

Policies & Procedures

Section: Clinical Policies

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Subject: Peer Support Specialist

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Peer Support Specialist

POLICY

A Certified Peer Support Specialist is an individual who uses their lived experience in recovery from mental illness and/or substance use disorder, in addition to skills learned in a formal training, to deliver services promoting recovery and resiliency. Davis Behavioral Health believes that peers are an invaluable piece of our service continuum as we strive to engage clients in meaningful and individualized recovery.

1. Under the direction of a licensed mental health therapist, the primary role of the Peer Support Specialist is to help individuals achieve their own needs, wants, and goals.
2. A Peer Support Specialists will:
 - a. Have at least one year of solid recovery prior to beginning employment
 - b. Receive weekly supervision by a master's level therapist to assist with
 - i. Practice management
 - ii. Supporting their own recovery
 - iii. Upholding clear boundaries
 - c. Maintain high standards of personal conduct that fosters their own recovery.
 - d. Appropriately share with the people they serve, peers and colleagues, their recovery stories from mental illness, co-occurring disorders, and substance abuse and will likewise be able to identify and describe the supports that promote his or her recovery.
 - e. At all times, respect the rights and dignity of those they serve.
 - f. Promote self-direction and decision making for those they serve.
 - g. Strictly respect privacy and confidentiality
 - h. Be directed by the knowledge that all individuals have the right to live in the least restrictive and least intrusive environment.
 - i. Keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to recovery, and openly share this knowledge with their colleagues.
3. Peer Support Specialists will not
 - a. Be in active treatment with Davis Behavioral Health, with the exception of medication management or SUD continued care/after care only.

- b. Intimidate, threaten, harass, use undue influence, physical force or verbal abuse, or make unwarranted promises of benefits to the individuals they serve.
- c. Enter into dual relationships or commitments that conflict with the interests of those they serve.
- d. Engage in sexual/intimate activities with those they serve or with any DBH client for at least two years post treatment.
- e. Practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate in any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical disability, or any other preference or personal characteristic, condition or state.
- f. Abuse substances under any circumstance.
- g. Accept gifts of significant value from those they serve.
- h. Access the client records of friends, family members or others who are not directly being served by the peer.

Peer Recovery Support Procedures

1. **Recovery Support Program Description:**

The Recovery Support Program aims to reduce barriers to clients' recovery and improve their engagement in a lifestyle of recovery. The services provided by the recovery support program are free of charge. Each member of team has their own recovery and some type of lived experience. Most services are offered by Recovery Support Specialist who serve as case managers, peer specialists, as well as recovery coaches. The program also offers clinical services from licensed mental health professionals, who offer recovery focused psychotherapy. While a client is in treatment, recovery support focuses on removing barriers to their recovery and engagement with recovery resources, through case management and connection to peers. After completion of acute treatment, recovery support focuses on clients maintaining recovery by offering ongoing recovery coaching and our Continuous Recovery Support (CRS) program. CRS offers peer driven groups throughout the week, which are facilitated by a Recovery Support Specialist. CRS clients also have access to free brief psychotherapy.

2. **Location:** The primary location for the Recovery Support Program is DBH's Main Street clinic. Our program is very mobile and offer services at all other DBH campuses, as well as locations in the community.
3. **Admission Criteria:** Clients with a substance use issues who are Davis County residents.
4. **Exclusion Criteria:** Those individuals living outside of Davis County and individuals who do not have a substance use disorder.
5. **Services Offered:** Individual Skills Development, Individual Behavior Management, Individual Peer Support, and Individual Psychotherapy. Group Skills Development, Group Behavioral Management, and Group Psychotherapy, Individual Case Management, Individual Recovery Coaching.
6. **Program Schedules:** Most services are offered Monday-Friday between 8:00AM-8:00PM. As needed CRS groups and some individual work offered on Saturday, Sundays and holidays.
7. **Estimated / Average Length of Service:** Recovery Support Specialist work with clients throughout their course of treatment. Services are offered for clients who have finished treatment on a voluntary basis and may remain in the CRS program indefinitely.

8. **Coordination and Collaboration with Community Agencies and Resources:**

Recovery Support works with and refers to many outside community agencies such as:

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Division of Child and Family Services.
- Utah State Workforce Services.
- State Medicaid Eligibility
- Davis County Midtown Community Healthcare Clinic (Medical & Psychiatric Providers)
- Family Connection Center
- Various Local Private SUD Providers

9. **Outreach Procedures:**

High Risk Referrals – 4 weeks to complete the outreach process.

- First outreach - phone with 24 hours if referral made Monday-Thursday & if referral was made Friday call the following Monday.
- Second outreach – Phone call or text message within a week following the first attempt of outreach.
- Third outreach – In-home outreach with a second RSS employee within a week following the second outreach attempt.
- Fourth outreach – Phone call for final outreach within a week following the in-home outreach.
 - Email assigned therapist on the email and copy to RSS supervisor needs to state the client needs to be discharged and all outreach attempts have been exhausted.

Normal RSS Referral Request for Services Outreach – 3 weeks to complete the outreach process.

- First outreach - phone with 24 hours if referral made Monday-Thursday & if referral was made Friday call the following Monday.
- Second outreach – Phone call or text message within a week following the first attempt of outreach.
- Third outreach – Phone or text message within a week following second attempt of outreach.

ED Follow up Calls – 24-hours to initiate outreach.

- Call client and ask how they are doing and if there is anything we might be able to assist them with (use your own words).
 - If you do not get a response, ED follow-up calls will be treated as high risk outreach and follow the four-week protocols.

DAVIS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

What is a peer?

A peer is an abbreviated term for “Certified Peer Support Specialist.” A CPSS is an individual in long-term recovery who has *lived experience* with mental illness, substance use, or both. A peer is also a specially trained staff member who maintains certification through the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Substance Use and Mental Health.

What can a peer offer me?

The primary purpose of a peer is to share their story! A peer offers encouragement and advocacy by being a relatable support who has been through many of the same experiences as the clients we serve. Some of the ways peers offer support include:

- Bridge builder: Peers have experience being a “client” and a “staff.” This can be helpful in building connections between our clients and other providers.
- Change agent: Peers help individual clients AND agencies build a recovery environment and understand that wellness can be achieved.
- Mentor: Peers use their personal skills to help clients build new and helpful skills of their own.
- Supporter: Peers encourage clients to feel empowered to make changes and become more successful.
- Advocate: Peers believe in recovery and help clients obtain tools and services that they need to facilitate recovery.

Peers are NOT:

- Personal shoppers: Although peers may, at times, assist with services like shopping, the primary focus is to encourage recovery and offer support.
- A chauffeur: Peers do sometimes help with transportation, but again, this is not a primary role.
- A punching bag: Peers provides services to help clients along their wellness journey. Being verbally aggressive, inappropriately demanding, pressuring peers after they have expressed their limitations, or other inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated.
- A therapist: Peers are not replacements for therapists. A peer is an added support as part of an overall individual treatment plan. If your therapist recommends continued counseling, attendance in counseling sessions will be required for continued peer services. On the other hand, a therapist can add peer support services when a client

no longer needs extensive therapy but would benefit from an added source of support. Please discuss the role of therapy in treatment with your therapist.

Who is eligible for peer services?

Current DBH clients who have a referral for peer services from their therapist or medical provider are eligible.

How do I pay for peer services?

Peer services are covered under many Medicaid plans. Depending on your insurance plan, copays may be charged in accordance with your plan. NO money should be exchanged during peer services. Charges will be billed through the DBH billing office, if applicable. Individual cases will be reviewed if you do not have Medicaid or other insurance.

How long can I be enrolled in peer services?

Clients who are involved in peer services *will not* be eligible for peer services forever! **A client will be enrolled in peer services for a period of up to six months.** After this time, if a therapist or medical provider deems it appropriate for additional peer services, the length of peer services will be reevaluated. Your peer will review any changes in peer support services offered by your individual treatment plan with you. *Your peer will not be able to make this determination on their own!* Peers will receive direction from your treatment team and from their supervisors.

Can I receive peer services at a future time if the need arises again?

Yes, your therapist or medical provider can request peer services again at a future time if they believe that it is medically necessary and would be beneficial for you. You may have a different peer assigned than you had during a previous enrollment in peer services. The same six-month period of participation will apply if your provider submits another referral for peer services.

What are the responsibilities of a peer?

- The peer who works with you will attend specialized training throughout the year to learn the best ways to work with you throughout your mental health or substance use recovery journey.

- The peer who works with you will maintain certification through the State Department of Human Services. They will be expected to act in a professional manner at all times.
- Your peer will treat you with respect and dignity. The peers have been in your shoes, and they remember what was helpful to them during their most challenging times.
- You can expect peers to be sensitive to your needs and your challenges.
- Your peer will be clear about what services they can offer you.
- Your peer will maintain appropriate professional boundaries and work performance.
- Your peer will work with your treatment team for guidance in providing peer support.

What are my responsibilities as a client enrolled in peer services?

- Engage in recovery-oriented discussions and activities with your peer.
- Treat your peer with respect.
- Refrain from verbally abusive language or inappropriate behaviors.
- Respect your peer's time and limitations. Your peer will let you know what services they can and cannot offer. *The services offered to one client may be different than the services offered to another client.* These decisions will be guided by your treatment team. A peer is responsible for following this guidance.
- Respect your peer's professional boundaries. Ask questions if you need clarification about what this means for your peer.
- Recognize that peers are not available outside of business hours and will not be authorized to respond to in-person requests, phone calls, or text messages. Peers will respond to messages as soon as possible during working hours.
- If you need assistance beyond what a peer can reasonably offer to you, please coordinate with your therapist, medical provider, case manager, or crisis team (801-773-7060) for more support.

DAVIS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
PEER SERVICES AGREEMENT

I, _____, would like to participate in peer services at Davis Behavioral Health.

_____ I have reviewed this document with my peer, and I understand the role of a Certified Peer Support Specialist in my recovery.

_____ I understand that I am enrolling in peer services for a period of up to **SIX MONTHS, beginning on _____, 2022.**

_____ I agree to uphold my responsibilities as a client enrolled in peer services, as explained in this document.

_____ I acknowledge that mistreatment of peers or non-engagement in my individual treatment plan can result in my discharge from the peer program.

_____ I understand that my peer is not authorized to provide crisis services, and I acknowledge that I can contact the DBH Crisis Team at any time by calling 801-773-7060.

CLIENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PEER SIGNATURE

DATE

PEER SIGNATURE

DATE