

## Follow Up Questions Asked During *Power of Peer Supports Part 1*

What do you do when you live in a neighborhood that has limited mental health resources?

- Clearly define mental health resources i.e. is it information, supports or treatment resources?
- Reach out to communities who may have resources
- Utilize on-line or nationwide resources
- Encourage a community center faith-based organization to invest,
- Identify hospitals or medical facilities who could support these efforts
- Connect with state led partners to ensure there are no resources in your neighborhood.

As a CPSS what else can I do to help my clients. Those that I see I help them learning their diagnosis and coping skills and I also help them with resources in the county. Is there anything else I can do?

- Depending on the organization you may work for because you need to follow their guidelines first
- Look at hosting support groups or activities to promote social connectedness, Community meet ups, alternative therapies such as dance, music, art or other things that make people feel good and express themselves.
- Education to the community to help those understand mental illness, recovery and relapse

Is there a national Certification program?

- Mental Health America is implementing a Nationwide Certification Program but there have not been specific guidelines across all of the States.

Is peer support only billable for substance use or mental health or both?

- I am not sure where else you would need to bill for services. But as far as I am aware of those are the only two areas I am aware of.

Does peer support specialist have to be a part of an agency?

- For billable services yes. But peer support can happen anywhere such as AA groups, NA groups, Gambling Anonymous, etc that there isn't a pay structure in place.

How do more facilities get on medicaid and medicare ...it is impossible to get on the panel any suggestions as there is a need where I am living.

- This is managed by States who follow federal guidelines. You would have to connect to your State Dept to identify the process of this.

I am a Forensic Peer Advocate and a Certified Peer Recovery Peer Advocate, can you explain the training that your Peer Advocates received?

- This is better explained through the second segment with Jill Mays with GA DBHDD

How much should I share of my story and keep healthy boundaries?

- Recovery should always be the end in mind. Recognize we are all human but the choices we make to manage our wellness should always be the foundation of your story. Questions to consider:
  - Is it helpful or harmful to share?
  - Will this improve the stigma associated with mental illness?

- Will this help my audience make better decisions about caring for others, accessing behavioral health services or being compassionate to your fellow man?
- Is this critical to my recovery journey?

Are there educational requirements for the peer support specialists and are they allowed to have prior criminal records?

- This differs from State to State. For forensic peers they have to have a criminal record. GA has a process in place to identify eligibility to become a peer. You can learn more at Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network at [www.gmhcn.org](http://www.gmhcn.org)