

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT PEER PRACTICE STANDARDS

Practice standards are rules or guidelines used as the basis for informed decision-making about acceptable work performance and practices. These Practice Standards are based on essential values, principles and competencies for all staff providing this service. The following core set of standards are key in ensuring that the peer support services are provided in a consistent, ethical and high quality manner.

Providers of Youth and Young Adult Peer Support Services must have Policies and Procedures in place which address:

- Social Media policy which details confidentiality issues and addresses all confidentiality standards and requirements;
- Communication between staff and participants which address the appropriate utilization of social media, texting and cellphone contacts;
- Transportation policy addressing the appropriate utilization of vehicles and purposes to transport participants;
- A Policy addressing how to recognize and respond to individuals in crisis situations;
- Policies outlining structure and frequency of staff supervision;
- Coordination of and referral to other community service systems and supports (e.g. Juvenile Justice, Children and Youth, school districts, treatment services etc.);
- Policy on the standards and requirements of staff to complete all the necessary criminal and child abuse background checks to work with this population;
- Procedures for recruitment and retention of YYA Certified Peer Specialists.

Providers of these services must have a staff training plan that meets and documents the following required training topics:

- Prior to providing the service all staff must have documented completion of the Two (2) Day state Youth and Young Adult CEU Classes;
- Annually each staff must document completion of a total of eighteen (18) hours of continuing CEU education which must include a minimum of six (6) CEU hours related directly to serving youth and young adults;
- All staff must document completion of an annual Mandated Reporter Training, which is not be counted toward any other training/CEU requirements. The supervisor must pass all child abuse clearances when supervising a CPS working with youth or when working as a CPS supervisor in an agency that serves youth, to comply with the Child Protective Services Law (23 Pa. C.S. §§ 6301-6385) as required in the Peer Support Services Bulletin OMHSAS-12-16. See Provider Handbook Section VII-II Peer Support Services (PSS) (revised 12/12/16) B. Provider Qualifications for MA Payment, Criminal history and child abuse background clearances, Page VII-21.

- At minimum, all staff must have documented completion of trainings in the following areas that can be included in the required 18 hours of CEU's:
 - Ethics and Boundaries
 - Children/Youth Services and Service Systems
 - Engagement of Youth and Families
- Other Recommended Topics for CEU's:
 - Family Dynamics
 - Adolescent Sexuality
 - Self-Care
 - Verbal De-Escalation
 - Strategic Sharing

All Peer Support Service Providers are expected to follow the Bulletin OMHSAS-12-16 and Provider Handbook Section VII-II Peer Support Services (Revised 12/12/16). In addition to the bulletin and handbook, consider the following key points regarding the use of group interventions, taken from the PSS FAQ Document released on 09/2017:

- To receive PSS in a group, each individual must have a goal in the ISP reflecting the need for the group and each individual must agree to participate in the group.
- Services such as psychoeducation or WRAP are the types of services that may be provided in groups when approved by the county AND Value Behavioral Health. If, as a provider of Peer Services to adults or youth and young adults, you find a need to conduct psychoeducational groups, you must submit a detailed group description to your county and VBH for approval.
- Appropriate Medicaid peer support group services DO NOT include social, recreational, or leisure activities.
- The unit of service for billing purposes is 15 minutes. When one or more CPS acting together provide a group service for one or more individuals during a 15 minute unit of service, the maximum number of units billed shall equal the number of CPSs involved or the number of individuals served, whichever is smaller.
- Units of service may be billed entirely to one individual participant or the units of services can be divided among group members, at the discretion of the provider. In any case, all case records of individuals involved in the group must include appropriate documentation of their involvement in the group, whether or not actual units were billed to the individual.

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