

WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer Support is a structured relationship where a trained worker or volunteer, who has gone through a process of recovery, assists other people with mental health issues to identify and achieve life goals as part of their own recovery process. Peer Supporters provide mentorship, emotional support, problem solving, goal setting, crisis risk assessment, and referrals to other community supports. Peer Supporters promote empowerment and self-determination through non-judgmental listening and person-directed goal setting.

HOW TO GET PEER SUPPORT

Call us at
905-545-2525

or

Drop in at
103-100 Main St E
Hamilton, ON L8N
3W4

MHRC is a
Consumer/Survivor
Initiative; we are run by and
for consumers of the
mental health system.

Mental Health Rights Coalition



Peer Support

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Peer Support May Help those who ...

- Are in crisis
- Need support to work through difficult feelings and thoughts
- Want to connect with other agencies and supports which may also be able to help
- Are dealing with personal issues such as shelter, housing, food, hygiene, recreation
- Need help to find ways to socialize

How Does it Work?

Call or Walk In Peer Support

- Any mental health consumer who is in crisis or may just need a supportive listener may use this service by calling or coming in to the Coalition.

One-on-One matches

- One on one matches are available through select community agencies. The person requesting a match will be matched with a trained Peer Support Worker. They may meet at the organization for a few times and then may find outside activities of mutual interest where they can talk and have some fun at the same time. This form of peer support is designed to help those who have been hospitalized or who may be lonely to find friendship and support while they learn to better integrate into the community. Organizations interested in providing this type of peer support are encouraged to call the executive director to speak about the program.

Who Uses Peer Support?

Anyone working toward recovery and in need of a supportive and empathetic listener. People of all races, cultures, beliefs, genders and sexuality are welcome at MHRC.

How to Access Peer Support

Consumers may refer themselves for peer support at MHRC. There are no waiting lists. Referrals may also be made by hospitals or other medical and clinical supports but must be approved by the consumer being served. Peer support is not clinical. MHRC does not keep clinical records and will not account for members time in peer support for any legal or clinical requirement. Membership is not required for Peer Support however membership at MHRC is free of charge for self-disclosed consumers of the mental health system over the age of 18. We encourage all consumers who use any of our service to become members and enjoy all of the benefits.



Beginnings

The peer support program began as “The Connections” program in the late 1990’s. It was part of a study project called “Therapeutic Relationships: From Hospital to Community”, which measured quality of life outcomes. MHRC continues to work closely with the researchers and other consumer organizations who were involved in that study. After the original study was completed MHRC, and many other agencies who had been involved, decided to continue with the work even though we have no direct funding for the work. Because of benefits to consumers and to the general improvement of mental health services we continue to advocate for core funding for this important work. All staff, Board Members, and drop-in members of MHRC are Consumer/ Survivors; all staff, coordinators and the Executive Director are trained in Peer Support.

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