

Solicitation of Interest (SOI): Peer Specialist Workforce Advancement & Mentoring Network

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) is seeking letters of interest to establish a Peer Specialist Workforce Advancement & Mentoring Network for Peer Specialists working or who plan to work in adult mental health services. Peer Support Services provided by Peer Specialists are a strong evidence-based practice which have demonstrable positive impacts on individual mental health and recovery outcomes.

While already working in a variety of settings statewide, Peer Specialists do not have a centralized, consistent, state-wide entity that provides leadership, support and direction around the growth and advancement in their field. The demand for Peer Specialists is increasing, making the need for this network essential to ensuring the future professional growth and meaningful inclusion of Peer Specialists throughout the healthcare system, and other community systems serving adults.

The Peer Specialist Workforce Advancement and Mentoring Network will serve as a centralized entity to provide leadership, support, advocacy, and best practice guidelines, ensuring that the integrity of the Peer Specialist discipline remains intact, while demonstrating and reinforcing fidelity to the established core values and best practices.

The Peer Specialist Workforce Advancement & Mentoring Network will also be responsible for promoting Peer Workforce opportunities, including opportunities in underserved or marginalized communities, to better promote equity and diversity in the Peer Specialist Workforce.

Finally, this group will assist with the establishment of Peer career ladders throughout our adult-serving system, including support for Peer Specialists to move into supervisory roles as discipline experts.

Goals:

OMH has three main goals for this statewide initiative:

- Create a centralized, state-wide entity that provides leadership, support and direction for the growth and advancement of the Peer Specialist Workforce
- Establish a state-wide Peer Mentoring Network
- Establish a state-wide Interactive Job Directory to promote work opportunities for Peer Specialists

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

ANN MARIE T. SULLIVAN, M.D.
Commissioner

MOIRA TASHJIAN, MPA
Executive Deputy Commissioner

Deliverables:

To accomplish these goals, OMH is seeking providers or vendors with the capability to:

- Establish a state-wide, centralized entity to coordinate efforts for Peer Specialist Workforce Enhancement in the mental health care system
- Develop virtual platforms for the Peer Mentoring Network and Interactive Job Directory
- Utilize and leverage national resources dedicated to the advancement of the Peer Specialist Workforce
- Serve as the facilitator of statewide opportunities for networking and ongoing communication of Peer Specialists, supervisors, and organizations
- Create a virtual hub that indicates the ongoing availability of Peer Specialists in the five specific OMH regions (NYC, HR, LI, CNY, WNY) and showcases Peer Specialist employment opportunities
- Create a virtual hub that cultivates leadership, provides support and advocacy for Peers in the workforce
- Create an advisory board of Peer Specialists, as well as Peer supervisors and Peer leaders, who are elected yearly by Peer members across all five OMH regions statewide to oversee adherence to evidence-based Peer Support best practices. The advisory board will be tasked with ensuring that the values, principles, and established best practices of Peer Support are maintained throughout the adult mental health system.
- Maintain an online meeting platform that ensures communication, networking, meetings, training opportunities, etc.
- Collaborate with state and national training entities to offer opportunities to Peers, non-Peers, Peer supervisors, and employers of Peer Specialists

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Expanded access to employment opportunities and the advancement of a career ladder for the Peer Specialist workforce
- Ensuring that the values and principles of Peer Specialists are maintained and supported by Peers, non-Peers, Peer supervisors, and employers of Peers
- Ensure Peer Specialists and non-Peer supervisors/employers have access to appropriate supervisory supports, and that geographically isolated Peer Supervisors/Peer agencies can obtain/offer support/supervisory opportunities through connection and collaboration

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Eligible applicants:

Eligible applicants are vendors with expertise in:

- National and regional efforts to promote and enhance the Peer Specialist workforce
- Peer Specialist workforce practices and values
- Oversight and maintenance of peer online forums and learning management systems
- Developing and managing a job board
- Providing support to organizations that support Peer Specialist and their supervisors

Please send your indication of interest and any questions via email to Carol Swiderski at carol.swiderski@omh.ny.gov.

Please indicate "**Peer Specialist Workforce Advancement and Mentoring Network**" in the Subject Line.

Indication of Interest are due by Thursday, April 28th 2022 at 12:00 Noon.

Please note this is solely a Solicitation of Interest and does not guarantee an award or contract.

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