



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW Funding Youth Peer Services

Youth Peer Services - An Overview for Funders

Across child- and adult-serving systems, there is interest among communities and organizations to provide transitional support to youth and young adults with a strong focus on Youth Peer Support (YPS). Over the last 20 years, the use of peer support services have evolved to include a variety of settings and a focus on children, youth and young adults.

Expanding Access to Peer Support Services

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued guidance for states in 2013 on how to establish peer support services as a Medicaid benefit for children, youth, and young adults with significant behavioral health conditions. CMS and SAMHSA recognize the utility and benefit of having peers with formal training and lived experience provide support and coaching to persons with behavioral health conditions as part of a team.

Youth Peer Services. An Integrated Approach

Peer supporters often work as part of a multidisciplinary team to maximize a peer’s value for individuals receiving services. These teams may consist of both clinical and non-clinical services and should include linkage to community supports as well. Each team member provides a separate service or function, and the team works in a non-segregated and cohesive fashion, to complement each other’s distinct discipline.

Youth Peer Support Services

33% Decrease Inpatient Readmissions

There is a growing interest in providing these services to youth, given research that shows youth and young adults with mental health conditions are more likely to turn to their peers for help and, when asked, they express a desire to have peer support services available to them.

49% Decrease Inpatient Days

Goals

- Supporting youth empowerment;
- Assisting youth in developing skills to improve quality of life; and
- Working collaboratively with others involved in delivering the youth’s individual care.

Roles

- Provide:
- One-on-one support;
 - Advocate for the voice of the youth in team meetings;
 - Facilitate group meetings; and
 - Community outreach and education.

Outcomes

- Youth peer services have increased hope and belief in the possibility of recovery; empowerment and increased self-esteem; self-efficacy and self management of difficulties; social inclusion; engagement; and increased social networks.
- Young people with mental health conditions who had access to peer advocates—as compared to those who lacked such access—had more favorable views regarding access to services, appropriateness of and participation in services, as well as higher overall/global satisfaction.

Funding for Youth Peer Services

Many states across the country began implementing youth peer services through their SAMHSA Children’s System of Care grants in an effort to develop a comprehensive and responsive children’s mental health system of care. In order to bring these services to scale, diversify their use and ensure sustainability, states are effectively leveraging Medicaid and federal, state, and local funds.

Medicaid offers peer services as an In Lieu of Service and prior authorization is required. Peer services can be billed under the following procedure codes:

- Procedure code H0038;
- Self-Help/Peer Services, per 15-minute unit, Max of 16 units/day; and
- Supervision of a Licensed Masters Level BH Clinician is required

The Department of Children and Families/Substance Abuse Mental Health also pays for Peer Support Services, through the Recovery Support Services Codes listed below. Services include substance use or mental health education, assistance with coordination of services as needed, skills training, and coaching. There are no requirements for Adult Mental Health (AMH). For Adult Substance Abuse (ASA), supervision must be by a Qualified Professional.

- 46 - Individual Services
- 47 – Group Services

Training & Certification

Lived experience is a foundation of peer-to-peer support services. Credentialing, and Competency Examination through the Florida Certification Board are critical to a Peer Supporters successful outcome.

A total of 40 hours of training and competency must be demonstrated among:

- Be between the ages of 18 and 29 at the time of application;
- Have lived experience as a person who, between the ages of 14 and 25 experienced a significant life challenge; and
- Now be living a wellness and/or recovery-oriented lifestyle for at least two years.

Advocacy;
Mentoring;
Recovery Support; and
Professional Responsibility

Resources to Connect & Learn More

Peer to Peer Support and Social Media - Natl. Institute of Health:
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4830464/>

Peer Support Services for Youth and Young Adults Who Experience Serious Mental Health Conditions: State of the Science:
<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/state-of-the-science-articles-2018-amp-plus>

Financing Recovery Support Services - SAMHSA:
https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/partnersforrecovery/docs/RSS_financing_report.pdf

Youth and Young Adult Peer Support: What Research Tells Us About Its Effectiveness in Mental Health Services:
<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/proj-5-AMP-peer-support-faq.pdf>

Youth Peer Support - Youth MOVE:
<https://youthmovenational.org/youth-peer-support/>

Florida Dept. of Children and Families: Peer Services
Resources: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/publications/>

