

**Fact Sheet: Office of Consumer Partnerships and Peer Counseling**

Updated: 10-21-16

<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>In 2003, the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health report called for consumers to be involved in planning, delivering, and evaluating mental health services. The mission of the Office of Consumer Partnerships (OCP) is to ensure that consumer involvement and communication is embedded in behavioral health systems. The OCP takes an active role in representation of consumers in internal agency activities, communication with consumers and consumer advocacy organizations and active support of the development and growth of individual consumer leaders, advocacy organizations, and consumer-run organizations.</p> <p>The senior manager of the OCP is also the program director for the certified peer counselor program. The certified peer support program trains and supports individuals with lived experience to provide unique and effective recovery support services. Peer counseling is a Medicaid billable service, and peer counselors have been shown to be effective in all service areas, including outpatient, inpatient, crisis, housing and employment support, and community support. Certified peer counseling is currently a mental health program, with plans to expand to include peer counselors for substance use as well.</p>
<p><b>Eligibility Requirements</b></p>	<p>The OCP includes individuals with lived experience working within DBHR. The OCP also includes all individuals receiving or who have received behavioral health services or their parents or guardians. A critical eligibility requirement is an interest in participating in policy making and involvement with improving the behavioral health system.</p> <p>The requirements for a Certified Peer Counselor include being a person with a mental health issue, completing a 40 hour in-person and online training, and passing a state test. Peer Counselors who work for Medicaid agencies also obtain an Agency Affiliated Counselor credential.</p>
<p><b>Authority</b></p>	<p>Washington Administrative Code 388-865-0107, 388-877, 246-810, and the Medicaid State Plan Amendment.</p>
<p><b>Budget</b></p>	<p>Office of Consumer Partnerships (\$54,155), Peer Counseling (\$650,000)</p>
<p><b>Cost and Numbers Served</b></p>	<p>The Office of Consumer Partnerships has a Listserv with over 3,500 members and offers regular state updates and webinars. In SFY 2015, approximately 350 individuals received training and were certified as peer counselors. In addition, approximately 275 peer</p>

	received continuing education, and all BHOs received education in operationalizing peer support.
<b>Primary Partners</b>	OCP partners with consumers, consumer-run organizations (statewide and national), advocacy organizations, Behavioral Health Organizations and counties. The peer counseling program partners primarily with consumer-run organizations, mental health agencies, consumers, Certified Peer Counselors, and Behavioral Health Organizations.
<b>Oversight</b>	The Office of Consumer Partnership has oversight by the DBHR Director. The Peer Support program has oversight from a behavioral health office chief. Numerous stakeholder groups also participate in oversight.
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