

The Road to Recovery 2013

Peer Recovery Support: Leveraging Personal Experience in Helping Others Discussion Guide

The show will be filmed in a panel format with free discussion between the show host and other panelists. This Discussion Guide is not to be considered as a script. The information and resources provided in this Discussion Guide are intended to assist panelists in show preparation. The questions identified in each panel section will be asked by the show host. Panelists will respond to not only questions asked by the host, but will also comment and add to information presented by other panelists in a discussion format. Panelists will bring to the show their own keen anecdotal experiences as well as references from scientific studies from the field.

Show Description: Peer recovery support in behavioral health is a powerful and essential component of the recovery process. More recently, however, the recognition of the importance of peer support has led to more structured and intentional applications of this recovery support approach. For example, many peer "recovery support specialists" and "recovery coaches" have received training on the most effective ways to help peers in recovery. Use of trained individuals along with other strategies for providing peer support is found in both mental health and substance use settings. Peer support is especially effective within certain groups such as military service members and veterans, young adults, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations. In some applications, online technologies are used to facilitate peer support processes. This show will also address the use of peer support in recovery community centers and recovery living settings.

Panel 1: Peer Recovery Support—A Critical Aspect of the Recovery Process

Key Questions:

- 1. What is the definition of peer recovery support?
- 2. What distinguishes peer recovery support from other approaches to supporting persons in recovery from mental and substance use disorders?
- 3. What types of support do peers provide to persons in recovery?
- 4. What specific activities take place when one peer provides support to another peer?
- 5. How is peer recovery support consistent with SAMHSA's new working definition of recovery and with the idea of recovery-oriented systems of care?

Definition of Peer Recovery Support

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, *What are Peer Recovery Support Services?* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 09-4454. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009.

http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4454/SMA09-4454.pdf

http://store.samhsa.gov/product/What-Are-Peer-Recovery-Support-Services-/SMA09-4454

- The peer recovery support services developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Recovery Community Services Program help people become and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of relapse. Because they are designed and delivered by peers who have been successful in the recovery process, they embody a powerful message of hope, as well as a wealth of experiential knowledge. The services can effectively extend the reach of treatment beyond the clinical setting into the everyday environment of those seeking to achieve or sustain recovery.
- In a peer-helping-peer service alliance, a *peer leader* in stable recovery provides social support services to a *peer* who is seeking help in establishing or maintaining his or her recovery. Both parties are helped by the interaction as the recovery of each is strengthened.

<u>Distinguishing Characteristics of Peer Recovery Support</u>

Source: SAMHSA Webinar Presentation, *Best Practices in Peer Support and Peer Recovery Coaching*, broadcast on March 28, 2013.

http://brsstacs.center4si.com/ppts/BRSSTACSwebinar March28.pdf

- Peer recovery support emphasizes mutuality vs. hierarchy. The peer leader is not "above" the
 individual receiving the peer support. This approach reflects a key premise in peer recovery
 support that "we are all in this together."
- To underscore mutuality vs. hierarchy, labels used for the person providing the services avoid terms found in conventional treatment programs such as "counselor" or "case manager." Rather, the terms used are "peer leader," "peer mentor," "peer guide," "peer specialist," or "peer recovery coach." Similarly, the person in recovery receiving peer services is referred to as a "peer" as opposed to a "client" or "patient.".
- In peer recovery support, the participants share lived experiences and tell their stories. The
 objective for all participants is to maintain "the four S's" (to remain Sane, Safe, Stable, and
 Sober).

Types of Helpful Support Provided in Peer Recovery Support Services

Source: Kaplan, L., *The Role of Recovery Support Services in Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care.* DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 08-4315. Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2008.

http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/pdf/SAMHSARecoveryWhitePaper.pdf

 Emotional support—demonstrations of empathy, caring, and concern in such activities as peer mentoring and recovery coaching, as well as recovery support groups

- Informational support—provision of health and wellness information, educational assistance, and help in acquiring new skills, ranging from life skills to employment readiness and citizenship restoration (e.g., voting rights, driver's license)
- Instrumental support—concrete assistance in task accomplishment, especially with stressful or unpleasant tasks (e.g., filling out applications, obtaining public benefits) or providing supports such as child care or transportation to support group meetings
- Affiliation support—opportunity to establish positive social connections with others in recovery so as to learn social and recreational skills in an alcohol- and drug-free environment

Specific Activities in Peer Recovery Support

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, *What are Peer Recovery Support Services?* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 09-4454. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009. http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4454/SMA09-4454.pdf
http://store.samhsa.gov/product/What-Are-Peer-Recovery-Support-Services-/SMA09-4454

Specific activities that take place in peer recovery support include:

- Peer mentoring or coaching: The peer leader encourages, motivates, and supports the peer
 who is seeking to establish or strengthen his or her recovery. This may include tasks such as
 setting recovery goals, developing recovery action plans, solving problems directly related to
 recovery (such as finding sober housing, making new friends, finding new uses of spare time,
 and improving one's job skills).
- Peer recovery resource connecting: The peer leader connects the peer with professional and nonprofessional services and resources available in the community that can help meet his or her individual needs. The peer leader often has had personal experience navigating the service systems and accessing the resources to which a referral is being made.
- Facilitating and leading recovery groups: Many peer leaders facilitate or lead recovery-oriented group activities, which may be support groups, educational sessions, or a combination of support and education. Typically in these groups, participants share personal stories and engage in collective problem-solving.
- Building community: Peer leaders often organize recovery-oriented activities to assist peers in
 making new friends. These activities may include participation on sports teams, family-centered
 holiday celebrations, and payday get-togethers that are alcohol-free. These activities provide a
 sense of acceptance and belonging to a group, as well as the opportunity to practice new social
 skills.

Consistency with New Working Definition of Recovery

Source: SAMHSA Website

http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/1112223420.aspx

- Peer recovery support is consistent with a new working definition of recovery from mental and substance use disorders that was announced by SAMHSA in December 2011. This working definition incorporates the idea that each individual in recovery works to improve his or her own health and well-being. The definition was the product of a year-long effort by SAMHSA and a wide range of partners in the behavioral health care community and other fields to develop a working definition of recovery that captures the essential, common experiences of those recovering from mental disorders and substance use disorders, along with major guiding principles that support the recovery definition. SAMHSA led this effort as part of its Recovery Support Strategic Initiative.
- **Definition of recovery from mental disorders and substance use disorders:** A process of change through which individuals work to improve their own health and well-being, live a self-directed life, and strive to achieve their full potential.

Goal of Recovery

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Leading Change: A Plan for SAMHSA's Roles and Actions 2011-2014.* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 11-4629. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2011.

http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Leading-Change-A-Plan-for-SAMHSA-s-Roles-and-Actions-2011-2014/SMA11-4629

- The goal of recovery is exemplified through a life that includes:
 - Health—Overcoming or managing one's disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way
 - o **Home—**A stable and safe place to live that supports recovery
 - Purpose—Meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income, and resources to participate in society
 - Community—Relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope

<u>Persons in Recovery—Valuable Members of the Recovery Community</u>
Source: SAMHSA Recovery Month Kit — *Partner with the Recovery Community*http://recoverymonth.gov/Recovery-Month-Kit/Targeted-Outreach.aspx

- Members of the recovery community are important role models for people in recovery, and so are their family members, helping to promote the effectiveness of intervention, support, treatment, and the hope of recovery.
- People in the recovery community have experienced mental and/or substance use disorders
 themselves, and therefore are likely familiar with the challenges and successes a person in
 recovery may face. This understanding enables the recovery community to identify warning
 signs in someone in need, share their own stories to promote recovery (including successes),
 and help themselves and others recognize signs of possible relapse and seek appropriate
 support.

The recovery community plays an instrumental role in other people's recovery journeys and has
a unique opportunity to educate individuals with a mental health and/or substance use disorder
about the different treatment approaches available, the effectiveness of treatment, available
recovery support services, and how to sustain long-term recovery.

Source: Mental Health Foundation, Recovery

http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/R/recovery/

It is important for the recovery community to share what that journey entails. With specific
knowledge and personal expectations, people pursuing recovery can advance on a path that is
best suited for their overall health and well-being. Examples of recovery inspire people to look
beyond mere survival and existence and to map out their own unique pathway.

Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care (ROSCs)

Source: Kaplan, L., *The Role of Recovery Support Services in Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care.* DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 08-4315. Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2008.

http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/pdf/SAMHSARecoveryWhitePaper.pdf

Peer recovery support is consistent with ROSCs in that it recognizes the need for ongoing support after initial treatment and is person-centered and self-directed (see definition of ROSCs below):

- ROSCs support person-centered and self-directed approaches to care that build on the strengths
 and resilience of individuals, families, and communities to take responsibility for their sustained
 health, wellness, and recovery from alcohol and drug problems. ROSCs offer a comprehensive
 menu of services and supports that can be combined and readily adjusted to meet the
 individual's needs and chosen pathway to recovery.
- In recovery-oriented systems of care, the expectation is that contact with the client will continue after the acute stage of treatment is completed and that recovery support services are extended to family members and to people who may not have remained in treatment.

Panel 2: Implementing Peer Recovery Support

Key Questions:

- 1. How has SAMHSA's Recovery Community Services Program helped to promote and implement peer support services in the field of behavioral health?
- 2. At what points in the treatment and recovery process are peer support services best applied to help persons with mental and substance use disorders?
- 3. In what organizational settings are peer recovery support services commonly being implemented?
- 4. How does peer support promote inclusion and social acceptance of persons with mental or substance use disorders?
- 5. What work is being done to integrate peer support into mental health and substance abuse systems of care supported by Medicaid?

SAMHSA's Recovery Community Services Program

Source: Kaplan, L., *The Role of Recovery Support Services in Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care*. DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 08-4315. Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2008.

http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/pdf/SAMHSARecoveryWhitePaper.pdf

- The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) initiated the Recovery Community Support Program in 1998 to help the recovery community organize members to participate in public policy discussions and to develop campaigns to combat stigma. In 2003, the name was changed to the Recovery Community Services Program (RCSP), and CSAT began providing funding for grantees to develop and provide innovative, peer-based recovery support services in community settings. These services extend the continuum of recovery by offering strengths-based services that emphasize social support as a factor in initiating and maintaining lifestyle change.
- The primary target population for the RCSP is people with a history of alcohol or drug problems who are in or seeking recovery, along with their family members and significant others. People in recovery design and, as peer service providers, deliver peer recovery support services.
- Successful peer recovery support programs offer clients a network for building strong and
 mutually supportive relationships with formal systems in their communities (i.e., treatment
 programs, housing, transportation, justice, education). Peer services are designed and delivered
 primarily by individuals in recovery to meet the targeted community's recovery support needs,
 as the community defines them.

Source: SAMHSA Recovery Community Services Program Supplements Request for Application (RFA) http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/2011/ti 11 004.aspx

- The purpose of this program is to deliver peer-to-peer recovery support services that help
 prevent relapse and promote sustained recovery from alcohol and drug use disorders. RCSP is
 intended to support peer leaders from the recovery community in providing recovery support
 services to people in recovery and their family members, and to foster the growth of
 communities of recovery that will help individuals and families achieve and sustain long-term
 recovery.
- Applicants must identify at least one area of additional focus related to the provision of peer-topeer recovery support services. Applicants may choose one or more of the following areas/populations of focus:
 - o Trauma-informed care
 - o Educational/job-training skills
 - Members of the military/military families
 - Those living with HIV/AIDS
 - o Individuals who are homeless
 - Adolescents
 - Re-entry populations
 - Co-occurring populations

Application of Peer Support at Stages of Treatment and Recovery Process

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, *What are Peer Recovery Support Services?* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 09-4454. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009. http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4454/SMA09-4454.pdf

- One strength of peer recovery support services has been their adaptability to many stages and
 modalities of recovery, as well as to different service settings and organizational contexts. This
 adaptability makes them an effective vehicle for extending support for recovery beyond the
 treatment system and into the communities where people live and to people following different
 pathways to recovery. Peer support services can meet the needs of people at different stages of
 the recovery process. The services may:
 - Precede formal treatment, strengthening a peer's motivation for change
 - o Accompany treatment, providing a community connection during treatment
 - o Follow treatment, supporting relapse prevention
 - Be delivered apart from treatment to someone who cannot enter the formal treatment system or chooses not to do so
- Furthermore, peer services can provide social support within the context of many different
 pathways to recovery, including pathways that are predominantly religious, spiritual, or secular;
 involve medication assistance; or focus on cultural survival and renewal as avenues to recovery.

Application of Peer Support in Varied Organizational Settings

Source: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, *What are Peer Recovery Support Services?* HHS Publication No. (SMA) 09-4454. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009. http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4454/SMA09-4454.pdf

- RCSP grant projects deliver peer services in a variety of settings, including recovery community
 organizations, recovery centers, churches, child welfare organizations, recovery homes, drug
 courts, prerelease jail and prison programs, parole and probation programs, behavioral health
 agencies, and HIV/AIDS and other medical or social service centers.
- Peer leaders work in urban and rural communities with many different populations, including
 those defined by age (e.g., adolescents, elders), race, or ethnicity (e.g., Asian/Pacific Islander
 American, Latino or Hispanic American, Native American, Caucasian); gender (e.g., women); or
 by co-existing conditions (e.g., HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, mental health disorders,
 homelessness, or a criminal record).
- Some RCSP projects are free-standing nonprofit recovery community organizations operated by members of the recovery community. Others reside within a host agency. These host agencies include those involved in the field of substance use disorders, including treatment providers; agencies that focus on the continuum of social service needs of specific populations, including those related to substance use; and agencies with a primary focus on challenges such as HIV/AIDS, post incarceration re-entry to the community, or children at risk of abuse or neglect.

• Each type of organizational context has its own culture and perspective on substance use disorders and recovery and presents its own opportunities and challenges in the establishment and operation of a peer recovery support service program.

<u>Peer Support as Related to Social Inclusion for Individuals with Mental and Substance Use Disorders</u>
Source: SAMHSA's Resource Center to Promote <u>A</u>cceptance, Dignity and <u>S</u>ocial Inclusion Associated with Mental Health (ADS Center)

http://promoteacceptance.samhsa.gov/update/archive/april2011.aspx#letter

- Access to peer support is a fundamental element of social inclusion for individuals with mental
 health and substance use conditions. The term "peers" in this context refers to individuals who
 are in recovery from mental health and substance use issues and have valuable knowledge to
 share about their journeys of recovery. Peers can be very supportive since they have "been
 there" and serve as living examples that individuals can and do recover from mental illness and
 addiction.
- Peers also serve as advocates and support others who may experience discrimination and prejudice. As leaders in their communities, peers promote positive change to ensure dignity and respect for individuals in recovery and full access to needed resources including health, social, economic, and cultural systems that promote recovery. By promoting a broader concept of recovery from mental health and substance use conditions that engages all aspects of community life, peers are primary drivers of a social inclusion perspective.

Integration of Peer Support Services into Mental Health Systems of Care

Source: Pillars of Peer Support Website

http://www.pillarsofpeersupport.org/about.php

- The Pillars of Peer Support Services initiative is designed to develop and foster the use of Medicaid funding to support Peer Support Services in state mental health systems of care. Between 2009 and 2011, three important Summits on Pillars of Peer Support Services brought together nationally-recognized experts and stakeholders from across the United States to identify and create consensus around factors that greatly facilitate the use of Peer Support Services as a valuable tool to support recovery from mental illnesses among individuals served in state systems. Each Summit generated a report which is available for viewing on the Pillars of Peer Support website.
- Pillars of Peer Support Summits have focused on key topics related to the expanded use of peer support, including a) lessons learned and best practices among states that provide formal training and certification of peer providers, with the goal being to improve state support in the development of a strong and vital peer workforce; b) training peer specialists in the principles and practices of Whole Health recovery; and c) the role of peer support in the integration of behavioral health and physical health systems of care.
- Participants in the Pillars Summits have been recruited and invited from their state behavioral health authorities. Each Summit generated a report which is available for viewing on the Pillars of Peer Support website.

Panel 3: Training Individuals to Provide Peer Recovery Support

Key Questions:

- 1. What training is appropriate for individuals who want to provide peer recovery support? What are some examples of peer support programs and initiatives?
- 2. Are there any states that have established formal training or certification for providing peer recovery support to persons with mental or substance use disorders?
- 3. Are there training opportunities for members of the general public who want to support others at a time of emotional crisis? What is "Emotional CPR"?
- 4. How can peer support training be a critical learning experience for participants?
- 5. Are there training opportunities available nationally that focus on peer support in mental health?

Training of Recovery Coaches in California

Source: Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Weekly, *Coaching youth in recovery*, by Heather Shamieh, Volume 24 Number 32, August 20, 2012, Print ISSN 1042-1394, Online ISSN 1556-7591 http://www.alcoholismdrugabuseweekly.com/feature-detail/coaching-youth-in-recovery.aspx

- Supported by funding from an Access to Recovery grant from SAMHSA, the California
 Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs hosted a three-day event hosted by the Altarum
 Institute to provide recovery coach training to young adults. The purpose of the session was to
 develop a learning community of recovery coaches and provide basic skills to participants in
 recovery coaching methodologies. Many of the participants were in recovery themselves.
- The focus of the training was on helping "coaches" develop improved life skills with a recovery orientation. Participants replicated a one-on-one coaching environment by role playing in helping persons in recovery, outlining recovery goals and ways to achieve them.

Peer Support Training at Visions of Hope Arizona

Source: Visions of Hope Website

http://phxhope.org/peer-support-training/

- Visions of Hope Arizona offers training to people who have experienced behavioral health challenges and are ready to use their recovery to offer hope and encouragement to others.
- The Visions of Hope Peer Support Training assists participants in rediscovering who they are and becoming who they want to be. In the process of learning about themselves, participants learn how to effectively help others rediscover their path.
- Peer Support Specialists are an important addition to a Care Team. Since Peer Support Specialists have "lived" experiences, their perspective can be very hopeful and proof that recovery is possible.

North Carolina's Peer Support Specialist Program

Source: Peer Support Specialist Program Website

http://pss-sowo.unc.edu/

- The North Carolina Peer Support Specialist Program is an initiative of the North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services.
- Peer Support Specialists are defined as people living in recovery with mental illness and/or substance abuse and who provide support to others who can benefit from their lived experiences. The North Carolina Certified Peer Support Specialist Program provides acknowledgment that the peer has met a set of requirements necessary to provide support to individuals with mental health or substance abuse issues.
- The goal of the Peer Support Specialist Program is to develop a qualified Peer Support Specialist
 workforce that has the support, access, credibility, competency, respect, and the valued role
 within the mental health and substance abuse service delivery system to positively impact the
 lives of individuals experiencing mental health and addiction challenges.
- Individuals with lived experience have an essential role to play in the public mental health/substance abuse service system and are considered peer supporters. The roles that are created for peers within the service system should fully utilize the lived experience of the peer supporter, viewing it as a credential that the individual brings to the work that they do.
- Guiding principles for the program are as follows:
 - Lived experience is necessary, and on-going skill development for peer supporters is essential.
 - The recovery environment of the workplace is fundamental to the success of peer supporters and recovery for the individuals served.
 - Peer supporters are highly valued members of an agency; therefore, they are fully integrated members of the mental health/substance abuse service delivery system.
 - Equality and respect between peer supporters and traditional professionals must be reciprocal.
 - O Choice and self-determination are important components in everyone's recovery, including individuals receiving and providing services.
 - o Recovery is possible for every individual.

Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Peer Support Training Source: ADHS Division of Behavioral Health Services Website http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/tr_resources/psp_training.htm

• In January 2013, ADHS posted on its website a set of materials as resources related to a Request for Proposals for Peer Support Provider (PSP) services. The materials include a document that defines a Peer Support Provider as a person with a diagnosis of mental illness who has been

trained to work with other persons living with mental illness. The document further defines the role and duties of a PSP in the context of a service team that includes a case management provider, doctor, counselor, nurse, or other team member.

Emotional CPR

Source: Emotional CPR Website http://www.emotional-cpr.org/

- Emotional CPR (eCPR) is a public health education program designed to teach people to assist others through an emotional crisis by three simple steps: C = Connecting, P = emPowering, and R = Revitalizing. People who have been through the training consistently report that the skills they learned have helped them communicate better in all their relationships. They tell us that eCPR is a way of life.
- The Connecting process of eCPR involves deepening listening skills, practicing presence, and creating a sense of safety for the person experiencing a crisis. The emPowering process helps people better understand how to feel empowered themselves as well as to assist others to feel more hopeful and engaged in life. In the Revitalizing process, people re-engage in relationships with their loved ones or their support system, and they resume or begin routines that support health and wellness, which reinforces the person's sense of mastery and accomplishment, further energizing the healing process.
- eCPR is based on the principles found to be shared by a number of support approaches: traumainformed care, counseling after disasters, peer support to avoid continuing emotional despair,
 emotional intelligence, suicide prevention, and cultural attunement. It was developed with
 input from a diverse cadre of recognized leaders from across the United States, who themselves
 have learned how to recover and grow from emotional crises. They have wisdom by the grace
 of first-hand experience.

Peer Support Training as a Critical Learning Experience

Source: Intentional Peer Support Website http://www.intentionalpeersupport.org/

- Peer support has traditionally meant informal, non-professionalized help from people who have had similar life experiences. In mental health, peers come together with many shared experiences, including a negative reaction to traditional services. However, without a new framework to build from, it is not uncommon to find people re-enacting "help" based on what was done to them. Some people take on positions of power, and others fall into passive recipient roles. Peer support training should emphasize a critical learning experience in which people mutually explore "how they've come to know what they know." In other words, through intentional conversations, people examine their assumptions about who they are, what power-shared relationships can look like, and ultimately what's possible. This is accomplished through a process of learning about:
 - What makes intentional peer support different
 - o The four tasks (connection, worldview, mutual responsibility and moving towards)
 - Listening with intention
 - Challenging old roles

- o Understanding trauma worldview and trauma re-enactment
- o Working towards shared responsibility and shared power
- o Creating a vision
- Using supervision as a tool to maintain values in action

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Peer-to-Peer Training Program

Source: NAMI Website

http://www.nami.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Find Support/Education and Training/Education Training and Peer Support Center/Peer-to-Peer/Peer-to-Peer.htm

- Peer-to-Peer is a unique, experiential learning program for people with any serious mental illness who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery.
- Peer-to-Peer consists of ten two-hour units and is taught by a team of two trained "Mentors" and a volunteer support person who are personally experienced at living well with mental illness.
- Mentors are trained in an intensive three day training session and are supplied with teaching manuals.
- Participants come away from the course with a binder of hand-out materials, as well as many
 other tangible resources: an advance directive; a "relapse prevention plan" to help identify telltale feelings, thoughts, behavior, or events that may warn of impending relapse and to organize
 for intervention; mindfulness exercises to help focus and calm thinking; and survival skills for
 working with providers and the general public.

Panel 4: Peer Recovery Support Applied in Specific Populations—Veterans and Individuals with Criminal Justice System Involvement

- 1. What is the extent of need for peer support among military service members and veterans? How many individuals returning from deployment are dealing with mental and substance use disorders?
- 2. Are there organizations established to promote peer support among veterans?
- 3. Is there an organization established to promote peer support specifically for veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan war era?
- 4. Has peer support among veterans proven to be effective?
- 5. What initiatives are underway to promote and encourage peer support for individuals with criminal justice center involvement? What is the GAINS Center?
- 6. What methods are used to provide peer support for individuals with criminal justice system involvement? What is PeerShare?
- 7. What is forensic peer support?

<u>Rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Among Troops Returning</u> from War

Source: Invisible Wounds: Mental Health and Cognitive Care Needs of America's Returning Veterans, RAND Center for Military Health Policy Research, 2008

http://www.rand.org/multi/military/veterans.html

- 18.5 percent of all returning service members in a survey of service members returning from Iraq or Afghanistan meet criteria for either PTSD or depression; 14 percent of returning service members meet criteria for PTSD, and 14 percent meet criteria for depression.
- 19.5 percent of returning service members reported experiencing a probable TBI during deployment.
- The Rand survey of service members recently returning from Iraq or Afghanistan indicated that about one-third report symptoms of a mental health or cognitive condition.
- About 7 percent meet criteria for a mental health problem and also report a possible TBI.
- If these numbers are representative, then of the 1.64 million deployed (as of 2008), the study estimates that approximately 300,000 veterans who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan were suffering from PTSD or major depression, and about 320,000 may have experienced TBI during deployment.

Prevalence of Substance Use Among the Military and Veterans

Source: Substance Abuse among the Military, Veterans, and their Families - A Research Update from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Topics in Brief, July 2009 http://www.nida.nih.gov/tib/vet.html

- Substance use among Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans is a large concern, with aggregated data from SAMHSA's annual household survey revealing that from 2004 to 2006, 7.1 percent of veterans (an estimated 1.8 million persons 18 or older) met criteria for a past-year substance use disorder.
- Problems with alcohol and nicotine abuse are the most prevalent and pose a significant risk to the health of veterans as well as to the Reserve component and National Guard soldiers. At greatest risk are deployed personnel with combat exposures, as they are more apt to engage in new-onset heavy weekly drinking, binge drinking, and to suffer alcohol-related problems; as well as smoking initiation and relapse. Within this group, Reserve and National Guard personnel and younger service members are particularly vulnerable to subsequent drinking problems. And although alcohol problems are frequently reported among veterans, few are referred to alcohol treatment.

Source: Substance Use Trends Among Active Duty Military Personnel: Findings from the United States Department of Defense Health Related Behavior Surveys, 1980–2005, Robert M. Bray & Laurel L. Hourani, RTI International, Research Triangle Park, NC, USA

 Cigarette and illicit drug use among military personnel declined sharply and significantly from 1980 to 1998. Heavy alcohol use decreased in the mid-1980s but was stable from 1988 to 1998.
 Both cigarette smoking and heavy alcohol use increased significantly between 1998 and 2002 and remained at those levels in 2005. Illicit drug use remained low. Source: Office of the Command Surgeon and Office of the Surgeon General United States Army Medical Command. Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT-V). *Operation Enduring Freedom 8, Afghanistan.* 14 February 2008.

http://www.armymedicine.army.mil/reports/mhat/mhat_v/Redacted2-MHATV-OEF-4-FEB-2008Report.pdf

• In 2007, 8 percent of soldiers in Afghanistan reported using alcohol during deployment, and 1.4 percent reported using illegal drugs/substances.

Use of Peer Support Among Veterans

Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Website – VA Peer Specialists http://www.vacareers.va.gov/peer-to-peer/faqs.asp

- A peer specialist is a person with a mental health and/or co-occurring condition who has been trained to help others with these conditions identify and achieve specific life and recovery goals. A peer specialist is a person who is actively engaged in his/her own recovery. A peer specialist is a person who volunteers or is hired to provide peer support services to others engaged in mental health treatment. At the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), peer support positions are called peer specialist positions.
- To be eligible for a peer specialist position, the individual must: 1) be a veteran who has recovered or is recovering from a mental health condition (must have spent a minimum of one year in personal recovery); and 2) be certified by a not-for-profit entity engaged in peer specialist training as having met such criteria as the secretary shall establish for a peer specialist position, or be certified by a state as having satisfied relevant state requirements for a peer specialist position.

Source: Vet to Vet Website http://vet2vetusa.org/

- Vet to Vet is a consumer/provider partnership program that utilizes veterans in recovery in a peer-counseling capacity to help other veterans. Vet to Vet is administered by veterans who themselves have been consumers of VA mental health services.
- Vet to Vet provides a six-week, peer-facilitator training program that teaches veterans how to facilitate peer group sessions and introduce program learning topics.

Source: Bloomington, Indiana Vet to Vet Chapter Website http://www.vettovetbloomington.com/IVY-TECH-peer-support-groups.html

• The Vet to Vet chapter in Bloomington, Indiana, was originally started by veterans with PTSD. As facilitators were being trained, the chapter's organizers realized that the groups could help with problems other than PTSD. Some of these problems are unique to veterans, and it may be difficult to discuss them with others, especially with people who have not experienced the same kind of events.

- Vet to Vet is unique in that no social workers or doctors attend the veteran-run meetings. Vet to Vet is endorsed by the VA, but is not part of the VA.
- The advantage of peer support, such as the Vet to Vet program, has been shown to be a valuable part of the learning and healing process. Meetings are normally overseen by two Vet to Vet peer facilitators who have been mentored and trained by caring veterans just like themselves who have received peer support group training in VA approved seminars.
- Vet to Vet enables veterans to:
 - Learn about themselves, their problems, and how they affect the other people in their lives
 - Help each other deal with problems adjusting to life after having been in combat or other military trauma
 - Help each other deal with problems such as anger, isolation, seclusion, anxiety, depression, and the need to use drugs or alcohol to escape from these problems
 - Help each other re-learn how to function in society, and how to unlearn the things the military has taught them that prevents them from doing that
 - o Find fellowship and mutual benefit

Peer Support for Iraq and Afghanistan-Era Veterans

Source: Vets4Vets Website (note: Vets4Vets is a different organization than Vet to Vet) http://www.vets4vets.us/

- Vets4Vets is a non-partisan organization dedicated to helping Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans to heal from the psychological injuries of war through the use of peer support.
- The primary goal of Vets4Vets is to help Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans understand the value of peer support and to regularly use peer support to express their emotions, manage their challenges and ease their reintegration into society. The organization's vision is that any time a veteran needs to talk with someone who really understands, a local Vets4Vets peer support group is available at no cost. The organization envisions Vets4Vets as being a common name in the minds of all veterans as a place where they and their comrades can go to heal.
- Vets4Vets believes that:
 - Sharing personal experiences with those who have shared similar experiences is a powerful healing tool
 - o Peer support does not require professionals
 - Peer support can take place in many formats, including weekend workshops, one-onone, and in small or large groups
 - By taking equal and uninterrupted turns, veterans benefit by both listening and speaking
 - By expressing the feelings associated with their experiences, veterans help each other heal
 - Providing an environment that is confidential, safe, and accepting is important
 - Taking part in positive community action of their choosing empowers veterans to further promote healing and reach out to other veterans

Use of drugs and alcohol hinders real emotional healing

Source: Buddy-to-Buddy Website

http://buddytobuddy.org/about-buddy-to-buddy

- The Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program was developed at the University of Michigan in partnership with the Michigan Army National Guard, faculty from the VA Health System and Michigan State University, and veteran advocates to address the unique challenges facing citizen soldiers. These soldiers often deploy multiple times and are isolated from those with whom they served once they return to their home communities. The mission of the program is to use trained volunteer veterans to help Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn (Iraq) military service members to overcome the stigma around asking for help and link those who are facing challenges throughout the deployment cycle with appropriate resources that will optimize their quality of life.
- Behind the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program is a simple concept: Military service is
 unlike any other human experience. No one knows more about the issues facing a service
 member—in combat or on the home front—than a fellow service member. Volunteer veterans are
 recruited to the program from a variety of veteran service organizations and the community.
 They receive training in communication skills and available community resources to help them
 assist other service members in managing the many challenges that may arise throughout the
 deployment cycle.

Effectiveness of Peer Support with Veterans

Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Website, *Peer Support Proves Effective in Coping with Chronic Disease*

http://www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/20110505a.asp

- In the Milwaukee area, members of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts volunteered as peer health leaders and helped other VFW members stay on track with managing their high blood pressure.
- In Philadelphia, African American veterans with diabetes served as peer mentors to others in their community to help them keep their blood sugar in check.
- In Ann Arbor, veterans with diabetes who took part in a mutual peer support program did as well as—or even better than—veterans who were assigned nurse care managers.
- These examples, all from recent VA research, show the benefits of an approach that is gaining
 increasing traction nationwide among doctors and health policy experts. Peer support, for one
 thing, is a smart way to leverage resources in strained health care systems. The arrangement
 also taps into a powerful social force—the ability of peers to motivate one another—that no
 medical system can replicate on its own.

Best Practices for Peer Support Programs in the Military

Source: Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, *Best Practices Identified for Peer Support Programs*, by Nisha Money MD, MPH, ABIHM, Monique Moore PhD,

David Brown PsyD, Kathleen Kasper, Jessica Roeder, Paul Bartone PhD, and Mark Bates PhD. January 2011.

http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Content/Navigation/Documents/Best Practices Identified for Peer Support Programs Jan 2011.pdf

- As part of its ongoing mission, the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury explored how to most effectively apply peer support in the military environment. The military has created a culture in which service members take care of each other. Common experiences, particularly for those who have served in combat, bind individuals together. Shared experiences are the foundation for peer support, as they foster the initial trust and credibility necessary for developing relationships in which individuals are willing to open up and discuss their problems despite concerns about stigma. Peer-to-peer programs facilitate opportunities for individuals to talk with trained peer supporters who can offer educational and social support and provide avenues for additional help if needed.
- Based on an analysis of the research literature, five elements were found to be essential to a successful peer-to-peer program:
 - 1) Adequate Planning and Preparation, including identifying needs of the target population and aligning program goals to meet those needs
 - 2) Clearly Articulated Policies to Avoid Confusion, especially around role boundaries and confidentiality
 - 3) Systematic Screening with Defined Selection Criteria for Peer Supporters, such as communication skills, leadership ability, character, previous experience or training, and individuals who can serve as positive role models
 - 4) Leverage Benefits from "Peer" Status, such as experiential learning, social support, leadership, and improved self-confidence
 - 5) Enable Continued Learning through Structured Training, by providing an atmosphere for peer supporters to support each other and improve peer support skills
- In addition, the literature review and examination of exemplar programs points to several underlying features or "key ingredients" that appear to account for the special effectiveness of peer support. These are 1) social support; 2) experiential knowledge; 3) trust; 4) confidentiality; and 5) easy access.

Peer Support for Individuals with Criminal Justice System Involvement—SAMHSA's GAINS Center Source: SAMHSA GAINS Center Website http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/

• Since 1995, SAMHSA's GAINS Center has been operated by Policy Research Associates, Inc. in Delmar, New York. The GAINS Center's primary focus is on expanding access to community based services for adults diagnosed with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders at all points of contact with the justice system. The Center emphasizes the provision of

consultation and technical assistance to help communities achieve integrated systems of mental health and substance abuse services for individuals in contact with the justice system.

- GAINS stands for: Gathering information, Assessing what works, Interpreting and integrating the facts, Networking, and Stimulating change.
- SAMHSA's GAINS Center provides technical assistance to the field, as well as technical assistance and support to the following SAMHSA-funded grant programs: Mental Health Transformation Grant, Adult Treatment Court Collaborative, and Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery.
- Peer support is a major area of emphasis for GAINS Center activities.

PeerShare

Source: SAMHSA GAINS Center Website

http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/peer_resources/default.asp

- SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation believes in creating a learning community that offers ways to network, support, learn, and grow. An important aspect of this learning community is meaningful peer involvement in Center initiatives.
- PeerShare is a virtual learning community that provides a place where peers involved with the
 criminal justice system in any capacity, as well as peers from the various GAINS projects, can go
 to find answers to questions, seek out technical assistance, and share their experiences.
- The STAR Center and SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation have collaboratively developed a three-part series on supporting the recovery of justice-involved consumers. The series is most effective when used collectively, but can also be used individually.
- PeerShare, part of SAMHSA's GAINS Center Virtual Learning Community, promotes
 collaboration, communication, and information sharing among peers, consumers, and people
 with lived experience. PeerShare is a password-protected site that provides users with a safe
 space for discussion and dissemination of resources pertaining to the behavioral health and
 criminal justice fields.
- In addition to PeerShare, the SAMHSA's GAINS Center Virtual Learning Community is home to a
 variety of discussion boards on topics such as trauma, service integration, and jail diversion.
 While the larger learning community is open to the public, PeerShare is designed for peers only.

Forensic Peer Support

Source: *Involving Peers in Criminal Justice and Problem-Solving Collaboratives*, SAMHSA's GAINS Center for Behavioral Health and Justice Transformation, January 2013 http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/cms-assets/documents/62304-42605.peersupportfactsweb.pdf

 Forensic peer support connects individuals with shared experiences, foremost with justice involvement, and often with mental illness, substance use problems, socio-economic, and/ or further challenges that affect their ability to successfully reintegrate in their communities (Davidson & Rowe, 2008; Rowe et al., 2007). Support is provided to peers with the goal of overcoming challenges associated with criminal justice involvement and mental illness, and in promotion of desired social and personal change.

- Peer support can be provided in many forms, such as linkage to community services (e.g., self-help groups, vocational services, and mental health/substance use services), mentoring and advice, social support, or simple encouragement (Davidson & Rowe, 2008; Rowe et al., 2007).
- The Forensic Peer Specialist encompasses a variety of roles and specific duties, and job
 requirements, training, and qualifications vary across settings (Harrington, 2011; Miller & Fuller,
 2007). In 2001, Howie the Harp Peer Advocacy Center coined the term "Forensic Peer
 Specialist." This training program laid the framework for many of forensic peer specialist
 training programs that exist today.
- The program's core curriculum emphasizes: "Self-help and Recovery; Human Services Roles and Responsibilities; Work Readiness; Navigating the Criminal Justice System; and, Professional Ethics" (Miller & Fuller, 2007). Many forensic peer support programs engage trained forensic peer specialists who are qualified to address the individual needs of consumers seeking support, emanating from their own experiences with the justice system and barriers against recovery, and also from targeted training for providing support to this population. One of the particular strengths of increasing the overall involvement of peers with histories in the behavioral health and criminal justice systems is that they have a better understanding of the culture of incarceration and the significant challenges that any involvement in the system has on such factors as eligibility for entitlements, housing, and employment. Forensic Peer Specialists have an enhanced ability to empathize while promoting recovery based personal reform because they have faced similar challenges and experiences (Davidson & Rowe, 2008).

A link check was run on all the external websites listed in the discussion guide to identify and fix any broken links as of 5/15/13. However, we acknowledge that website URL's change frequently and may require ongoing link checks for accuracy. Last Updated: 8/29/13.