



Peer Recovery Specialist Academy Training Overview

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Adapted with permission from the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse's CARES Training Overview.

Peer Recovery Specialist Academy Description

This training introduces participants to the key concepts, fundamental skills and core functions of peer recovery support services delivered within a recovery-oriented system of care. A Recovery Is Happening (RIH) trained Peer Recovery Specialist is uniquely qualified by lived experience credentials to provide peer support that promotes progressive health, sustainable happiness, and pro-social living, also known as long-term recovery from alcohol and other drug use. Peer recovery support is the process of giving and receiving non-professional, non-clinical assistance that is fundamentally strengths-based, delivers or assertively links to individually tailored and culture-specific services, and, most importantly, demonstrates hope. These distinct services enhance the utilization and effectiveness of prevention and treatment across the continuum of care from professional services to mutual aid/recovery support groups and the recovery community.

The mission of the RIH Peer Recovery Specialist Academy is to **facilitate each participant's progress toward mastery-level competence as a Peer Recovery Specialist**. The goal is for participants to leave the training with a "can-do" comfort level for delivering recovery peer support services within a team of addiction treatment service providers or as a volunteer with RIH. In addition to confidence, participants take away from the training a concrete assessment of her or his Peer Recovery Specialist knowledge and skills plus a plan for further developing their abilities to support others' recovery. Lastly, participants develop a network of peers who give and receive ongoing support that promotes progressively higher levels of competence and visibility.

This transformational Peer Recovery Specialist training begins with recognizing the experience, strength and hope brought by each participant. Building on that, participants have opportunities to assess various fundamental areas for growth and development and participate in activities that accomplish their respective Peer Recovery Specialist goals. Mirroring the process that is used with peers we assist, we periodically re-assess our growth and progress and set new goals, always with the end in mind: promoting sustainable recovery in oneself and others. Accomplishing this requires time for learning concepts, practicing skills, receiving feedback, and reflecting on and incorporating the feedback.

Daily Schedule*

8:30 – 9:00	Daily Opening
9:00 – 10:30	Session 1
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:00	Session 2
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30	Session 3
2:30 – 2:45	Break
2:45 – 4:30	Session 4
4:30 - 5:00	Daily Closing

**The Daily Schedule is flexible and will accommodate the group's training needs.*

Daily Opening: Set the Tone & Re-Acquaintance (30 min)

- A. Review Training Safety and Respect Guidelines
- B. Review Improvement Questions/Challenges (IQs) & Performed Examples of Recovery Kindness or Strength (PERKS)
- C. Burning Questions from Yesterday's Session

Daily Sessions: Sessions 1 – 4 are designed to build upon each preceding topic so that participants are introduced to new concepts and ideas with increasing comfort and confidence. The sessions encourage participation and trust building and facilitate each participant's level of comfort regarding the use of their Peer Recovery Specialist skills and stories to help others.

Daily Closing: At the close of each day we check-in with all participants and give some time to reflection about the day. (30 min)

- A. Review Improvement Questions/Challenges (IQs) & Performed Examples of Recovery Kindness or Strength (PERKS)
- B. Reflection about the day.
- C. Recovery Journey Reading/Journal time

Overall Training Objectives

1. Confidently deliver peer recovery support services within a team of addiction treatment service providers or as an RIH volunteer.
2. Fill a role that is valued by myself, the peers with whom I engage, and potential team.
3. Assess my Peer Recovery Specialist knowledge and skills.
4. Identify my Peer Recovery Specialist development goals and tasks for moving toward a mastery level of competence.
5. Engage a network of peers with which I give and receive ongoing support that promotes our work, Peer Recovery Specialist development and on-going recovery.

Daily Objectives and Key Learning Elements

The Peer Recovery Specialist Academy curriculum is facilitated over five days. The objectives for each day are described; and one or two key learning elements described to highlight the content covered.

DAY 1

Key Learning Elements

- RIH Peer Recovery Specialist Academy's Vision, Mission, and Values
- Peer Recovery Support Services Principles and Core Functions
- Pleasure Unwoven & the Science of Addiction & Recovery (SOAR)
- "What's Right with You"
- RIH Peer Recovery Specialist Academy Core Function: Individual Recovery Support Services

Objectives

1. Create a group agreement regarding guidelines for making this a safe and respectful place that promotes every participant's learning and development.
2. Recognize and recite the RIH Peer Recovery Specialist Academy mission statement.
3. Identify the recovery-oriented, person-directed and outcome-informed principles of the RIH Peer Recovery Specialist Academy support services.
4. Contrast the roles and tasks of a mutual support sponsor, a Peer Recovery Specialist, and an addiction counselor.
5. Recognize the principles of recovery-oriented, person-directed and outcome informed services.
6. Define recovery peer support services and recovery.
7. Distinguish between the tasks that move beyond the helping role of a Peer Recovery Specialist in those of a 12-step sponsor, counselor, nurse/physician, and priest/chaplain/clergy.
8. List the four core functions of a Peer Recovery Specialist.

9. Identify at least five pathways to recovery.
10. Compare the recovery rates for addiction and other chronic health conditions.

DAY 2

Key Learning Elements

Relationship Enhancement and Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Objectives

1. Describe three aspects of the spirit of motivational interviewing, and the importance of person-centered principles in communication.
2. Discuss at least three principles for responding to resistance in a non-confrontational style.
3. Demonstrate via role-play enactment the ability to respond to others with basic empathic listening, open-ended questioning, and reflective listening skills.
4. List at least three micro-skills of MI, and their application to person-centered communication.
5. Identify change talk in conversation and provide an empathic summary statement.

DAY 3

Key Learning Elements

- Cultural Competence
- Self-Awareness and Values
- Stigma and Labeling
- Culturally-sensitive Interviewing

Objectives

1. Identify and acknowledge one's own cultural and spiritual heritage, including one's cultural values, biases and subjectivity and how it impacts the provision of care and support.
2. Identify culturally competent recovery oriented activities and pathways needed for the local populations who are in your community.
3. Assess your cultural competence for delivering peer support to people in your community, and identify ways to enhance your skills and awareness's for supporting peers in your community.

4. Identify how stigma and labeling hinder recovery and learn strategies that can help in overcoming issues related to stigma and labeling for people in recovery.
5. Describe the various components of Cultural competence, cultural sensitivity and spirituality and other relevant terms.

DAY 4

Key Learning Elements

- Ethical Decision Making and Personal Boundaries
- Co-occurring Disorders: Mental Health and Chemical Dependency

Objectives

1. Learn decision-making models for ethical & boundaries dilemmas.
2. Understand ethical issues in crisis situations.
3. Understand boundary issues in social situations & the internet.
4. Identify the interface between mental health (MH) and chemical dependency (CD).
5. Define co-occurring disorders.
6. Understand common mental health diagnosis.
7. Review evidence based practices utilized in treating co-occurring disorders.

DAY 5

Key Learning Elements

- Peer Recovery Groups
- Recovery Advocacy
- Recovery Planning
- Community Resources
- Self-care
- Recovery Elevator Speeches
- Commencement

Objectives

1. Follow the process for leading a Peer Recovery Support Group.
2. Learn how to use different tools for recovery planning.
3. Develop an understanding on how to locate community resources.
4. Identify self-care activities.
5. Deliver a personalized recovery elevator speech.