



Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services

DMH/DD/SUS Advisory Committee: Peer Mentoring Workforce

September 12, 2024

Guidelines to Engagement

DMHDDSUS is committed to transparency in our work and creating shared spaces to engage in constructive dialogue.

We acknowledge that these topics may be difficult, based on personal experiences and identities, and we honor your willingness to share valuable insight.

- If you have a question, wish to express an idea, or share a concern, please use the raise hand feature or the chat function.
- We ask that you are mindful of the time to ensure as many members as possible have a chance to provide input and share their thoughts.
- We may interrupt dialogue to keep the space constructive. One of our staff members will connect you with our DMHDDSUS team for additional conversation offline.

Agenda I/DD & TBI Peer Mentors

- Introduction to I/DD & TBI Peer Mentors
- Presentation of Peer Mentor Models in Tennessee and Michigan
- Discussion Points
 - Strengths of Peer Mentor Programs in Other States
 - Designing an Effective Training Program
 - Community Implementation of IDD & TBI Peer Mentor Programs
 - External Agencies and Providers with Successful Peer Mentor Programs

Peer Support vs Peer Mentoring

During community interviews we heard:

- Need for adult individuals in the community with IDD & TBI for peer services
- Help each other gain independence and reach daily goals through lived experience

Differences:

- Peer Support:
 - Continue to focus on MH and SU
 - Potential specialized training for IDD & TBI populations
 - Focuses on recovery
- Peer Mentor:
 - Made for individuals with an IDD and/or TBI, can have dual diagnosis
 - Also touch on MH/SU recovery
 - Have IDD and TBI individuals working with other individuals with similar lived experiences

North Carolina Current Pilot Program for Peer Mentoring

In 2017 Community Bridges began working to develop an I/DD Peer Mentoring Program

Collaboration with Optum and the National Association of Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Program includes a 16-lesson curriculum offered in person as well as virtually

Peer Mentoring Training Curriculum supported by the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities

Partnered with the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities to develop a comprehensive Care Extender Policy paper to “examine the potential for integrating individuals with lived experience and their families into compensated positions to improve family navigation and Peer Support Services”.

Not currently covered by Medicaid via the 1915i waiver unless dually diagnosed

Peer Mentor in the Context of IDD in other States

Tennessee

- According to [disABILITY LINK](https://disabilitylink.org/) in Tennessee:
 - Definition per Tennessee: Peer Mentor in the IDD service system means pairing trained individuals with disabilities with other persons with similar disabilities to support and encourage them
 - Teach the individual served how to advocate for themselves and reach daily life goals.
 - A Peer Mentor is a person with a disability who has learned life strategies, trained to be a self-advocate, and learned how to successfully live independently
 - They use their experiences and knowledge to support other people with disabilities.

Michigan

- Definition per Michigan: Peer Mentors are individuals with IDD who have a unique skill level from their experience.
- Peer Mentoring services provide adults with IDD opportunities to support, mentor, and assist individuals served
- Help individuals achieve community inclusion, participation, and independence
- Activities provided by Peer Mentors may include:
 - Sharing personal stories
 - Navigating transportation systems
 - Identifying recreation opportunities
 - Providing information on entitlements

Peer Mentoring Models in Tennessee

The Peer-to-Peer Mentors and Navigation System of Peer Mentors help with the Employment and Community First (ECF) CHOICES program. Assist participants with Person-Centered Planning, Self-Direction, Integrated Employment/Self-Employment, and Independent Community Living. Despite its potential, few participants currently use this benefit.

Challenges:

- 1.Lack of Awareness: Participants may not fully understand how to use the benefit or what it offers.
- 2.Limited Peer Mentors: Tennessee had a shortage of trained Peer Mentors to deliver this service effectively.

Solution:

To address these challenges, Amerigroup, one of the Tennessee's three Managed care organizations administering ECF CHOICES, saw potential in expanding the peer mentor benefit. They partnered with:

- The Arc Tennessee
- disABILITY Link

Initiative: Peer Support Academy

A three-day training program led by individuals with disabilities to equip others with disabilities to become effective Peer Mentors.

Key Components:

- Training: Delivered by experienced peer supporters.
- Mentoring: Ongoing support from The Arc Tennessee's 17 trained peer mentors.
- Employment: Paid opportunities for peer mentors to assist with referrals and use their skills gained through personal experiences.
- Impact: Expand use of benefits by addressing the lack of awareness and enhance engagement with more individuals with disabilities ability to access and benefit from peer-to-peer mentors
- Empowerment: Provides jobs for individuals with disabilities.

New Initiative Peer Mentoring Model in Tennessee

- Tennessee Dept. of Disability and Aging is also working on a new Peer Mentoring program.
- Built specifically to support people in [our MAPs program](#). (Medicaid Alternative Pathways)
- Working with Vanderbilt University to design the curriculum and training materials for the program.
- Will be solicitating to identify one or more organizational host partners for the program—essentially, the ones to recruit, train, hire, and support Peer Mentors.
- The funding for the host partners and Peer Mentor wages comes from the MAPs budget, which is state (non-waiver) funded.
- Peer-to-Peer Mentor is covered for members in Group 5 and 6 with a \$1,500 lifetime limit. We reimburse at \$25/hour and use HCPC T2013.

Peer Mentor Models in Michigan

Peer Mentors offer first-hand knowledge on community mental health services and resources, guiding others with similar experiences towards self-advocacy, empowerment, and personal responsibility.

Michigan Role of a Peer Mentor:

- Support Self-Advocacy: Help peers advocate for their own goals.
- Encourage Independence: Assist in building independent lives and achieving personal goals.
- Facilitate Planning: Aid with person-centered planning.
- Community Connection: Build bridges to community resources.
- Principle: Guided by self-determination for all individuals.

Peer Mentor 101 Training

- Designed to train individuals with I/DD to become effective peer mentors
- Provides tools to help peers become self-advocates, make choices, and develop leadership skills for autonomous living
- Referrals by Community Mental Health Service Providers (CMHSP)
- Certification by the Developmental Disabilities Council upon successful completion.

Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council

Certified Peer Mentors are individuals with I/DD serving Medicaid beneficiaries. The service is covered by the State Plan, Healthy Michigan (Medicaid Expansion) and EPSDT. Billed per encounter

- For anyone wanting to become a Peer Mentor
 - Must be referred by local provider agency
 - Trained, offered a supervised internship to gain experience and to improve/refine their skills
 - Evaluated on a set of core competencies
 - Once internship is completed, they are certified
 - Once certified, the provider is approved to use the Medicaid billing code.
- Read the press release https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder1/Folder56/MSA_16-39.pdf?rev=5776d4f51db24938aed4dd7975ee53cc



Comparison of Peer Mentor Models

Tennessee

- What is a Peer: Trained individuals with IDD with another person with IDD to support and encourage
- Funding: Tenn Dept of Disability & Aging Peer Mentoring Program currently being funded by (MAPS) Medicaid Alternative Pathways, hopes for future waiver state funding
- Training Requirements: Tenn Dept of Disability & Aging is currently working on an IDD curriculum in partnership with Vanderbilt University

Michigan

- What is a Peer: Peer Mentoring supports self-advocacy, encourages independence, person-centered planning, community connections
- Funding: Michigan IDD is funded by the State Plan, Healthy Michigan (Medicaid expansion)
- Training Requirements: Referral from (CMHS) Community Mental Health Service Provider. Complete 101 Mentor Program provided by MI Developmental Disabilities Council.
After 101 Mentor Program Completion individual is required to participate in between 90-120 hours of supervision.

Question:

1. What do we like most about each State's program?

Designing an Effective Training Program

What would the North Carolina program look like?

- IDD & TBI combined into one program
- Cover primary topics such as:
 - IDD
 - TBI
 - Dual Diagnosis and Recovery
- Some States require Peer Mentors to have an Internship or On-the Job Training
 - One State requires up to 120 hours of an internship

Questions:

- 1. How would an individual become a Peer Mentor?**
- 2. What other main topics should be covered?**
- 3. What would the credentialing program look like? Would there be an internship period?**

Community Implementation of IDD & TBI Peer Mentors

Where would Peer Mentors work?

Other States appear to have the top employment areas include:

- Supported Employment
- Group-Home Settings
- Independent Housing
- Universities and Public Schools
- Community Health Centers
- Hospitals
- Respite, Living Rooms, or Wellness Centers

Questions:

- 1. Where could Peer Mentor's work in North Carolina?**
- 2. What would be their primary job duties?**
- 3. Could they work along side a CPSS for an individual dually diagnosed?**

External Agencies and Providers

- Begin meeting and discussing the IDD & TBI curriculum with internal partners within DHHS in October – November
- During this time will also be meeting with other state agencies and continuing to research IDD and TBI Peer Mentoring programs
- Begin meeting with external partners in December/January to discuss Peer Mentoring

Question:

1. Who are some external agencies that you feel should be interviewed during this process?
2. What work are they currently doing with the IDD Peer Mentors?

Next Steps

- Setting up internal DHHS meetings
- Work with other State's and continue communicating/meeting with them to review their perspective programs.
- Meet with external partners
- By Spring 2025 come back to this Advisory Group with a plan for review