

# **EMPOWERMENT SERVICES PEER SUPPORTS**

## **What are Empowerment Services: Peer Supports?**

Empowerment Services-Peer Support (Peer Support) are non-clinical, peer-delivered services with focus on rehabilitation, recovery, and resilience. They are designed to promote skills for coping with and managing behavioral health symptoms while facilitating the utilization of natural supports and community resources.

Peer support must include the identified goals of objectives in the individual's Individual Service Plan (ISP), with interventions tailored to the individual. These goals should promote utilization of natural supports and community services, supporting the person's recovery and enhancing the quality of their personal and family life. The intentional, goal-directed activities provided by this service emphasize the opportunity for peers to model skills and strategies necessary for recovery, thereby developing the individual's skills and self-efficacy. These services are provided through the perspective of a shared personal experience of recovery, enhancing the individual's sense of empowerment and hope.

## **Why are Empowerment Services: Peer Supports useful?**

The value of Peer Support lies in the shared experiences between the individual receiving the service and the peer delivering the service. The shared personal experience of recovery enhances the individual's sense of empowerment and hope.

## CORE Essential Competencies

**Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR)** is a recovery-oriented treatment approach that empowers and supports individuals to overcome barriers caused by their behavioral health diagnosis and promote independence and full community participation.

**Person-Centered Planning** is a collaborative process where individuals participate in the development of goals and services that are provided to them. It is based on the strengths of the individual and focuses on individual capacities, preferences, and goals. Individuals and families are core participants in the development of plans and goals for treatment.

**Motivational Interviewing** is a person-centered counseling style that addresses the common feeling of ambivalence about change. It is a collaborative conversation style that helps strengthen an individual's own motivation and commitment to change.

**Shared Decision Making** is a collaborative process that allows individuals and their care teams to make treatment decisions together. It takes into account the best scientific evidence as well as individual values and preferences.

**Trauma Informed Approach:** According to SAMHSA, trauma-informed care is a strengths-based service delivery approach that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma. It emphasizes the physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. It also involves anticipating and avoiding institutionalized processes and individual practices that are likely to re-traumatize individuals who already have histories of trauma, and it upholds the importance of consumer participation in the development, delivery, and evaluation of services.

**Wellness Self-Management (WSM)** is a curriculum-based clinical practice designed to assist adults to effectively manage health problems. WSM is important because it provides consumers with knowledge and tools to better manage mental and physical health problems. This enables individuals to spend less time managing illness and more time pursuing goals and enjoying life. WSM is also designed to reinforce principles of recovery including shared decision-making, informed choice, involvement, and hope.

### Additional Skill Sets Required of the Worker

- Outreach and engagement
- Advocacy
- Knowledge of Community Resources
  - Ability to connect individuals to natural supports in the community
- Sharing lived experience when appropriate to support individuals in:
  - Understanding the concept of recovery
  - Empowering and increasing their sense of hope
  - Managing behavioral health symptoms
    - Identifying triggers and managing symptoms
- Integrated and collaborative care
- Health literacy
- Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)
- Crisis/safety planning
  - pre-crisis support
- Knowledge of benefits/entitlements

## When and how to use the CORE Essential Competencies and Additional skills

### Psychosocial Rehabilitation

- Using shared personal experiences to support **skill development** that guides the individual towards more independence (e.g., healthy relationships, increased social networks, participation in meaningful activities)

### Person-Centered Planning

- Use the concept of **shared decision making** to help an individual identify a person-centered recovery goal and communicating with other practitioners to ensure **integrated, collaborative care**.

### Motivational Interviewing

- Using Motivational Interviewing to **engage the individual** to overcome ambivalence and increase their sense of hope towards the process of recovery.

### Trauma-informed Approach

- Providing safety, choice, collaboration, and trustworthiness will help with the delivery of advocacy support. This can include developing **psychiatric advance directives**, connecting individuals to natural supports like warmlines and peer support groups, and building self-advocacy skills.

### Wellness Self-Management

- Developing person-centered **Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAP)** may be helpful for individuals to identify activities that promote a sense of purpose and well-being and how to overcome barriers to engaging in these activities.
- **Transitional Support** like bridging from an institutional setting like a jail or hospital to the community by providing support during the transition period.