



**OVERVIEW:**

- The Peer Specialist project is embedded in the Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA).
- Peer Support embodies a variety of approaches that are based on the belief that people who share the same behavioral health issues can help each other through the mutuality of peer support. These practices are led by both Certified Peer Support Workers and Peer Specialists.
- Federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services rules require that the state approve the certification process vis-à-vis the Medicaid State Plan for peers providing Medicaid reimbursable rehabilitative services. This certification is finalized by the New Mexico Credentialing Board for Behavioral Health Professionals (NMCBBHP).
- Certified Peer Support Workers (CPSW) may only work in a state approved agency; and, under the supervision of a independently licensed behavioral health practitioner.

**SUMMARY:**

Key Tasks of the “Peer Specialist” Project include:

- The OCA plans, develops, and actively participates in all trainings provided by Consumer Contractors in the state.
- OCA works closely with Core Service Agencies (CSA) to ensure that Employment Opportunities are provided to Individuals who have the credential of Certified Peer Support Worker.
- Assertive Community Treatment Teams require a Certified Peer Support Worker be a part of the team.
- Revising the Certified Peer Specialist Training Manual and Processes based on the evaluation from trainings. Providing Continuing Education Training to both Certified Peer Support Workers and Certified Family Specialists.
- Attend and monitor all Peer Specialist Trainings to ensure compliance with Medicaid regulations.
- Work closely with the Steering Committee of the Healthy Homes Project which is a SAMHSA grant that is developing supportive housing in Farmington and Santa Fe. Another part of the Healthy Homes Grant is the development of additional trainings for the peer support workers in the areas of Supported Employment and Supportive Housing.
- Work closely with the State Advisory Council for Veterans to develop a Peer Training on PTSD and Military Culture for Veterans.
- The OCA has recently developed a Certified Peer Support Worker video. This can be viewed on <http://www.bhc.state.nm.us/BHConsumers/OCA.html> .
- The OCA is working towards becoming a chapter of the National Association of Peer Specialists.

**HSD STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Goal 4: Improve Behavioral Health Services through an Interagency Collaborative Model

Task 4.2 Reduce adverse impacts of substance abuse and mental illness on individuals, families and communities

Task 4.3 Promote recovery and resiliency for high-risk and high-need individuals with mental illness and/or substance abuse to successfully manage life challenges, and to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities by increasing access to housing, education, employment, transportation and positive social interactions.



Task 4.4 Promote positive behavioral health and reduce stigma associated with behavioral health issues.  
 Task 4.5 Develop New Mexico’s behavioral health workforce

**OTHER PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

- *NM System of Care Strategic Priorities, Proposed Strategic Priorities FY09-10 (Draft 12/15/08) BHPC Recommendations to the Collaborative*  
*Priorities: Children’s, Adolescents’ and Families’ System of Care*  
*Consumer Voice and Choice*  
*Substance Abuse Services*  
*Transportation*  
*Supportive Housing*  
*Supported Employment*  
*Peer provided services*  
*Services to Native Americans*  
*Crisis Response Systems (Including Jail Diversion and Law Enforcement Initiatives)*  
*Effectiveness, Evidence Based Practices & Professional Training*  
*Support Local Provider Base*
- National Association of Consumer, Survivor Network and OCA Directors Nationwide
- <http://www.gacps.org/Home.html> -- A forerunner in peer supports.
- <http://www.naops.org/> -- There are only two chapters in US

**CURRENT FUNDING:**

As a Part of the Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) budget the Peer Specialist and FY 2011 Training budget is as follows:

- Certified Peer Specialist and Recovery Planning Training FY2011: \$198,323.00.

**CURRENT PROGRAM STATUS:**

- **THE OCA IS IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA IN THE SHIPROCK COMMUNITY TO TRAIN INDIVIDUALS FROM THE NAVAHO COMMUNITIES TO BECOME CERTIFIED.**
- **THE OCA HAS PLANNED SIX TRAINING FOR THE REMAINDER OF FISCAL YEAR 2011.**
- **THE OCA HAS PLANNED A CONTINUING EDUCATION RETREAT FOR ALL CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT WORKERS IN 2011.**
- **THE OCA HAS FIVE TRAINERS AND IS WORKING TOWARDS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE METHOD OF DEVELOPING FUTURE TRAININGS.**
- **THE OCA CURRENTLY MONITORS ALL CPSW TRAININGS TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH MEDICAID GUIDELINES; AND OTHER FEDERAL GUIDELINES.**
- **THE OCA HAS TRAINED 147 INDIVIDUALS FROM MAY OF 2009 UNTIL PRESENT.**
- **THE NEW MEXICO CREDENTIALING BOARD FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS HAS TESTED 147; PASSED AND CERTIFIED 100 INDIVIDUALS.**
- **SEVENTY-FIVE (75) OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE CERTIFIED HAVE WORK; THE OTHERS EITHER DO NOT WORK OR ARE DOING ADVOCACY WORK IN THE CONSUMER COMMUNITY.**
- **THE OCA HAS DEVELOPED A PEER SPECIALIST TASK FORCE WHICH WILL BE MEETING ON A QUARTERLY BASIS BEGINNING JANUARY 2011.**
- **THE OCA IS WORKING TOWARDS NEW MEXICO BECOMING A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PEER SPECIALISTS. SEE [WWW.NAOPS.ORG](http://WWW.NAOPS.ORG)**

**FACTS/CHALLENGES:**



Human Services Department  
Behavioral Health Services Division (BHSD)  
Peer Specialists – Certified Peer Support Workers (CPSW)  
Fact Sheet

THE CERTIFICATION OF PEER SUPPORT WORKERS IS VIEWED BY MANY AS EMPOWERMENT TRAINING RATHER THAN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING. MANY INDIVIDUALS HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE CPSW TEST OF SIXTY (60) MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS AS BEING TOO DIFFICULT DUE TO THE PREVIOUS METHOD OF TRAINING AND TESTING. ALTHOUGH CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT WORKERS ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PEER SPECIALISTS IN GENERAL ARE A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF AN INDIVIDUALS RECOVERY. THERE ARE PEER SPECIALISTS WHO WORK IN MANY DIFFERENT ARENAS INCLUDING COMMUNITY WELLNESS CENTERS AND DROP IN CENTERS. RECOVERY IS NO LONGER WHAT A CLINICIAN DOES TO AN INDIVIDUAL BUT RATHER WHAT PEERS DO FOR THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER. RECOVERY IS ABOUT BEING RESILIENT.