

Peer Support Programs: Overview

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Peer Support Programs by and for people with mental illnesses (“consumers”) take many forms throughout the VA and wider community. They vary according to the nature of the peer interaction, the intensity of the interaction (weekly, monthly, single session), compensation (volunteer, CWT, or paid) and the amount of training and supervision involved. Peer Support Program are a very helpful addition to professional mental health services, delivering things that it cannot. They can also stand alone, and often do.

The following is an overview of the types of peer programs that are available throughout the VHA and in the non-VA community. **Please note this chart is a work in progress: programs may have opened, closed, or changed contact information.** We have included contact information whenever possible.

Peer Programs have a number of different purposes in different combinations:

- Information: helping other consumers find resources they need, become familiar with a new program, gather information to solve problems and reach their goals.
- Support: structured or informal sharing of encouragement among others who “get it”
- Skill building: daily life-task skills, self advocacy, illness management, communication, etc
- Social Network: to lessen isolation, provide welcoming enjoyable interactions with others
- Advocacy: formally or informally working to dismantle stigma, foster respect, protect rights
- Inspiration: providing success experiences, role models, articulation of goals and means to reach them, instilling hope.
- Empowerment: a combination of believing in ones self, holding on to hope, and reaching for the means to reach one’s goals.

VA EXAMPLES	COMMUNITY EXAMPLES
Drop-in Center: non-clinical informal setting for socializing, peer support, resources access	
VISN 17, Central Texas	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>On Our Own, Inc. (Baltimore City)</i> 6301 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214 Contact person: Tony Wright 410-444-4500 Tonyw21214@aol.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>On Our Own Center (Balt. County)</i> 10 Dunmanway, Baltimore, MD 21222 410-282-1701 / 800-307-2203 Contact Person: David Burkhardt</p>
Clubhouse: structured daily program run jointly by consumers and professional staff	
VISN 7, Georgia	International Center for Clubhouse Development http://www.iccd.org/

Warm Lines: peer run telephone call-in service for support and information

Stratton VAMC Community Day Prog.
113 Holland Ave, Albany, NY
Nicholas Pazienna: nicholas.pazienna@med.va.gov

Friendship Line: 1-888-448-9777
OR
Peer Mentor Program Warm Line: 520-770-9909
http://www.geocities.com/az_mh_consumers/pmp

Peer Counseling: trained peers provide one-to-one or group counseling to other consumers

Batavia VA PTSD Peer Support Prog.
Contact: Terri Julian: Terri.Julian@med.va.gov
OR
Cleveland VAMC, Brecksville OH
Center for Stress Recovery
Kenneth.Prabucki@med.va.gov

Peer Bridger Project
1 Columbia Place, Albany, NY 12207
Tel: 518-436-0008

Tanya Stevens: tanyas@nyaprs.org
www.NYAPRS.org (Peer Bridger link on left)

Consumer-run organizations: may combine various specific programs and advocacy w/ emphasis on a welcoming environment for consumers

Batavia VA PTSD Peer Support Prog.
Contact: Terri Julian
Terri.Julian@med.va.gov
OR
Errera Community Care Center
Moe Armstrong: moea@shore.net
115 Boston Post Rd
West Haven, CT 06516
OR
VISN 17, Central Texas: support groups, learning lab, drop in, warm line, orientation to services, transportation.

Nueva Luz Resource and Advocacy Center
236 S. Tucson Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716
520-770-1197
www.geocities.com/az_mh_consumers/nuevaluz
OR
Hearts and Ears
1900 E. Northern Parkway, Suit 310
Baltimore MD 21239
410-323-0444
Paula Lafferty: paula@heartsandears.org
OR
On Our Own-Maryland
<http://www.onourownmd.org>

Support Groups: peer-led meetings to share mutual aid, discuss problems and strategies

www.Vets4Vets.us (national network)
OR
VA Boston Outpatient Clinic,
Mental Health Clinic, RP / Psychosis Programs
Contact: Melissa S. Wattenberg, PhD
:251 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114
melissa.wattenberg@med.va.gov

Depression and Related Affective Disorders
Association (DRADA)
2330 West Joppa Rd., Suite 100
Lutherville, MD 21093
410-583-2919 www.drada.org
(will arrange support groups in other locations)

Peer-managed Housing: Consumer managed transitional or long term supportive living

VANTHCS HCHV (Health Care for Homeless
Veterans Program)
Desralei.Jackson@med.va.gov
Dallas, Texas
OR
Crescent Building Transitional Residence Program
Debra J. Locke, M.Ed, CPRP, VRS

PeerHousing.Org
1281 E 19th Ave. #A303
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907)272-8216
katsumi@peerhousing.org
OR
Main Street Housing, Inc.

<p><u>Debra.Locke@MED.VA.GOV</u> Lowell, MA</p>	<p>On Our Own-Maryland http://www.onourownmd.org</p>
<p>Crisis House: Peer-run highly supportive environment for consumers in mental health crisis</p>	
	<p>The Crisis Hostel, Ithaca, NY (607) 272-3724 http://www.power2u.org/selfhep/crisis_hotel.html</p>
<p>Vocational Training: Peer-run programs to prepare consumers for employment or business, or to employ consumers directly in supportive environment</p>	
<p>Veteran Business Owner Initiative Edith Nourse Rogers VA Hospital 200 Springs Road, 116B Bedford, MA 01730 jerry.pinsky@med.va.gov (781)-687-3338 OR Long Beach CA Day Treatment Center Richard.Tingey@med.va.gov</p>	<p>Shining Reflections Restaurant & Tea Room @ Shining Reflections Vocational Center 330-385-7000 or 330-385-0533 Fax: 330-385-2008 http://www.adultrecoverynetwork.org/content/programs/shiningreflections.html (one long address) OR Laurie Mitchell Employment Center 8794 "S" Sacramento Drive Alexandria, VA 22309-1677 703-531-6380 lmecc@lmecc.org http://www.lmecc.org</p>
<p>Advocacy: Organizations to advance and the legal and human rights of mental health care consumers</p>	
<p>VA Mental Health Consumer Councils http://www.mentalhealth.med.va.gov/cc</p>	<p>CHARG Resource Center 709 East 12th Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80203 (303) 830-8805 Fax: (303) 830-8918 info@charg.org or http://www.charg.org/ OR Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumer Assn. 4105 Derry Street, Harrisburg, PA 17111 1-800-88PMHCA or (717) 564-4930 FAX: (717) 564-4708 http://www.pmhca.org/index.htm</p>
<p>Homeless Outreach: Consumers helping other consumers who are homeless</p>	
<p>Southwest Behavioral Health Services 1112 E. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85034 602-256-2688</p>	<p>Cleveland Comprehensive Homeless Center 1000 Brecksville Road, Brecksville Ohio 44141 Lisa.Pape@med.va.gov</p>
<p>Life Skills & Socialization: Consumers helping other consumers learn and maintain daily living tasks (banking, grocery shopping, recreation) and/or become familiar with a new mental health program</p>	
<p>Long Beach Day Treatment Center Richard.Tingey@med.va.gov Long Beach CA (VISN 22) breakfast club, welcome basket, computer and</p>	

<p>shopping help OR VANTHCS - CWT/Veterans Industries Sharon.Crowder@med.va.gov Dallas, Texas OR VISN-5 alumni programs: graduates of a program return to be role models for current clients. (need fill in contacts)</p>	
<p>Empowerment Programs: peer-led classes/groups focused on skill-building & values clarification towards adopting a self-guided, positive, active stance regarding living one's life and with mental illness.</p>	
<p>Vet to Vet Peer Program (VISN 1) Laurie Harkness, Ph.D Laurie.Harkness@med.va.gov (203)931-4062 http://www.veteranrecovery.org (click on "peer support education" in upper left) OR NEW West LA Vet to Vet Program Roy Brown roy.brown@med.va.gov 113 01 Wilshire Blvd Los Angeles, CA 90073 http://www.vet2vet.us</p>	<p>Queen's Behavioral Health Services Kaheihemalie Building, 1374 Nuuanu Ave. Honolulu, Hawaii (808) 926-0466 The facility offers a 15 week course that encourages consumers to deal with their feelings about themselves and their SMI. OR Peer to Peer from NAMI (national) www.nami.org/template.cfm?section=peer-to-peer</p>
<p>On Line: Internet web-rings, support groups, message boards, blogs, and other support and information exchange via email and websites</p>	
<p>Veteran Recovery Group http://groups.yahoo.com/group/veteranrecovery</p>	<p>Beyond Madness Webring /www.geocities.com/steel_tears/bmadness.html OR People Who: http://www.peoplewho.net OR Creative Expression: http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/Creative- Expression/</p>

Helpful Websites

Veteran Recovery: www.veteranrecovery.org
Veteran Self Help Support Groups: www.vets4vets.us
Directory of Consumer-Driven Services: <http://www.cdsdirectory.org/>
National Mental Health Consumer Self-help Clearinghouse: <http://www.mhselfhelp.org>