



To: Stacy Smith, Adult MH Team Lead
June Freeman, Adult MH Policy Consultant
Dr. Michelle Laws, Asst Director for Community Engagement and Empowerment

From: Peer Voice NC Strategic Planning Council, Peer Support Standards Coalition

Re: Peer Support Definition and Clinical Coverage Policy

Date: 10/20/19

Dear Stacy, June and Michelle,

On behalf of Peer Voice NC (PVNC), the statewide peer and “consumer” organization by and for people in recovery from mental health and co-occurring substance use challenges, we’d like to extend our gratitude for hosting the peer support webinar on Monday, September 30, 2019. The session was well attended, indicating that the future of peer support in NC is considered critical to so many in our state.

At the request of various stakeholders, the PVNC Council has convened a Peer Support Standards (PSS) Coalition comprised of providers, Certified Peer Support Specialists, family members, allies and advocates. PVNC members are eager to serve as active partners to the Division, DHHS and DMA to elevate NC standards for peer support practices. To this end, the PSS- Coalition is developing shared responses and recommendations, across stakeholder groups, to advance peer related trainings, workforce equity, rate structures, peer and recovery related policies, provider standards, and related quality issues.

Members of the PSS-Coalition attended the recent webinar. Due to a variety of technical issues and the delivery of the information on the call, PVNC has received feedback that the webinar provided more confusion than clarity, without sufficient opportunity to have questions answered from a variety of participants in a coordinated and informative manner. Our stakeholders are clear about the urgency and are requesting another webinar to be scheduled within a month.

In preparation, Coalition members are submitting the following questions and requests:

- A 1 1/2 hour block of time devoted to peer support service definitions and clinical coverage policy via interactive webinar
- Identification of the “point person” at DHHS and DMA for questions and feedback
- Timeframes for the final policy and service definitions
- Clarification around the following information:
 - Distinctions between DHHS and DMA related roles/responsibilities;

- Understanding of the relationship between the Clinical Coverage Policy and PSS definitions;
- Expectations within the MCO/PHPs jurisdiction to change the peer support service definition and the latitude they have to do so;
- Timeframes that MCO/ PHP's have to disseminate their clinical coverage policies based on the service definition and support they will offer for providers to come into compliance;
- Explanation of the variances between the state definition and Medicaid definition (ie. rate difference);
- Calculations used for rate setting and its comparison to national peer support rates;
- Updates on questions posed to CMS;
- Description of the process that was used to develop the service definition and policy and its inclusiveness of peer workers, providers, MCO's, and peer content experts;
- Policies that are currently in place and/or being developed to address equity and disparities among the Peer Support Specialist workforce and how are these policies are/will be monitored; and
- Vision for peer support in NC, in and outside Medicaid and state billable service definitions and inclusive of social determinants of health

Additionally, the coalition recognizes that with the breadth of information provided and wide variety of foundational knowledge and perspectives of the webinar participants, it is incredibly challenging to have a fully interactive session that is productive for DHHS, DMA and participants. In this vein, PVNC has been asked to develop and distribute a survey to gather questions in advance of the webinar to share with DHHS and DMA. Our intention is to post and then compile the questions to submit to DHHS and DMA two (2) weeks in advance of the scheduled webinar.

PVNC's Peer Support Standards Coalition would like to extend our gratitude for your support and partnership and believes that the aforementioned will help send a clear message to Peer Support Specialists throughout the state that we are valued leaders, and a key stakeholder in this process. We look forward to sharing the new date, webinar information and link throughout NC.

Sincerely,

Peer Voice NC Strategic Planning Council and Peer Support Standards Coalition

Elliot Palmer Jr., NCCPSS, CEO of Share Hope, PVNC Strategic Planning Council Member
 Kemi Amola-Hill, Ph.D, LPCS, NCC, CEO VOICE Therapeutic Solutions
 Lisa Hainsworth, Genesis Project 1
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Cc: Kody Kinsley, Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health & IDD, DHHS
Kathy Nichols, Assistant Director, MHDDSAS
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