

**Status Report on
Certified Peer Specialist
and
Certified Parent Peer Specialist
Expansion**



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES**

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Overview

The Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Care and Treatment Services (DCTS), Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery (BPTR), launched the Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative for individuals who have experience living with mental illness in 2010.

Certified peer specialists (CPS) are individuals who have not only lived experience, but also formal training in the peer specialist model of mental health supports. They use their unique set of recovery experiences in combination with skills training to provide peer support. Peer specialists actively incorporate peer support into their work while working within an agency's recovery team structure. CPS work in many different settings in mental health programs and crisis services across the state. While the Wisconsin CPS Employment Initiative gives individuals who have experience living with mental illness a career path, it also gives programs that employ CPS a sustained emphasis on recovery.

DHS, along with partners Access To Independence and UW-Milwaukee, has been certifying peer specialists with lived experience in mental health since January 2010. In December 2014, the executive leadership of DHS recognized the positive impact of CPS within the mental health services system and approved a DCTS request for the expansion of the Wisconsin CPS Employment Initiative through:

- Modification to the current certification to encompass the experiencing living with substance use disorder and the provision of peer support to individuals with substance use issues, mental health issues, or both.
- Implementation of a parent peer specialist certification that will provide parent peer support to other parents and caregivers of children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and substance use disorders

Wisconsin is among a select group of states establishing adult, integrated (mental health and substance use disorder), and parent peer specialist certifications.

The Wisconsin CPS Employment Initiative expansion began in January 2015. Work on the expansion is expected to be complete in September 2020. Expansion activities include:

- Creation of CPS and certified parent peer specialist (CPPS) core competencies, codes of ethics, and scopes of practice.
- Development of CPS and CPPS curriculum and participant guides.
- Development of CPS and CPPS validated competency-based exams.
- Development of CPS and CPPS trainer selection process, training process, and quality assurance and quality improvement process.
- Development of CPS and CPPS train-the-trainer training for DHS-approved trainers.
- Development of CPS and CPPS training infrastructure to train peers on the curriculum.
- Development of integrated CPS and CPPS employer toolkit and trainings.

A two-year CPS integration training pilot began in July 2017 and it is expected to end in July 2019. The CPPS training pilot began in September 2018 and is expected to end in September 2020.

CPS and CPPS: Past vs. Present

Peer Specialist	2010–2015	Present
Certification	Only peers with experience living with mental health concerns were certified.	Peers with experience living with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorders are certified.
Curriculum	Wisconsin approved the use of four national peer specialist curriculums for training.	One integrated curriculum developed and approved by DHS.
Trainers	Only trainers trained in the approved curriculum are used to train peers.	DHS and Access To Independence select trainers with lived experience who attend a train-the-trainer training before they train others.
Trainings	No DCTS or Access To Independence oversight of training sessions.	Access To Independence coordinates, oversees, and collects data on all CPS trainings in the state.

Parent Peer Specialist	2010–2015	Present
Certification	A CPPS state certification did not exist.	Encompasses parents with experience parenting children with serious emotional disturbance and/or substance use disorders.
Curriculum	A CPPS state curriculum did not exist.	One integrated parent peer specialist curriculum developed and approved by DHS.
Trainers	CPPS state trainers did not exist.	DHS and Access To Independence select trainers with lived experience who attend a train-the-trainer training before they train others
Trainings	CPPS trainings did not exist.	Access To Independence coordinates, oversees, and collects data on all CPPS trainings in the state.

CPS Training Pilot

From July 2017 through December 2018, 416 peers attended a training session and registered for the certification exam. The exam was offered five times. Of the 406 peers who took the exam during this time period, 282 ended up passing and 124 failed without passing. Ten of the 416 peers who registered for the exam during this time period did not take the exam.

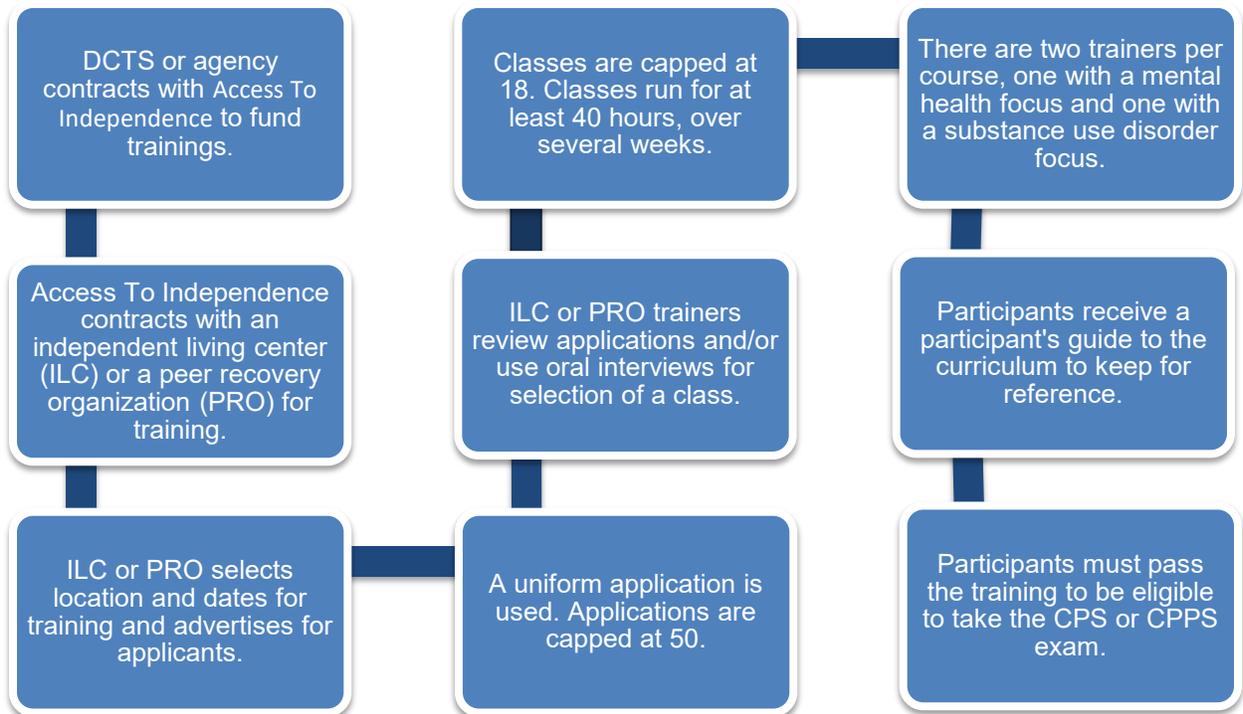
CPPS Training Pilot

The CPPS training pilot is on schedule.

- The curriculum and exam are completed
- The trainers have been selected.
- The 14 selected trainers have been trained.
- Three training sessions for parents were held in 2018.

Training Process

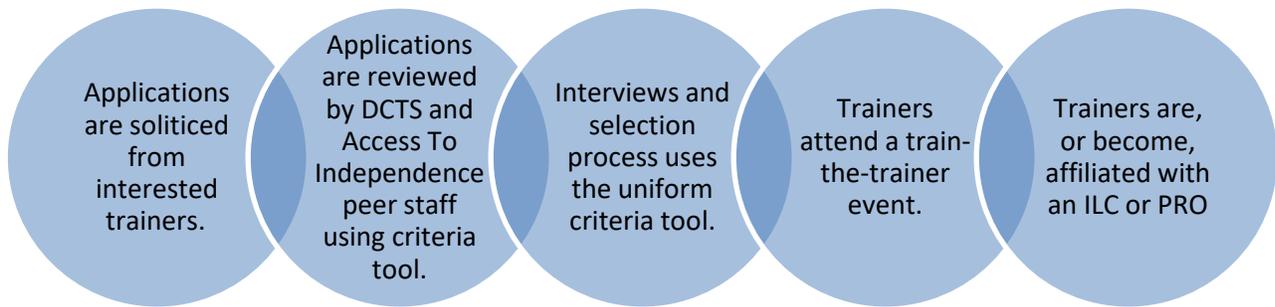
A uniform training process for CPS and CPPS was developed by the DCTS CPS and CPPS workgroups. Workgroup members included peers, staff from DCTS and Access To Independence, UW-Milwaukee, Wisconsin Office of Children’s Mental Health, and stakeholders in each initiative. This process will guide the CPS and CPPS training plan for the pilot years. It was designed to maximize the ability to collect data on the curriculum and the training system.



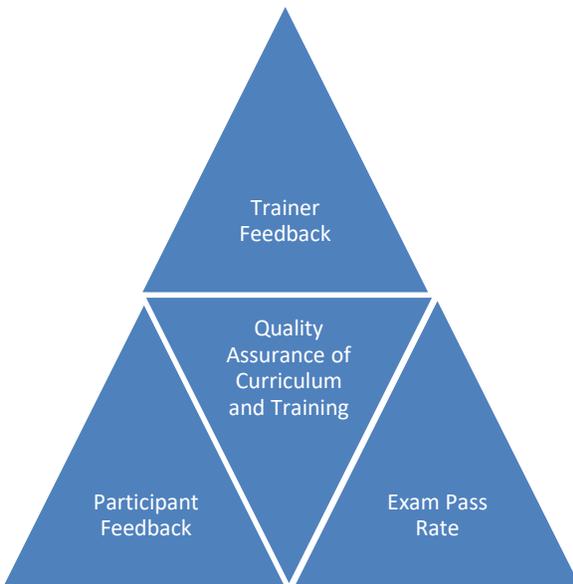
Trainer Selection Process

A uniform CPS and CPPS trainer application and selection process was developed by the DCTS CPS and CPPS workgroups. The workgroups included staff with experience living with mental health and substance use challenges from DCTS and Access To Independence; staff with experience training adult learners from DCTS, Access To Independence, UW-Milwaukee, and stakeholders in each initiative.

DCTS originally recruited and trained individual trainers to provide trainings. This structure was not sustainable. It relied on individuals associated with agencies that had no training experience to support them. Many of the trainers left soon after they joined the initiative. As a result, in September 2017, DCTS and Access To Independence rebuilt the training network. The new training network includes Wisconsin's independent living centers (ILCs) and peer-run organizations. These agencies understand training adult learners and peer support. This structure will ensure the trainers provide the best experience for participants.



Quality Assurance and Improvement Process



The DCTS CPS and CPPS workgroups created the CPS and CPPS Quality Assurance and Improvement Process to evaluate the curriculums and guide trainings. This work includes the evaluation of the exam participant feedback, trainer feedback, and the exam pass rate.

Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Process

