



2018 Via Hope Peer Services Implementation Learning Community Application Supplement

About the Via Hope Recovery Institute

The Via Hope Recovery Institute aims to promote mental health system transformation by helping organizations develop practices that support and expect recovery, and by promoting the voices of people with lived experience, youth, and family members. Recovery Institute initiatives are designed to support the implementation of new practices, shift organizational culture, promote innovation, and increase collaboration within and among teams. Peer Services Implementation is a specific program within the Recovery Institute, formerly called the Peer Specialist Integration Program. The experiences and skills available through this program are necessary preparation for organizations to meet the challenges and opportunities arising in our rapidly changing environment. In this document, you will find information about Via Hope's 2018 Peer Services Implementation Program, including purpose, program description, expectations for participants, and requirements.

Peer Services Implementation Program: Certified Peer Specialists in Texas

Since 2010, when Via Hope held its first Peer Specialist Certification Training and launched the Peer Specialist Learning Community, over a thousand people have been trained as peer specialists and there has been a veritable explosion in the growth of peer support positions in the Texas behavioral health system. As the value of peer support has become recognized and the interest in hiring peer specialists has increased, so has the demand for effective consultative support for the implementation of the valuable services they provide. The Peer Services Implementation (PSI) Program is designed to help provider organizations deepen their recovery orientation, specifically through the implementation of peer support services. There is a competitive application process. Organizational teams are comprised of peer specialists, supervisors of peers, clinical staff, and individuals in administrative leadership roles.

Over the course of the PSI Program, teams will focus on change across five domains of peer services implementation:

- Organizational Culture,
- Funding Peer Specialist Positions,
- Recruitment and Hiring of Peer Specialists,
- Peer Support Staff Role Definition and Clarification, and
- Supervision and Career Advancement.

Participants Can Expect the Following Support in the PSI Program:

- Tailored support to help teams meet goals as they define them,
- Ongoing access to a community of teams navigating similar peer services implementation challenges,
- On-demand tools and resources only available to program participants,



- Regular access to subject matter experts who provide individualized consultation for people that occupy a variety of roles within the organization, and
- Professional development (at least 24 hours CEUs for a variety of disciplines).

Requirements to Apply for the PSI Program

- First, review all of the program activities in order to determine whether 1) this program is a fit for your organization's needs and 2) your organization can fully commit to the program requirements.
- Complete and submit the online application in its entirety by the April 4th, 2018 5 pm CST deadline, including the creation of a PSI team and obtaining a letter of support from an Executive Sponsor.
- During the application process, you must identify a team leader who is interested in leading this effort. The team should include individuals in the various roles that are outlined in the application. Download the Application Preview document on the PSI program page: <https://www.viahope.org/programs/recovery-institute/peer-services-implementation/>
- The organization must be a mental health service provider that receives public funds.

Participating Team Responsibilities

Participating teams will be asked to...

- Complete all of the required activities in timeline (see below).
- Commit to independent activities, including the development of PSI-specific goals.
- Host Via Hope on-site for an initial visit, a 2-day Demystifying the Peer Workforce workshop, and up to one day of on-site peer specialist consultation. In addition to hosting, ensure that the appropriate staff are present for these activities.
- Complete evaluation activities (e.g. distribute surveys at the end of workshops hosted at the organization) as requested by Via Hope.
- Collaborate and communicate with other staff involved in peer services implementation, such as human resources, quality management, and training staff.

Evaluation Activities

As noted above, all participating organizations will be asked to take part in program evaluation activities. Via Hope may employ a variety of evaluation elements, such as training feedback forms, program improvement discussions (i.e. focus groups, interviews), and pre-and-post-program surveys.

Required PSI Program Activities

An estimated timeline of activities is also included below the list of required activities. Activities for the 2018 PSI Learning Community will begin in April of 2018 and end in May of 2019.

Orientation Activities for the PSI Team:

- Individual site orientation call with Via Hope PSI staff to discuss site-based PSI team role, PSI Unit selection, hopes for the project, and upcoming activities.
- One-day consultation visit with Via Hope PSI staff.
- Create project plan and goals in consultation with Via Hope PSI staff.

Cross-Site Events that the PSI Team will attend:

- 2-day Opening Gathering for all PSI Teams.
- 2-day Closing Gathering for all PSI Teams.

On-Site Events that the PSI Team will host:

- 2-day Demystifying the Peer Workforce workshop for PSI Unit staff and key leadership.
- 1-day technical assistance visit in support of peer specialists.



Ongoing Activities for the PSI Team:

- Implementation of changes within PSI Unit.
- Monthly individual coaching calls.
- Monthly all teams calls or webinars.
- Independent learning activities and activities related to the implementation of peer services, as determined by team.
- Meet as a group (at least) monthly to review plans, develop ideas, review resources, etc.
- Evaluation activities.

Estimated Timeline of Activities

- March, 2018 – Application process.
- April, 2018 – Sites notified of acceptance status.
- April, 2018 – Orientation activities, including individual site call and community webinar.
- May, 2018 – Initial 1-day site visits and consultation.
- June, 2018 – Opening gathering for all sites.
- June – August, 2018 – Individual site calls, community webinars, and independent site-based work.
- September - October, 2018 – On-site 2-Day Demystifying the Peer Workforce Workshop.
- November 2018 - March, 2019 - Individual site calls, community webinars, and independent site-based work.
- January – March, 2019 –Peer Specialist-specific technical assistance.
- April, 2019 – 2-Day Closing Gathering.
- May 2019 – Wrap-up activities.

Experiences Implementing Peer Services with the Support of Via Hope¹:

Without the support and technical assistance provided through Via Hope, we would not be nearly as progressed in the Recovery Oriented System of Care or peer integration as we now are. The resources have been invaluable in moving our organization from one of a behavioral system to one of recovery.

– Peer Specialist Integration Project Participant

Following participation in the Peer Specialist Integration Program (the former name of the Peer Services Implementation Program), self-reported peer specialist integration increased as well as leadership commitment to recovery orientation. Teams made improvements to knowledge, policy, and practice in each of the five areas of peer specialist integration: Organizational Culture, Funding, Role Definition and Clarification, Supervision and Career Advancement, and Recruitment and Hiring. Teams' accomplishments included developing a peer support training module for new employees, developing a peer employee career ladder, established Human Resources guidelines regarding hiring peer providers, established method of reallocating funds from traditional positions to peer specialist positions, and more. By project end, teams increased overall referrals to peer specialists from once a month to once a week².

¹ CSWR

² CSWR



Application Process

As part of the 2018 Peer Services Implementation Program application process, applicants will complete an online application. A preview of the application will be posted when the application opens so that applicants can review questions prior to submitting their applications. Information about the application process can be found on the Via Hope website. Learn more: <https://www.viahope.org/programs/recovery-institute/peer-services-implementation/>

Application Timeline

March 7, 2018 11:30 am – 12:30 pm CST	Via Hope hosts an informational webinar on the upcoming program. To register: https://tinyurl.com/viahopepsiwebinar
March 7, 2018	The online application opens. Link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/vhpsilcapp2018
March 21, 2018 11:30 am – 1:00 pm CST	PSI Webinar, “Documentation: How to Provide Effective Documentation While Maintaining Peer Support Values,” Presented by Amy Pierce, CPS, Via Hope PSI Field Liaison To register: https://tinyurl.com/viahopepsidocument
April 4, 2018	The online application will close. All applications must be submitted by close of business to be considered.
By April 13, 2018	Accepted applicants will be notified.
April, 2018	Orientation activities for program initiatives will begin.
April, 2018 to May, 2019	Program activities will take place.

Maximizing Participant Success

Several factors increase the success of organizations that participate in Recovery Institute programs. These include:

- **Significant Executive Sponsor³ involvement**, including clear and consistent communications about promoting recovery and resiliency, and related efforts.
- Use of Recovery Institute efforts to **support other initiatives** (e.g. trauma-informed care implementation) that emphasize **the leadership development of people with lived experience**.

³ For the purposes of the Recovery Institute, Via Hope has defined Executive Sponsor as an individual within your organization that has formal authority to support change from the top and has committed to support change from that position. The Executive Director or Superintendent must indicate support for the application but your agency’s Executive Sponsor can also be the Director of Mental Health Services or someone in a similar role. Because of the importance of executive sponsorship to the success of these initiatives, the Recovery Institute application process has been designed for completion by the Executive Sponsor.



- Identification of **recovery-oriented change champions** that comprise a leadership team that represents a variety of perspectives and roles, including people with lived experience.
- Develop the **leadership of a variety of staff** to lead recovery change at all levels of the organization.
- **Continued involvement** in recovery-oriented transformation initiatives over time.

Application Review

A review committee will first screen applications to ensure applicants have committed to all required activities and the essential elements of the application have been submitted. Next, all eligible applications will be reviewed and considered for the 2018 Peer Services Implementation Program.

Prioritization will be based on such factors as:

- Demonstrated commitment to and engagement in promoting recovery and resiliency-oriented organizational change.
- Dynamics of change within the organization and how those dynamics relate to the program.
- Leadership commitment to removing barriers for participating team.
- Organizational match with program focus.

Conclusion

Registration Fees

The 2018 Peer Services Implementation Program will be offered at no cost to participating organizations. However, participating organizations will invest significant staff time and energy into the program. Organizations that prioritize these programs are able to take full advantage of what is offered and make more progress than those that cannot commit fully to the process. The cost of the 2018 Peer Services Implementation Program is covered by a grant from the Medical and Social Services Division of Texas Health and Human Services Commission. While Via Hope is not currently required to charge organizations for participation in these initiatives, in future projects we do anticipate charging a registration fee. Such fees are already required for individual trainings that are provided outside of Recovery Institute projects (e.g. Peer Specialist Certification training or Intentional Peer Support).

For program gatherings, lodging, breakfast, and lunch are typically provided. However, no travel stipends are included for participants and other travel costs must be covered by participating organizations.

Questions?

For questions/information regarding the 2018 Peer Services Implementation Learning Community, please contact John King, PSI Program Coordinator at john.king@viahope.org

For general inquiries regarding the Recovery Institute, please contact Amanda Bowman, Recovery Institute Manager, at amanda.bowman@viahope.org.

To learn more about Via Hope: www.viahope.org



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