



# Core Peer Competencies Take Center Stage of Integrating Peers in the Mental Health Workforce

## NAMI National Conference Denver, CO

July 7, 20156



# Overview of Core Peer Competencies

**Keris Jän Myrick, M.B.A., M.S.**

Director, Office of Consumer Affairs

**CAPT Wanda Finch, SAMHSA's Program Coordinator for  
*BRSS TACS, CMHS, SAMHSA***

# Agenda

- Introduce the core competencies
- Discuss potential uses of the core competencies to provide all forms of peer support delivered by or to adults, young adults, family members and youth
- Discuss the potential benefit for developing core competencies for the provision of peer support in specific settings and/or for specific groups

# Objectives

- 1) Articulate the importance and use of the peer core competencies in the provision of peer support services for all forms of peer support
- 2) Identify effective methods to apply the competencies in specific settings and/or for specific groups
- 3) Describe and promote use of the competencies to all forms of peer support at state and local levels

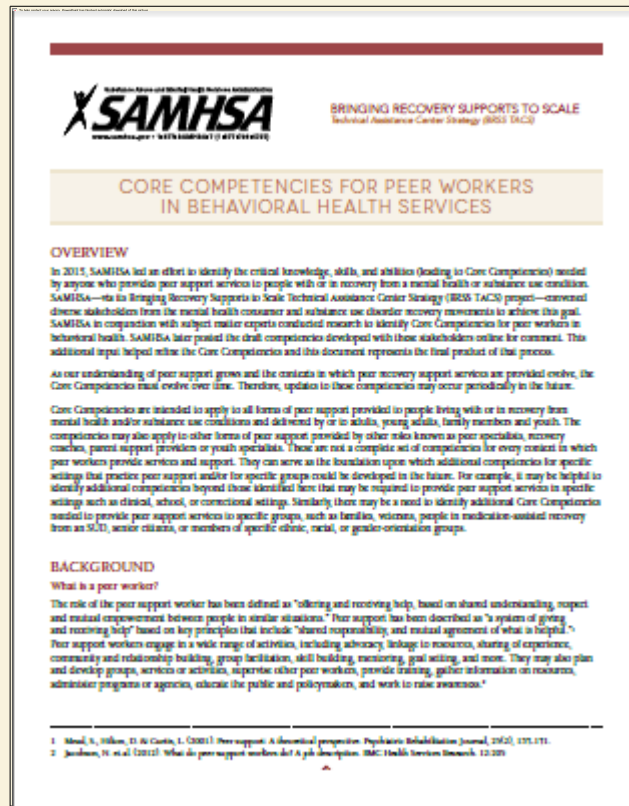
# Peer Workforce and Peer Competencies

- The Affordable Care Act facilitates an expansion of patient centered medical homes as well as increased community health workforce, providing an opportunity for people to benefit from peer support
- Through BRSS TACS, SAMHSA is helping to build that capacity by
  - Identifying and refining a set of core competencies
  - Providing technical assistance to promote strategies aimed to increase the number of peers in the workforce

# Core Competencies

SAMHSA assigned BRSS TACS to:

- Identify and refining a set of core competencies
- Provide technical assistance to promote strategies aimed to increase the number of peers in the workforce



# Definition of Peer Support Worker

- Offering and receiving help, based on shared understanding, respect and mutual empowerment between people in similar situations
  - Views peer support as a system of giving and receiving help
  - Based on shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful

Source: Mead, Hilton & Curtis, 2001

# Peer Support Includes A Range of Activities

- Advocacy
- Linkage to resources
- Sharing of experience
- Community and relationship building
- Group facilitation
- Skill building
- Mentoring
- Goal setting and more
- Plan/develop groups, services or activities
- Supervise other peer workers
- Provide training
- Gather information on resources
- Administer programs or agencies
- Educate the public and policymakers
- Work to raise awareness

Source: Jacobsen et al, 2012



# Peer Practice Guidelines

- Developed through a partnership between the Addiction and Mental Health Peer disciplines
- Operationalize peer performance expectations, skills and knowledge in the workplace

# Regional Summits

- In 2015, BRSS TACS convened three Regional Summits on Peer Provider Workforce in Behavioral Health
  - Atlanta: May 19-20
  - Portland/Vancouver: June 23-24
  - Baltimore: July 29-30
- Stakeholders included representatives from peer-run, family-run, youth-run, and recovery community organizations; state/local agencies; primary care or behavioral health provider organizations

# Regional Summits

- Convened key peer recovery and behavioral health stakeholders, educators, researchers and others to help draft the framework for the core competencies that will hopefully be adopted nationally
- Intended to reflect the abilities of peers in diverse roles, or in peer-run/recovery community organizations

# Categories of the Core Competencies

- Engages peers in collaborative and caring relationships
- Provides Support
- Shares lived experiences of recovery
- Personalizes peer support
- Recovery planning
- Links to resources, services and supports
- Teaches information and skills related to health, wellness and recovery
- Helps peers to manage crises
- Communication
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Leadership and advocacy
- Growth and development

# Core Competencies

- Core Competencies are intended to apply to all forms of peer support. They can:
  - Apply to other forms of peer support provided by other roles
  - Serve as the foundation upon which additional competencies for specific settings that practice peer support and/or for specific groups
- As our understanding grows, the contexts in evolve, the Core Competencies must evolve over time.

# Potential Use of Core Competencies

- Guide delivery and promote best practices in peer support.
- Inform peer training programs, assist in developing standards for certification, and inform job descriptions.
- Appraise peer workers' job performance and peers will be able to assess their own work performance
- Set goals for continued development

# Core Competencies

## Opportunities and Challenges

### Opportunities

- More opportunities for input and include individuals/peers working with diverse cultures
- Clarify purpose and intent
- Clarify connection to existing mechanisms in the field
- Develop a strategic dissemination strategy

### Challenges

- Need to address misconstructions of who a “peer” is and role
- More collaboration between BH systems and peer leaders
- Need sustainable funding strategies need to be identified and implemented
- Preserve the integrity of the peer services

# Current Activity

- Validation of the input gathered from the field
  - Systematic review underway
  - Performed a content analysis of feedback from the field via 2015 Regional Summits and open comment period; results pending
  - Intend to replicate to inform future iterations
- Influence other workforce development efforts
  - Referenced by Mental Health America (MHA) in its Nationally Certified Peer Specialist Core Competencies
  - Provided guidance to HHS/DoD/VA Interagency Task Force on Peer Workforce
- Inform the field of existence: Presentation approved for NAMI Conference, July 7, 2016



# Dialogue

- What is the impact of the competencies to expand the integration of diverse role of peers for all forms of peer support delivered by or to adults, young adults, family members and youth?
- How will the competencies influence the delivery of peer services and promote recovery, and guide peer support services in specific settings and for specific groups?
- What are potential uses of the core competencies to guide the delivery and promote best practices for all forms of peer support?
- What suggestions do you have for the development of competencies for other forms of peer support delivered by or to adults, young adults, family members and youth?

# BRSS TACS



In 2011, SAMHSA launched the Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS) to promote the widespread adoption of recovery-oriented supports, services, and systems for people in recovery from substance use and/or mental health conditions.

# SAMHSA BRSS TACS Team

CAPT Wanda Finch, LICSW  
Program Coordinator, Office of Consumer Affairs  
Center for Mental Health Services  
Wanda.Finch@samhsa.hhs.gov  
(240) 276-0432

Marsha L. Baker, LCSW  
Public Health Advisor  
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment  
Marsha.Baker@samhsa.hhs.gov  
(240) 276-1566

Keris Jän Myrick, MBA,  
Director, Office of Consumer Affairs  
Center for Mental Health Services  
Keris.myrick@samhsa.hhs.gov  
(240) 276-0626