

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Scope of Practice

Summary: The primary function of the Wisconsin certified peer specialist is to provide peer support. The certified peer specialist engages and encourages peers in recovery from mental health and/or substance use disorders. The certified peer specialist provides peers with a sense of community and belonging, supportive relationships, and valued roles. The goal is to promote wellness, self-direction, and recovery, enhancing the skill and ability of peers to engage in their chosen roles. The certified peer specialist works with peers as equals.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Providing support

The certified peer specialist will:

1. Identify as a person in mental health and/or substance use recovery.
2. Be mindful of the ethics, boundaries, power, and control issues unique to the CPS role.
3. Establish supportive relationships with peers which promote recovery.
4. Assist peers to understand the purpose of peer support and the recovery process.
5. Provide peers with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration definition of recovery and its components.
(<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery>)
6. Intentionally share his or her own recovery story as appropriate to assist peers, providing hope and help in changing patterns and behaviors.
7. Create an environment of respect for peers which honors individuals for taking charge of their own lives.
8. Mutually establish acceptable boundaries with the peers and agree to discuss on an ongoing basis as needed.
9. Demonstrate understanding of how trauma affects mental health and substance use disorder recovery, develop trauma-informed relationships, and support peers in obtaining appropriate resources for help.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of how substance use disorder affects mental health recovery.
11. Encourage and assist peers to construct their own recovery/wellness plans, which may also include proactive crisis and/or relapse prevention plans.
12. Support peers in crisis to explore options that may be beneficial to returning to emotional and physical wellness.
13. Provide culturally-sensitive and age-appropriate services.
14. Provide a welcoming environment of recovery, wellness, and hope.
15. Encourage peers to focus on their strengths, exercise use of natural supports, develop their own recovery goals, and strengthen their valued roles within the community
16. Use active listening skills.
17. Together with peers, research and connect with resources that are beneficial to peers' needs and desires (for example, employment, housing, health, and peer-delivered services).
18. Understand and be able to explain the rights of the peers.

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Communicating with supervisors and interacting with staff

The certified peer specialist will:

1. Understand and utilize the established supervisory structure to communicate needs, ask questions (especially about ethics, boundaries, and confidentiality), mention concerns, etc.
2. If employed in a Medicaid-funded and/or clinical program, understand the requirement of clinical supervision by a qualified mental health or substance use disorder profession.
3. Understand his or her role and fully participate as an integral part of the professional recovery team.
4. Demonstrate and model to staff that recovery is achievable, and that peer support is an evidence-based practice.
5. Complete all required documentation timely, accurately, and respectfully.
6. Develop healing and trauma-sensitive relationships with peers and staff.
7. Report all intended, serious harm to self or others immediately to the appropriate person.

Demonstrating confidentiality

The certified peer specialist will:

1. Know state and federal confidentiality standards, including directives from his or her own agency.
2. Maintain the utmost confidence concerning all verbal and written information, whether obtained from peers or otherwise.
3. Know information that is not to be kept in confidence: intended, serious harm self or others, and know how to handle these situations.



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of **HEALTH SERVICES**

Division of Care and Treatment Services
P-00972 (02/2019)