking to hire peer support professionals across the United States.

While N.A.P.S. has hosted an online job board for many years, the new job board is a significant improvement to what had been offered by the association in the past, meeting the goals of easier search for job seekers, ease of use by employers, and improved access for both job seekers and employers.

**The new N.A.P.S. job board can be accessed at
peersupportworks.org/jobs.**

Peer Specialist Webinar Series

**Join us for our monthly
webinars - last Tuesday of each
month!**

Click here to view our webinars