



ROLE OF PEER WORKERS IN PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING*

▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 30 minutes

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- List 4 ways peer workers promote health and well-being.

 **Training Methods:** Small Group Brainstorm, Large Group Discussion

 **In This Activity You Will...**

- Brainstorm “who is a peer/what do they do?” (20 minutes).
- Discuss the difference between personal qualities/knowledge/skills of a peer and discuss which of these a peer brings to the job versus are developed by training or both. (7 minutes).
- Summarize by mentioning studies showing the impact of peer support on a client’s health. (3 minutes).

 **Materials:**

- Newsprints-Peer Roles (one for each group)
- Handout – Role of Peer Worker
- Flip chart and easel
- Markers

 **Preparation:**

- Prepare newsprints
- Prepare handouts

Instructions

1. Break into small groups of 4-5 people.
2. Pass out newsprint and a different color marker to each table group. Brainstorm “who is a peer/what do they do.” Emphasize commonalities and differences in roles.
3. Instruct participants to think about what roles a peer plays in promoting health and well-being.
4. Instruct participants to brainstorm in their groups and write their answers on the newsprint. Watch time and instruct when 15 minutes has passed.
5. Ask participants to return to their seats.
6. Ask groups to present lists one by one (posting the lists on the wall in front).
7. Discuss the roles and as each group presents look for commonalities and differences.
8. Hand out answer key. Discuss personal qualities, knowledge and skills of a peer and ask for examples from the list. Discuss whether these are something that a peer can be trained on or if peer already has.
9. Discuss how peers are often valued more for their personal qualities but that they can also teach skills and have a measurable impact on health and well-being.
10. Explain the concept of a multidisciplinary team is. Briefly discuss the idea of multidisciplinary teams and the specialized role of the peer.

* This module comes from the Comprehensive Peer Worker Training, Peer Advanced Competency Training (PACT) Project Harlem Hospital Center, Division of Infectious Diseases, 2008.

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► TRAINING TIP

- Keep these flipcharts to be used in the Multidisciplinary Team exercise later in training.
- Use this first exercise as an opportunity to validate the work that peers do. Whether they are paid or volunteer, peers are performing work that is a valuable function for their agency.

Summary

Summarize by reminding peers that they are much more than cultural guides: peers have a crucial role to play in a multidisciplinary team and can have an impact on a client's health. Tell participants that the positive impact of social networks and social support has been proven by studies to improve prevention efforts, slow disease progression, improve adherence, improve coping and quality of life.

* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit. This module comes from the Comprehensive Peer Worker Training, Peer Advanced Competency Training (PACT) Project Harlem Hospital Center, Division of Infectious Diseases, 2008.

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SESSION HANDOUT

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Actively listen
Advocate
Answer questions
Assist with paper work
Assist with the service plan
Bridge the gap between patient and doctor
Bring street experience
Buddy
Build confidence
Communicate in layman's terms
Community outreach
Compassion
Concerned
Condom demonstrations
Counselor
Credible source of information
Demonstrate in marches
Dependable
Educate
Educate youth
Empathetic
Empower clients and themselves
Enhance self esteem
Escort
Experience with disclosure
Facilitator
Family support
Feedback to healthcare providers
Flexibility
Follow-up
Foster self-efficacy
Friendship (to an extent)
Give information
Harm reduction
Have more time than medical staff
Help clients with substance use
Help communicate with providers
Help incorporate treatment into daily life
Help navigate health care system
Help with confidence/self esteem
Help with disclosure
Help with risk factors
Honest
Housing
Identify with client
Identify client needs
Identify resources
Inspire hope
Lobby
Non-judgmental
Open and honest
Outreach
Positive role model
Presentations
Prevention with positives
Reach people where they are
Referrals
Run support groups
Support
Treatment education
Understanding