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*“Peer-to-Peer has allowed me to take the focus off my illness and learn to balance it with the rest of my life. By engaging in recovery, I am able to be more relaxed and productive both at work and at home.” – Anonymous*

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## ***PEER SUPPORT ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020 - 2021***

### **WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?**

Peer support is a non-clinical, strengths based program to aid individuals with their recovery journey. Individuals with lived experience (Certified Peer Specialists) help peers by inspiring hope, walking with them on their recovery journeys, reducing stigma, providing self-help education, linking to other services, and supporting the individual to identify goals.

### **HOW CPS SERVICES WORK?**

- Services are provided by a CPS and mostly one-to-one.
- Services may also include groups if all participants agree and they have mutual goals &/or objectives. Activities such as WRAP® planning/Advanced Directives are examples of this.
- Appointment dates & times are directed by the service participant.

### **WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?**

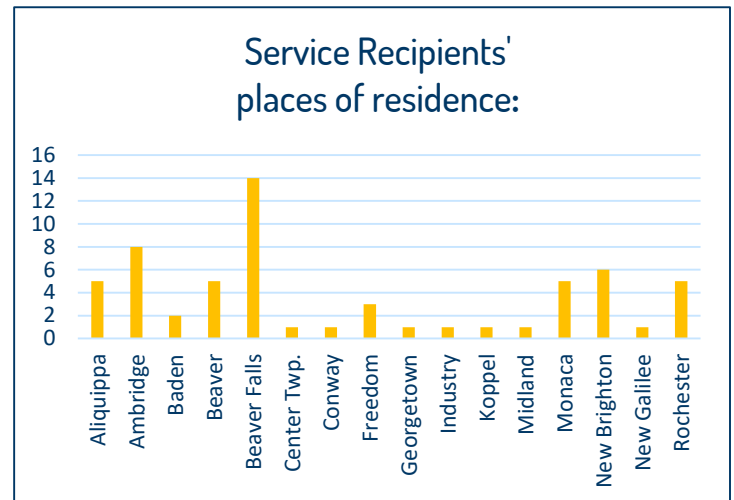
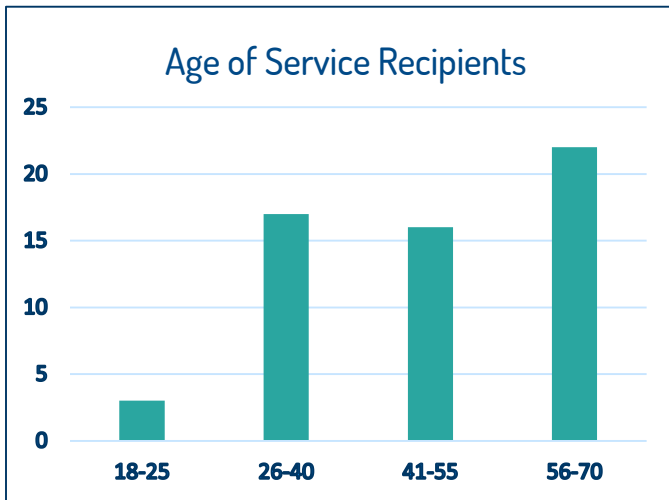
In order to be eligible to participate in the peer support program, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- Be 14 years of age or older
- Have the presence or history of an SMI or SED
- Have a written recommendation from a Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts acting within the scope of professional practice
- Choose to receive peer support services

## MHA Peer Support Services have provided support for 60 individuals in FY 2020-2021

The pandemic has challenged our program and the way we provide services. Currently, Certified Peer Specialists are able to meet with peers face to face (outdoors) following CDC protocol and social distancing. We are also using telehealth services when needed and adapting to ever changing circumstances. If you are interested in peer support services, please contact our office for more information.

### Demographics



(Survey tools, internal and external, are used to help assess service participants' satisfaction. Internal assessments are: an initial survey completed by the participant upon entry into the program, a follow-up survey is initiated after an individual has received services for six months, and annually or upon exiting the program. This survey contains a Likert scale questionnaire along with a section for open-ended questions. To encourage feedback, service participants are provided with self-addressed, stamped envelopes.

### Health in Recovery

#### *Examples of Individual Service Plan Goals:*

The CPS and peer work together to set S.M.A.R.T. goals that act as a roadmap for services. A S.M.A.R.T. goal is a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable, and Timely. Most goals are set to be accomplished in 1 year. A six-month update or review is completed for each goal in order to assess progress and identify any changes that may need made to the goal.

- "I want to get my own apartment by X date."
- "I would like to lose ten pounds by X date."
- "I want to walk 1-2 times per week for exercise by X date."
- "I would like to learn skills to deal with my agoraphobia and leave my house once a month by X date."
- "I want to attend three group activities a week by X date."
- "I would like to get a part-time job by X date."
- "I will get my learner's permit and driver's license by X date."
- "I want to get signed up for DART by X date."

Quotes from CPS – At the initial phase of pandemic, Peer Support Services applied to be a telehealth provider. We were granted that service provision. The Peer Support Staff responded by adopting their approach to non-face-to-face contact. The following expressions shed light on some of the challenges.

- “Doing an intake over the phone was a challenge. It was more difficult to get peers to engage and build trust. Sharing a little about myself helped build trust.”
- “One of the biggest struggles I have experienced during telehealth appointments was working from home and finding topics for discussion. Some peers didn’t have specific topics to discuss that reflected their goals. In order to overcome these two challenges, I made sure to have my work area cleaned and vacuumed a day before, open my blinds to get some motivation and inspiration. The subjects of discussion were searched on the internet after I did some research on healthy wellness tools and tips to assist peers in achieving their goals.”
- “I had trouble filling in the time in between appointments. I used the computer for journaling my appointments for time management and for accountability for time spent with my peers. I would walk after work as a way to separate from my workday and home life.”
- “Supervising staff from home and communicating with agencies regarding referrals and mutual clients was fairly challenging. Phone calls, emails, and Zoom meetings allowed for some of these gaps to be bridged effectively.”

Quotes from Peers – *The following are expressions from individuals that are/have received Peer support services.*

- “Worked on reviewing ISP and facilitating treatment goals.’
- “Focused on positive verbal skills, update contacts and began goal conversation”
- “Spent time working on appointments and doctor visits. Drove to the Phoenix Center to practice driving.”
- “I have so much to look forward to that the depression and everything else just isn’t getting to me anymore.”
- “I’ve been doing really good with things beginning to open up. I feel a huge weight lifted up off my shoulders.”
- “I had a life before Covid. Now, I can appreciate developing new skills to fit different situations.”
- “I am going to do this. I will prove her (girlfriend) wrong. Rehab will work for me.”
- I was just able to remind myself that doing that will only make things much worse and take away all I’ve accomplished.”
- When I forget to take my meds, my appetite decreases greatly to a point that I have to force myself to eat. Only when I take meds again, then I can eat”

# ***EVERYONE IN THE PEER PROGRAM RECOMMENDS THIS PROGRAM TO OTHER PEOPLE NEEDING SERVICES!***

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## ***C/FST Assessments***

(External Assessments are performed by the Consumer Family Satisfaction Team. The team interviews service participants semi-annually to determine their level of satisfaction with Peer Support services.)

In 2020, individuals that are receiving or have received Peer Support services provided feedback, through Consumer/Family Satisfaction Team (C/FST) surveys about their level of satisfaction with their services.

## ***CFST Survey Answers:***

- 1. My peer is like my own cheerleader, encourages me and cares.**
- 2. It is nice to have someone that understands and cares.**
- 3. Pushed me to try new things and activities, like going to the library. And he pushed me to do job searches and it has really helped.**
- 4. She encourages me, helps me keep things I need to do going forward and me personally going in the right direction.**
- 5. I feel comfortable with my peer and it's nice that I can get personal. He is easy to talk to, it is an outlet and has taught me more about self-care. He also provides me information on peer trainings so I can always be updated in my certifications.**

\*All surveyed were satisfied with Peer support services.

**“Maybe I can’t stop the downpour, but I will always join you for a walk in the rain.” – Mental Health Advocacy, Inc.**