

Peer Support: Humanizing People & Services Along the Wellness Journey



Support
House



Centre for
Innovation in
Peer Support

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Meet the Team



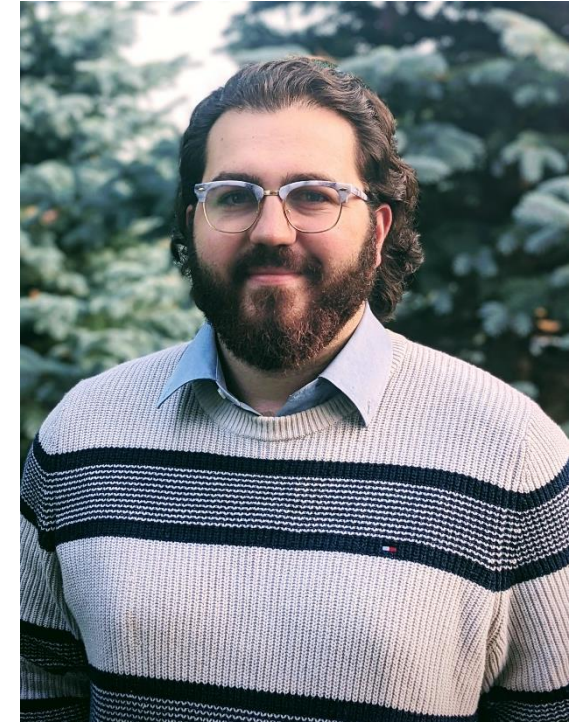
Richard Adair

Manager, Centre for Innovation in Peer Support



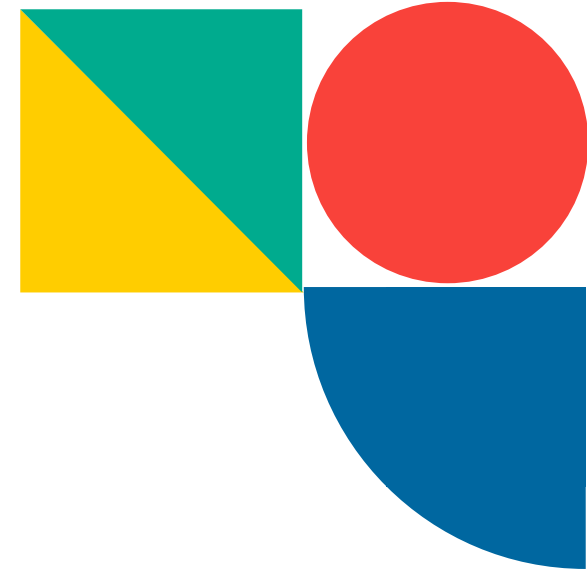
Alyssa Gremmen

Peer Integration and Systems Lead



Ethan Hopkins

Peer Systems Navigator



Introduction of Centre for Innovation in Peer Support





Support House's **Centre for Innovation in Peer Support** has both, direct service and systems support programming. Our Direct Service team provides wellness based, peer-led self-help and social connections programming. The Centre's Provincial, Systems & Partner stream is focused on supporting peer staff and their organizations, as well as organizations looking to implement peer staff through training, capacity-building, evaluation, research, knowledge brokerage, and quality improvement.



Virtual Groups

Peer led supports offered in a safe, non-judgmental space.

Self Help Groups

Self-referral based with a short registration process

Well BEing Group

Navigating Stress & Anxiety

Daily Wellness Planning

Social Connections

Self-Referral based with no registration required

The Sharing Circle

The Games Room

Peer Support Navigation

- Short-term, one-to-one support in navigating mental health and addictions supports and overcoming personal barriers in accessing identified services
- Up to three months in duration
- Is currently offered by phone, video chat, or text messaging

Virtual Learning Centre & Resource Hub

Peer Staff, Supervisor & Team Trainings

Peer Professional Development Webinar Series

Resource Hub: Implementation and Peer Support Practice

Validated Peer Support Evaluation Tool

Mentoring and Consultation

(Implementation, Peer Support Practice, Quality Improvement)

Communities of Practice

(Peer Staff, Supervisors, Family & Caregivers)



Foundations of Peer Support

The Centre's Definitions

What is peer support?

“Peer support is intended to be rooted in hope through an empowering and empathetic relationship between people who have a similar life experience or circumstance in common”

Who is a peer worker?

“Someone who has a similar life experience or circumstances to yours. They have engaged in special training and skill development to enhance their ability to support you in living the life you want.”

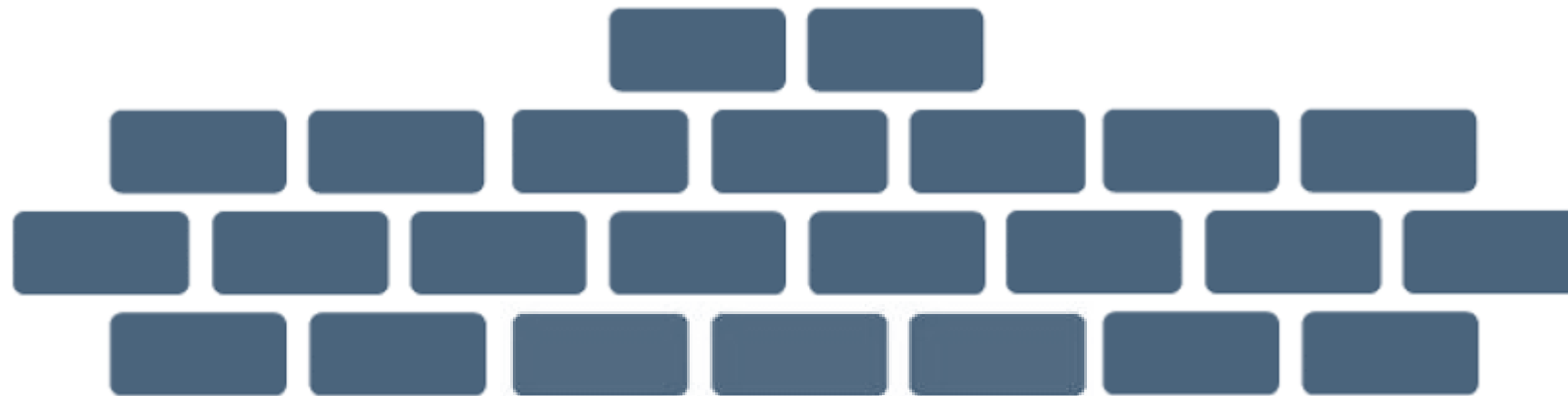
Source: Centre for Innovation in Peer Support

Foundation Built on Values

Core Values – Mental Health Commission of Canada

Values in Action – Centre for Innovation in Peer Support

Code of Conduct – Peer Support Canada



Importance of Values-Based Work

- Honours the individual as a person, holistically
- Honours the person as an expert in their own lived experience
- Empowers the person to achieve their wellness goals
- Reminds the person they have innate, unwavering worth
- Creates a space where safety and self-exploration may occur

Values of Peer Support

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2013). Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support.

Hope and Recovery

Acknowledging the power of hope and the positive impact that comes from a recovery approach

Integrity, Authenticity and Trust

Noting that confidentiality, reliability and ethical behaviour are honoured in each and every interaction

Self-Determination

Having faith that each person intrinsically knows which path towards recovery is most suitable for them and their needs, noting that it is the peer's choice whether to become involved in a peer support relationship

Dignity, Respect and Social Inclusion

Acknowledging the intrinsic worth of all individuals, whatever their background, preferences or situation

Empathetic and Equal Relationships

Noting that the peer support relationship and all involved can benefit from the reciprocity and better understanding that comes from a similar experience.

Lifelong Learning and Personal Growth

Acknowledging the value of learning, changing and developing new perspectives for all individuals

Health and Wellness

Acknowledging all aspects of a healthy and full life

Values in Action

The Centre for Innovation in Peer Support recognizes that peer support is made up of values based actions.

17 values based action statements were developed. These are the Peer Support Values in Action

These statements are validated and reliability tested, the items cannot be changed or altered.

Values in Action

1. **The peer support worker** reminds me that my health and wellness is unique to me
2. **The peer support worker** tells me about their experience in a way that is meaningful to me
3. **The peer support worker** gives me encouragement
4. **The peer support worker** shares information with me, e.g., community resources that are available, different learning opportunities
5. **The peer support worker** helps me explore options open to me when I have a decision to make
6. **The peer support worker** does not express disapproval of me or the choices I make
7. **The peer support worker** tells me they believe in me
8. **The peer support worker** tells me my feelings and opinions are worthwhile

Values in Action

9. **The peer support worker** genuinely listens to me
10. **The peer support worker** follows through on commitments they make
11. **The peer support worker** discusses confidentiality with me
12. **The peer support worker** tells me that I am not alone in my experiences and struggles
13. **The peer support worker** encourages me to do things for myself instead of doing things for me
14. **The peer support worker** learns from me and I learn from them
15. **The peer support worker** reminds me that I have the right to express my needs
16. **The peer support worker** demonstrates ways they take care of themselves
17. **When I meet with others in a group, the peer support worker** tells me that I can participate in a way that is comfortable for me and the group

Peer Support Canada Code of Conduct

- I will act ethically, according to the values and principles of peer support
- I will treat all people with respect and dignity
- I will respect human diversity and will foster non-discriminatory activities
- I will honor the rights, beliefs and personal values of individuals
- I will behave with honesty and integrity in providing support to peers
- I will respect the privacy of individuals and maintain confidentiality within the limitations of program policies and the law e.g. potential harm to self or others

Peer Support Canada Code of Conduct

- I will not knowingly expose a peer to harm
- I will not take advantage of the peer relationship for personal benefit, material or financial gain
- I will respect the boundaries of peer support work and will not engage in romantic or sexual relationships with the peers that I support
- I will not provide peer support in a manner that negatively affects the public's confidence in peer support



Implementing Peer Support Programming

Preparation Considerations

- Co- Design of Peer Programs
- Guiding Standards of Peer Support
- Policies and procedures
- Clear Job Description
- Salary range
- Interview panel

Recruitment Considerations – Hiring Guide

Knowledge, Experience & Training:

- Training and experience related to the practice of peer support.
- Knowledge and Training on the *Guiding Standards of Peer Support*
- Understanding of Recovery and Wellness
- Self Awareness
- Training in supporting people experiencing distress and crisis

Skills & Abilities:

- Skillful use of selective disclosure
- Proficient in setting and maintaining boundaries
- Effective conflict resolution & communication skills
- Ability to take initiative
- Ability to be flexible/adaptable
- Engages in reflective practice and seek out ongoing learning
- Excellent problem-solving ability
- Effective time management and organization skills

Practice Considerations

- Supervision
- Professional Development
- Documentation Guidelines
- Access to relevant staff resources



Measuring the Impact of Peer Support

Peer Support Outcomes and Impact

- Reduction in symptoms
- Decreased substance use
- Increased medication adherence
- Increased self-efficacy
- Development of coping and interpersonal skills
- Adoption of healthy behaviours
- Improved daily functioning and quality of life
- Increased goal setting and recovery planning
- Improved social functioning and expanded social networks
- Increased ability to reframe experience and re-construct identity
- More empowered and hopeful

(CMHA Waterloo Wellington)

Impact on Mental Health and Addiction System

- Fewer and shorter hospitalizations
- A reduced need for intensive mental health services
- Increased service-user satisfaction with treatment
- Better communication with service providers¹
- Peer supporters model recovery, decreasing stigma and altering attitudes among mental health providers
- Services become more recovery-oriented and person-centered when they employ peer staff
- Involving peer staff in systems-level planning leads to more innovative policies and programs

(CMHA Waterloo Wellington)

Peer Support Integrity, Quality and Impact Survey

The Centre created a validated tool to measure...

Integrity

The degree to which peer support services align with the values of peer support

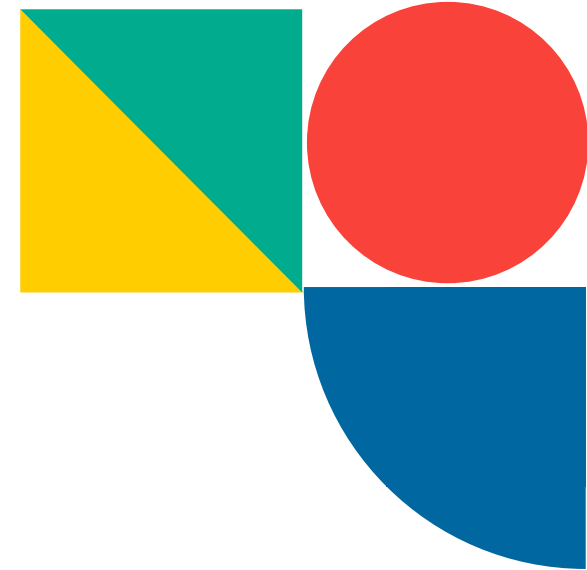
Quality

The degree to which peer support affect **PES**'s feelings about services they are receiving?

Impact

The degree to which **PES** believe they are experiencing certain impacts in their day-to-day life because of peer support

...from the perspective of **People Engaging with peer support Services**



Trainings and Opportunities



Peer Support Core Competencies Training

- Recovery and Wellness
- Peer Support Foundations
- The Peer Role + Working as a Team
- Communication Basics
- Connecting through our Experiences
- Peer Support Relationships
- Ethics and Boundaries
- Trauma Informed Care Practices
- Stigma and Discrimination
- Culture, Diversity and Worldview
- Social Determinants of Health + Advocacy
- Self Determination and Stages of Change
- Supporting Someone Experiencing Crisis/Distress
- Wellness Planning
- Resiliency

Key Documents – Resource Hub

Making the Case for Peer Support
(Mental Health Commission of Canada)

Guidelines for the Practice and Training of Peer Support
(Mental Health Commission of Canada)

Best Practices in Peer Support 2017 final report
Addictions and Mental Health Ontario

A practical guide to implementation of peer support services within an organization
ImROC

Supervising Peer Workers Toolkit
Centre for Excellence in Peer Support, Centre for Innovation in Peer Support

Growing Your Skills

Trainings

Wellness Recovery Action Plan
(Level 1 and 2)

Brief Action Planning

Non Violent Crisis Intervention Training

First Aid and CPR

Suicide Support Trainings
(ASIST, SafeTalk, Suicide to Hope)

Mental Health First Aid

Training topics to learn more about:

Harm Reduction

Cultural Competency

Grief and Bereavement

Wellness and Mindfulness

Mental Health/Addiction

Anti-Oppression

Trauma informed Care Practices

2SLGBTQ+

Always consider how your professional development aligns with the values and practices of Peer Support

Thank You!

For System Supports:
Centreinfo@supporthouse.ca

For Direct Service Supports:
1 -833-845-9355 x390

<https://supporthouse.ca/peer-services/>



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