



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES

Supervising Peer Support Professionals: Holding True to the Values that Matter

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Presentation Outline

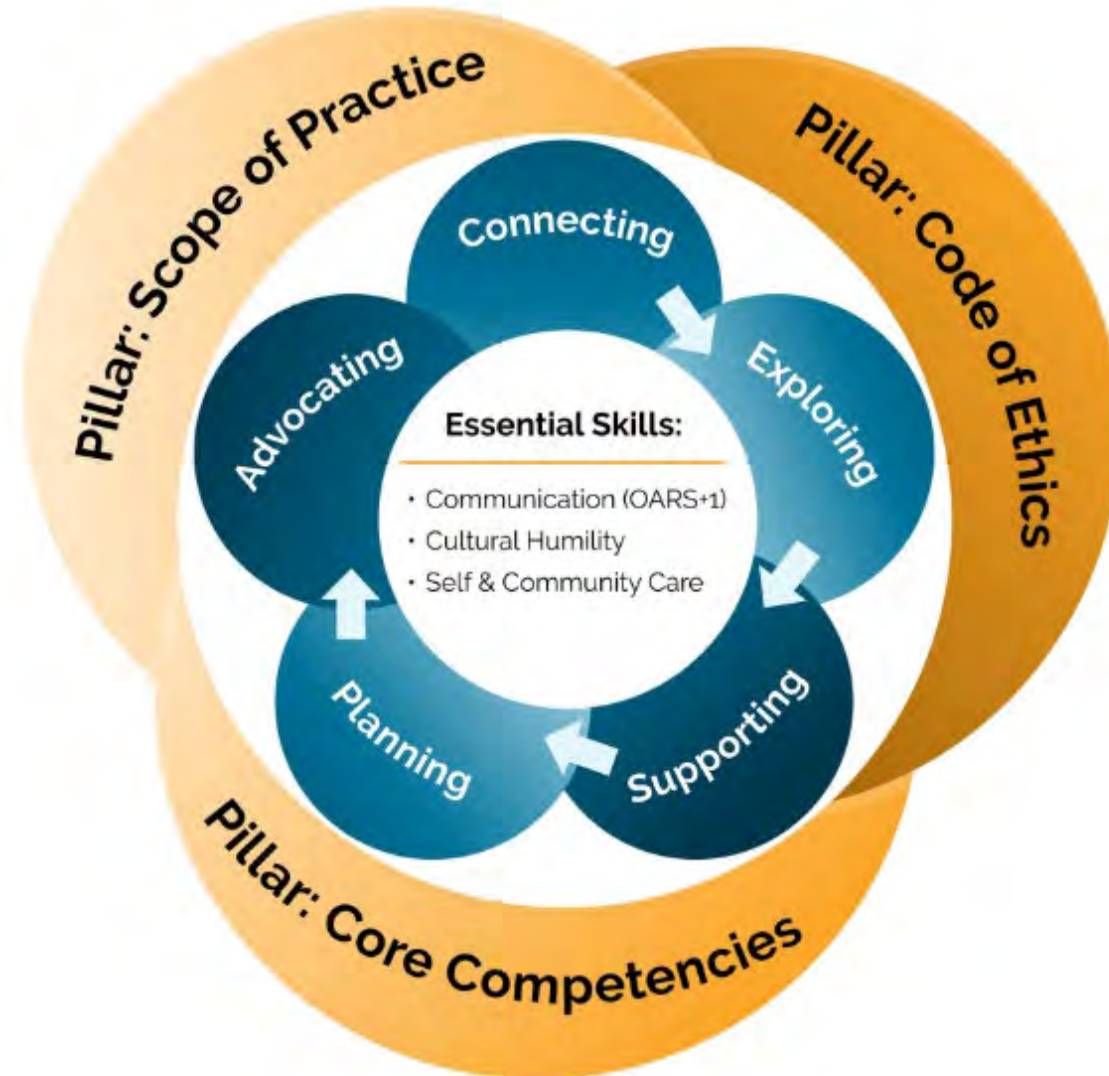
- Opening poll
- Peer support overview
- Supervision overview
 - Description of supervision-as-usual
 - Description of effective supervision
 - Effective supervision with peer support professionals
- Organizational context matters
- Closing activity

Poll

1. What is your current work?
2. To what extent are you familiar with the work of peer support professionals?

Peer Support Overview

- Pillars
- Processes
- Skills



Peer Support Overview

- Within each process, many tasks of peer support are described.
- Tools guide the practice.

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Comprehensive Practice Toolkit

As described in the DHS online course, the comprehensive practice of peer support comprises five fundamental processes (Connecting, Exploring, Supporting, Planning, Advocating) with corresponding tasks and tools. Tools are intended to be used with essential skill-sets of communication (OARS+I), cultural humility, and self & community care.

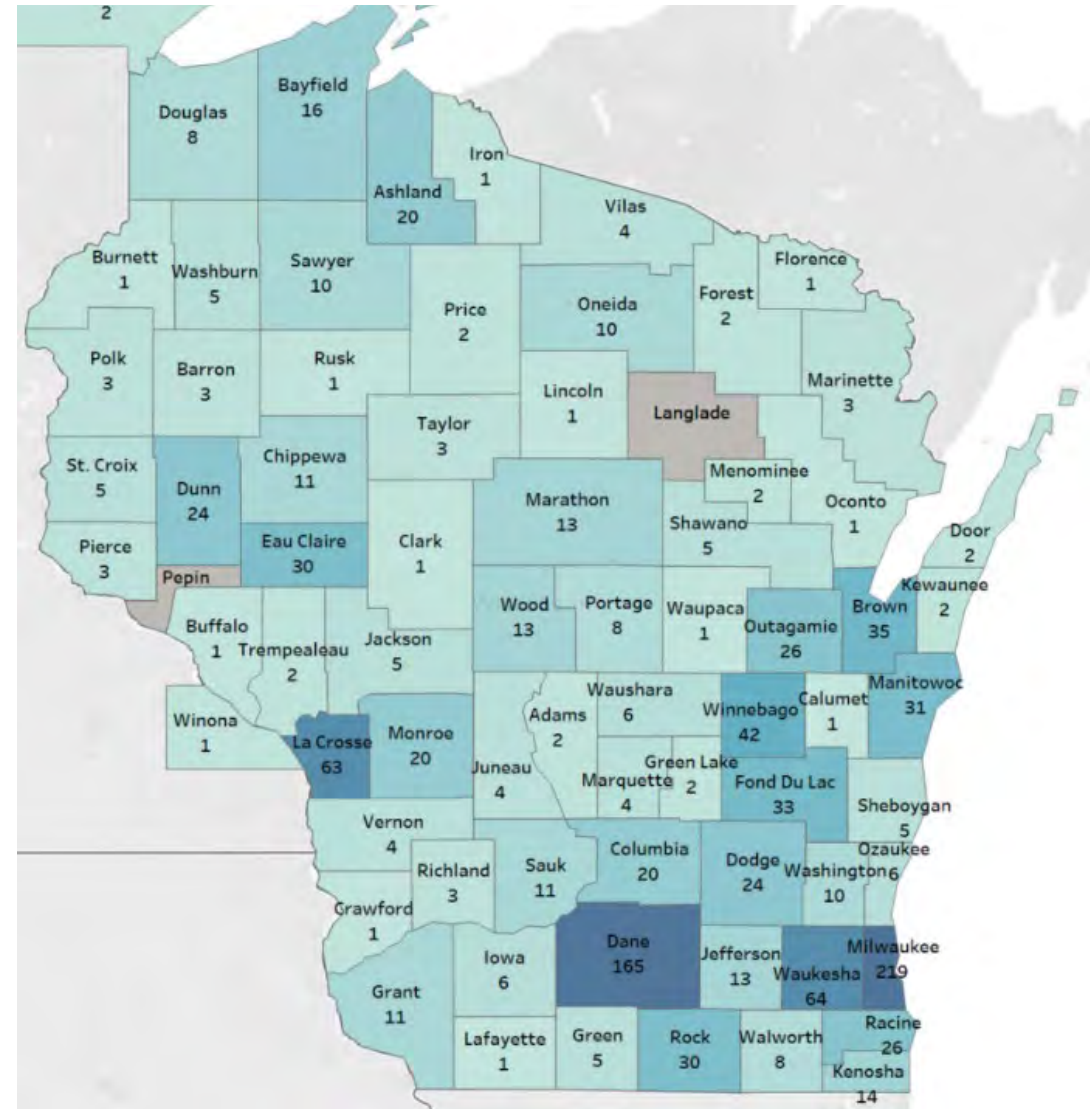
Process	Tasks	Tools
Connecting	• Provide your introduction • Get to know peer • Create mutuality • Discuss scope of practice, professional boundaries, and confidentiality • Offer a summary	• Initial Meeting Checklist • OARS+I Communication Skills • Reflective Listening Cheat Sheet • Identity Wheel Activity
Exploring	• Explore peer's strengths, values, hopes, dreams • Understand peer's past efforts in recovery • Identify current challenges, concerns, or needs.	• Exploring Open Questions
Supporting	• Support lived experience • Consider multiple pathways to recovery • Explore decision-making • Assist with navigation • Share recovery story	• Advantages and Disadvantages Worksheet • Informing with Ask-Share-Ask
Planning	• Ask about what the peer is moving toward • Identify what might get in the way • Brainstorm ways to address the barriers • Identify supports	• Planning Worksheet • Planning Resources • Preparing for Supervision Worksheet
Advocating	• Obtain informed consent from peer • Gather information • Develop a power statement • Advocate with (not for) peer • Debrief	• Power Statement Worksheet

Flow of services tool: CPS Self-Reflection Guide



Peer Support Overview

- Most counties have at least one certified peer specialist.
- There are currently 1,555 certified peer or parent peer specialists.



Supervision Overview

In your experience with supervision (receiving/providing), what value matters most?



1

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2

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Supervision Overview

1. Supervisor professional development
2. Supervisory alliance
3. Focusing
4. Administrative tasks
5. Foster professional development
6. Evaluation
7. Planning

Source: DHS (2024); Milne et al. (2011); Prock et al. (2020).

Supervision Overview



Supervision-as-usual

Effective
supervision
components

Effective
supervision with
peer support
professionals

Supervision-as-Usual

Fundamentals	Description
1. Supervisor professional development	• Attend 1-2 annual conferences
2. Supervisory alliance	• Little to no purposeful attention; tendency toward chat • Hierarchical relationship
3. Focusing	• Supervisor sets the agenda • Disproportionate attention to administrative tasks
5. Administrative tasks	• Ensure compliance to administrative rules, focus on technical issues, attention to internal procedures, review documentation
4. Foster professional development	• Focus of learning is administrative, technical, procedural aspects of the work • Consultation is crisis driven with fact gathering and supervisor problem-solving; supervisor is expert
6. Evaluation	• Annual performance review
7. Planning	• Generic goals and plan for professional development

Effective Supervision

Fundamentals	Components
1. Supervisor professional development	- Initial training followed by ongoing co-learning - Develop cultural humility, hone professional ethics
2. Supervisory alliance	- Engagement is purposeful and starts every session - Way of being (collaborative, accepting, support autonomy) with skillful communication (emphasis on reflective listening) - Relationship minimizes power differential
3. Focusing	Collaborative agenda setting; balance administrative tasks with fostering professional development
4. Administrative tasks	Similar to supervision-as-usual (but less emphasis)
5. Foster professional development	- Explore readiness for learning, use active learning methods - Consultation with trauma sensitivity - Shared expertise to develop cultural humility and professional ethics
6. Evaluation	Ongoing with multiple methods (including direct observation of practice)
7. Planning	Ongoing with tailored goals and detailed plans for professional development

Poll

1. Which fundamental do you receive/provide the MOST in supervision?
2. Which fundamental do you receive/provide the LEAST in supervision?
3. Which fundamental fits best with what you value the most?

Supervision Overview



Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 1: Supervisor professional development

- Complete initial training to understand peer support services, then continue learning to deepen understandings
- Continual examination of attitudes, biases, and assumptions about peer support
- Continual co-learning with/from peer support professional expertise (see DHS, 2023, p. 28)
- Model development of cultural humility
- Develop ethical understandings of values-based peer services within scope of practice

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 2: Supervisory alliance

- Purposeful engagement to connect is viewed as essential to start all meetings.
- Highly collaborative, accepting, mutual way of being provides parallel process to peer support services.
- Skillful communication with emphasis on reflective listening ensures understanding peer support professional experiences, perspectives, and ideas.
- Attention to power dynamics means balancing authority with relational/psychological safety.

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 3: Focusing

- Collaborative agenda setting
- Full input into agenda from peer support professional fosters empowerment and supports autonomy
- Agenda balances administrative tasks and peer support professional growth and development
- Maintaining focus maximizes precious supervision time

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 4: Administrative tasks

- Program compliance discussions include attention to peer support scope of practice, competencies, and ethics (pillars of peer support services)
- Discussions on organizational policies/procedures include role clarity and clear expectations
- Documentation review with attention to recovery-oriented, person-first language (co-learning)
- Identify supports/resources for continued learning of technical, administrative aspects of the job (advocacy)

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 5: Fostering professional development

- Valuing professional development is consistent with peer support professional embrace of change and growth as person-in-recovery
- Strengths-based consultation on challenging interactions
- Active co-learning and reflective practice are good fit approaches on topics of professional ethics, cultural humility, trauma-informed care
- Attention to self-care and community care to address “role strain” (SAMHSA, 2023, p. 136)

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 6: Evaluation

- Direct observation of practice with simple structure (e.g., communication skills observer sheet)
- Consider use of emerging standardized evaluation (e.g., Chinman et al., 2016)
- Use of self-assessment is a good fit approach
- Two-way, strengths-based feedback

Effective Supervision with Peer Support Professionals

Fundamental 7: Planning

- Planning for ongoing professional development is a top priority among peer support professionals (DHS, 2023, p. 27).
- Planning is collaborative and supports autonomy.
- Goals are tailored with an eye for career/leadership development.
- Specific resources are identified with attention to access.

Poll

To what extent are you familiar with the work of peer support professionals?

Organizational Context Matters

- Recovery-oriented mission
- Preparing staff



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“Getting the Staff to Understand It:” Leadership Perspectives on Peer Specialists before and after the Implementation of a Peer-delivered Healthy Lifestyle Intervention

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Abstract

Over the past two decades, there has been increased recognition of the effectiveness of peer delivered services, with prior research highlighting the benefits for both recipients of peer services and peer providers. Despite this, peer specialists report challenges to their work such as experiencing stigma associated with their role and difficulty integrating into a non-peer



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Peer Support Specialists’ Experiences of Microaggressions

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Abstract

Microaggressions and their consequences have been observed among people with mental illness. However, little is known about ways in which peer support specialists, those with lived experience who also provide mental health services, experience microaggressions or the impacts of these

Organizational Context Matters

- Recovery-oriented mission
- Preparing staff
- Planning for integration
- Role clarity
- HR policies and procedures
- Being a learning organization

Source: Beidas (2021); Bochicchio (2023); Edwards (2023); Firmin (2019); Gagne (2018); SAMHSA (2023).

Closing Activity

In chat, note one thing that was...

- interesting to you OR
- surprising to you OR
- exciting to you OR
- motivating to you

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