OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: Certified Peer Specialist Advisory Committee Special Informational Meeting			Attending: Members present: Amy Yonker, Amy Polsin, Alysia Mullins, Christopher Zahn, DeAnna Cobun, David Stanley, Emma Duchrow, Jesse Jonesberg, Nicole Iuro, Tanya Kraege, Todd Campbell, Chrystal Kuhzel, Oleka Parker, State and Contract Staff: Marguerit Galindo, Katie Sparks, Jessica Andrews, Ann Kelley-Kuehmichel, Leanne Delsart, Amy Cottington, Ashley Borlick, Denise Eder, Julie Lentz, Morgan Kebbekus, Acienda Yang, Kaeden Watford, Jason Fischer, Robin Matthies, Elizabeth Anne Watson, Jessica Smith Public Guests: Andre, Andrew Denman, Bailey McGowan, Carlos, Carmella, Chandler Cook, Charles, Ciara Maldonado, Dominique Christian, Fern Neisius, Imani Jackson, Kayla Sanders, Lynn Maday, Monica Caldwell, Nikki, Paula Buege, Jessica Sweeney, Stephanie Weare, Taylor Jurgens, Trina Myers, Viktor Kilpatrick, Victor Petrasevicius, YouL, Robert Kaminsky
Date: 7/31/2026	Time Started: 10:03 am	Time Ended: 12:00 pm	
Location: Zoom			Presiding Officer: DeAnna Cobun

Minutes

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order by DeAnna Cobun at 10:03 am.

2. Zoom Logistics – DeAnna Cobun, Co-chair of the CPSAC reviewed Zoom logistics

- Voting will be conducted using the "Raise Hand" function.
- Members should remain muted unless speaking and raise their hand to contribute.
- Speakers should state their name before speaking.
- Closed captions are available.
- Public guests may not vote or participate in discussion verbally or via chat but may share comments during the Public Comment section.

3. Welcome and introductions – Marguerit Galindo facilitates welcomes and introductions

- Members and DHS staff introduced themselves.

4. Deparment of Health Services (DHS) overview and introduction to Center for Innovative Transition Education and Employment (CITEE) - Jessica Andrews (Division of Care and Treatment Services (DCTS) Assistant Administrator)

- DHS Background:
  - Understands that peer support is rooted in mutuality, hope, self-determination, and lived experience and we commit to preserving these values while also maintaining access to high quality peer services across Wisconsin.
  - Understands the value of using those with lived experience to assist anyone who is experiencing a crisis, using treatment services, or in recovery.
  - Understands that research shows positive outcomes with use of peer professionals.
  - Goal is to expand access and resources to add support to the statewide workforce.
  - Transitioning the management of the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Imitative

from Access to Independence (ATI) to University of Wisconsin Milwaukee's (UWM) Center for Innovative Transition Education and Employment (CITEE) which will occur 10/01/2026

- Appreciates ATIs contribution to the peers as they:
  - Helped launch this initiative over 16 years ago and did an amazing job and are grateful for the partnership.
  - Helped make professional peer support a reality in Wisconsin.
  - We now have thousands of Peer Specialists, Parent-Peer Specialists and Recovery Coaches.
- DHS 72 is developed to create a pathway for Medicaid reimbursement across the behavioral health programs and peer run agencies to have those peer support services.
- Looking to include youth peer support.
  - DHS is looking to create a youth peer curriculum to support youth peers
- Challenges with the growth and changes
  - Increased demand and certifications
  - Access to training limited
  - Online forums do not support all styles of learning.
  - Infrastructure needed to support the growth
- Next phases need to look at
  - Expand administrative capacity
  - Technology
  - Data systems
  - Training coordination

- Transitioning to CITEE to manage the work.
  - Change to ensure employment initiative has the necessary structure to keep advancing the state's goal of integrated professional peer support across the behavioral system.
  - Creates greater access to courses.
  - Administrative management is changing but DHS remains responsible for the oversight and is committed to maintaining the integrity of the curriculum.
  - Curriculum standards are the guide for the peer support system in Wisconsin.
  - Building a train the trainer model.
  - CITEE will be the hub, providing the training, scheduling, registration, application, certification records, technology and statewide administrative support.
  - Develop "spokes" where the trainees will be able to take back to their communities.

- **CITEE and DHS –**
  - BPTR has worked with them often –
    - Lead the QTT program for years.
    - Lead some conference development.
    - Helped with regional sessions on naloxone saturation.
    - Strong partners and purpose understand the value of these projects across behavioral health.
    - Deeply committed to create systems for education and training.
  - CITEE has access to technology and platforms to organize large amounts of information in a safe and confidential way.
  - A shared vision is to build a sustainable accessible, community centered peer specialist

training system. Continuing to grow alongside all of the behavioral health system and the behavioral health workforce. Also, we want to remain grounded in the values of peer support.

- Review of peer professional programs, increasing access to peer recovery support services, and transition management focus from ATI to CITEE on Oct 1, 2026.
- ATI helped DHS launch this initiative more than 16 years ago – we are so grateful.
- We are now in a place where thousands of peers are working across our behavioral health system.
- Now, with the implementation of DHS 72 for PRSS. New youth peer curriculum being developed.
- There are often challenges with this growth – increased demand for trainings and certifications. Bottlenecks with trainings and certifications available. As the program grows, the infrastructure now needs to grow. Data coordination, access, training etc.
  - Greater access to training courses for CPS and CPPS
  - While the contract transition is changing, DHS continues to [provide oversight to ensure peer fidelity and values are honored.
- Hub and spoke model

5. CITEE presentation – Elizabeth Ann Watson and Jessica Smith from UWM CITEE
Presentation by CITEE staff to CPSAC via PowerPoint. PowerPoint slide deck will be available to all committee members with the minutes of today's meeting.
Questions asked:
•What is working well?
•What are the bottlenecks?
•How can access to training look in 2-5 years?

6. Questions and Discussion with CPSAC members

Questions, Responses, and Recommendations by Topic

A. Peer Leadership, Voice & Advisory Role

CPSAC Question/Concern:
Members encouraged a strong presence of peers and parent peers in program leadership and noted that peer leadership was not addressed in the presentation.

CITEE/DHS Response:
CITEE stated that it is committed to exploring leadership opportunities, working with advisory committees, actively seeking feedback, and supporting autonomy and partnership. CITEE staff include individuals with lived experience, although current staff do not hold CPS or CPPS designations.

CPSAC Question:
How will peers and parent peers be included in the transition moving forward?

CITEE/DHS Response:
No additional specific response was documented beyond CITEE's commitment to leadership opportunities, advisory committee involvement, feedback, autonomy, and partnership.

CPSAC Question:
What access does CPSAC have to advise DHS and CITEE regarding the transition and contract, particularly since CPSAC had not previously been involved?

CITEE/DHS Response:
CITEE stated that, as an advisory committee to DCTS, it intends to receive advisement from CPSAC and DCTS as the transition moves forward.

CPSAC Question:
Several sources of stakeholder feedback were identified, but they did not appear to represent the people in the room. How will DHS and CITEE broaden opportunities for feedback in the future?

CITEE/DHS Response:
No specific response was documented.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Ensure meaningful CPS and CPPS representation in program leadership and development.
- Establish a transparent process for when and how CPSAC will provide advisement to DHS and CITEE.
- Broaden stakeholder engagement to include CPSAC and the larger peer community.
- Clearly communicate how peer feedback and recommendations will inform decisions.

B. APEERS & Program Identity

CPSAC Question:
How does APEERS fit into the transition, and what is the program?

CITEE Response:
APEERS is a separate four-year, federally funded HRSA pilot. It is not the model for Wisconsin's statewide CPS/CPPS program, and its courses are not intended to be clinical. CITEE acknowledged that launching APEERS at the same time as the statewide transition unintentionally created confusion and anxiety.

CPSAC Question:
Are APEERS participants reimbursed at a higher rate, and are there different eligibility requirements?

CITEE Response:
Federal funding allows training and curricula to be offered differently. Participants must still meet Wisconsin's lived-experience qualifications.

The documented response does not directly address whether reimbursement is higher.

CPSAC Question:
Would APEERS courses count toward CPS/CPPS recertification requirements?

CITEE/DHS Response:
APEERS primarily serves individuals who are not yet certified. Some courses may potentially be used by certified individuals for additional learning or microcredentials. Whether they qualify for continuing education would depend upon the course content and applicable CE categories.

CPSAC Question/Concern:
How will CITEE address concerns that APEERS could unintentionally push out or devalue naturalized peer support, particularly for people who are not pursuing higher education?

CITEE Response:
APEERS is optional and is not intended to replace or displace peer professionals. CITEE stated that CPS remains the “gold standard” for peer support in Wisconsin.

CPSAC Feedback:
Members expressed concern that the messaging could imply that clinical or academic coursework is necessary to become a more “advanced” peer professional.

CPSAC Question:
What equity considerations are behind the APEERS stipend and reimbursement structure?

CITEE Response:
Federal funding allows stipends to be provided. CITEE stated that it did not determine the stipend structure and that stipends were intended to promote equitable access to the program.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Clearly distinguish APEERS from Wisconsin's CPS/CPPS training and certification system.
- Ensure messaging does not imply that academic or clinical education makes someone a more advanced or legitimate peer professional.
- Continue centering lived experience and the established Wisconsin peer support model.
- Address equity concerns related to funding, stipends, and access across programs.

C. Training, Certification & Equitable Access

CPSAC Concern:
Members expressed concern that moving the program into an academic institution could result in the training becoming “white-washed” or overly academicized.

CITEE Response:
The model will continue to be peers training peers. Peers will participate in curriculum development, and the existing training materials will remain the same through the transition.

CPSAC Question:
Will CITEE staff who identify as peers complete CPS or CPPS training?

CITEE Response:
Staff who qualify will complete the training. Several team members have lived experience and previous peer work experience but have not yet had the opportunity to complete CPS/CPPS training.

CPSAC Question:
Will there be additional state-funded trainings to address training bottlenecks?

CITEE/DHS Response:
A standard training tempo is being developed.

CPSAC Question:
Without designated hubs and spokes currently established, how will rural communities, Tribal communities, and areas outside Madison and Milwaukee have equitable access to training?

CITEE Response:
CITEE is exploring heat mapping, Tribal access, different training modalities, different training times, and mechanisms for gathering feedback from communities.

CPSAC Question:
When will training schedules be available, and will recertification requirements change?

CITEE/DHS Response:
Recertification is expected to remain substantially the same. Potential changes would focus on reducing burden and making the process less cumbersome. CITEE was working to publish the training schedule within the following few weeks.

CPSAC Question/Concern:
Will reliance on privately funded trainings remain the same or increase?

Members emphasized that privately funded trainings shift costs to counties, community organizations, and other entities.

CITEE/DHS Response:
No direct answer regarding the future balance between state-funded and privately funded trainings was documented.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Maintain the peers-training-peers model.
- Protect the peer-centered nature of the curriculum during the transition.
- Increase state-funded training opportunities to reduce bottlenecks.
- Reduce reliance on counties and community organizations to fund trainings.
- Ensure equitable statewide access, particularly in rural and Tribal communities.
- Make certification and recertification processes as accessible and administratively manageable as possible.

4. Workforce Development & Professional Support

CPSAC Question/Concern:
A peer who is trained is not necessarily a peer who is employed. What will CITEE do to support workforce development and employment?

CITEE/DHS Response:
DHS 72 intersects with multiple state-certified programs that can employ and reimburse eligible peer services. CITEE plans to continue Communities of Practice, coaching, and mentorship for people seeking employment. CITEE has also received feedback regarding employment barriers associated with background checks and criminal histories and is exploring employment supports.

CPSAC Question/Concern:
Will the Communities of Practice continue?

CITEE Response:
Yes. CITEE plans to continue the COPs.

CPSAC Feedback:
Members described the COPs as an important resource for both peer professionals and supervisors and emphasized that supervisors need to understand peer roles to protect the integrity of peer practice.

CPSAC Question:
Will the community networking previously facilitated through WIPSEI continue?

CITEE/DHS Response:
Community networking will continue and remain peer-led.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Build workforce development into the statewide peer infrastructure rather than focusing only on training and certification.
- Continue coaching and mentorship for peer professionals seeking employment.
- Address employment barriers related to criminal histories and background checks.
- Maintain and expand Communities of Practice.
- Ensure supervisor education and support remain available.
- Continue peer-led networking and professional connection opportunities.

E. Community, Relationships, Trust & Transition Impact

CPSAC Question:
Why did the transition occur at this pace, and who made that decision?

DHS Response:
Previous DHS leadership made the decision to move quickly in anticipation of future DHS 72 needs. DHS acknowledged that peers were not at the table when the decision was made and recognized this as a misstep.

CPSAC Feedback/Concern:
Members expressed that although they heard an apology, they continued to feel that the transition was moving forward without adequately addressing its impact on the peer community.

Members described the previous model as providing:

- Safety and trusted relationships.
- Community and connection.
- Relationship-building opportunities.
- Historical knowledge and continuity.
- A sense of belonging within the peer community.

Members expressed concern that these elements could be lost in the transition and that the new environment did not yet feel safe.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Acknowledge the impact of how the transition was initiated, not simply the operational changes being made.
- Preserve the trusted and effective elements of the previous model.

- Prioritize relationship-building and community alongside administrative transition activities.
- Demonstrate through actions how peer feedback will influence the new model.
- Identify concrete steps for rebuilding trust with the peer community.

6. Data, Accountability & Continuous Improvement

CPSAC Recommendation:
DHS should continue collecting and reviewing process-improvement data related to trainings, certifications, recertifications, and other aspects of the statewide peer support infrastructure.

Related Questions/Concerns Across the Discussion:
Members raised several issues where ongoing data could inform future decisions, including training bottlenecks, geographic access, state-funded versus privately funded trainings, employment outcomes, and equitable access.

Recommendations/Feedback:

- Continue process-improvement data collection related to training and certification.
- Examine geographic access to identify underserved regions.
- Monitor training demand and bottlenecks.
- Evaluate the balance between state-funded and privately funded trainings.
- Consider workforce outcomes in addition to the number of people trained or certified.
- Use data alongside peer feedback and lived-experience perspectives when making program improvements.

Cross-Cutting Themes

1. Nothing about peers without peers — CPS/CPPS voices need meaningful roles in leadership, advisement, implementation, and evaluation.

2. Protect the identity and integrity of peer support — particularly as the program transitions into an academic institution and APEERS exists alongside the statewide model.

3. Access matters beyond training availability — including geography, cost, employment, mentorship, supervision, and community connection.

4. The transition is relational as well as operational — preserving trust, safety, relationships, and community is part of successful implementation.

5. Create an accountable feedback loop — CPSAC members want to understand not only how they can provide feedback, but when DHS/CITEE will seek it, what decisions they can advise on, and what happens to their recommendations afterward.

12. Public comment (limited to three minutes per person)

1. Rob – if this will be administered by the UW system – will the trainings be micro credentialed? That would be my recommendation.
2. Jessica – wondering how CITEE is formally aligning with the peer values – what exactly are you aligning with? What is your mission there? The concept of peer values is vague – what do you mean by that?
3. Bailey – As an employer, I would like to make the public comment in regards to our concern about being able to employ parent peers in the workforce.
4. Lynn – CPPS curriculum review was funded by DHS and did employ peers in the project. This model could be used to incorporate peers into the decision-making process. This included people with lived experience. This program was used and very purposeful.
    a. Additionally, the project with the tribes where two trainings were provided inside tribal areas. This really incorporated community-based training and needs in the trainings. Recognize all peers in the room today and say thank you.
5. Doug – If we are making the recertification process less tasky for people – I would suggest if there was a way where we could just upload our PDF, or as we do trainings, we use an online system where we can upload our trainings as we take them and keep them on our private account.
6. Dominique – When I think about this transition that is happening in WI – from WIPSEI (where many of us know them from the community – boots on the ground work) to an academic process and platform. The people who designed this did so on the backs of our lived experience – racial, cultural, geographic, and lived experience – designing in this transition matters. What I visibly see and who I have heard about the changes that happened – I do not feel that the people I directly serve, or myself, are represented. If the people most impacted by inequities were not meaningfully engaged in developing this model – then this is only consultation and not collaboration.
7. Paula – From what we've heard, I actually feel sad. I am still dragging my chair to the table after 20 years and now it feels like the table is being taken away. I appreciate the transparency. I do feel unity in our lived experience and I hope we continue to rally together to make sure our table stays in front of us.

17. Adjourn:

- Motion: Todd Campbell
- Second: Christopher Zahn
- Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.
- The meeting adjourned at 11: 54 a.m.

Prepared by: Katie Sparks on 7/31/2026.

They have been presented and approved by the governmental body on: 9/11/2026