



# The Centre for Excellence in Peer Support

## Supervising, Supporting, and Mentoring Peer Workers

### Who We Are

The Centre for Excellence in Peer Support is a service provided by Self Help & Peer Support at CMHA Waterloo Wellington. Self Help & Peer Support, formerly known as the Self Help Alliance, is a peer-driven service. We are experts in peer support and provide support and training to peer workers who are employed to work in mental and substance use health services. In order for a peer worker to be effective in their role, training on how to effectively use their lived/living experience to support others is usually necessary.

*We support peer workers to be successful in their roles*

We work alongside peer workers, their supervisors and teams to strengthen the practice of peer support in every setting. Agencies enter into a contract with the Centre to provide anywhere from weekly to quarterly support to their peer workers. The support the Centre for Excellence provides is a fee-for-service.

### Individual Coaching/Mentoring

Through consultation and training, we help agencies with the following areas:

- Planning, hiring and implementing peer/lived/living experience roles
- Training and education of peer workers, their supervisors, and their non-peer team members
- Ongoing support, supervision, or mentoring to peer staff

### Waterloo-Wellington Peer Worker Community of Practice

Peer workers connected with the Centre are connected with a team of peer workers doing similar work. At Community of Practice meetings discussion topics are driven by the peer workers and may include:

- Work wellness strategies
- Intentional use of lived/living experience
- Dealing with workplace stigma and misunderstandings about the peer role
- Recognizing power and privilege, working from an anti-oppressive perspective

### Annual Trainings and Retreat

Annually, peer workers attend a variety of trainings and a full day retreat. These trainings and the retreat are designed to help peer workers maintain grounding in the values of peer support.



**SELF HELP & PEER SUPPORT**  
Centre for Excellence in Peer Support

### Support to Organizations

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### Why peer workers need us

Without the support and connection to a peer-driven service, research has shown that peer roles get overwhelmed and swallowed up, thereby losing the peer support perspective and becoming ineffective.

“Mental health professionals...can still harbor stigmatizing attitudes towards consumer/survivor colleagues and may not understand the experience and impact of marginalization.”

By connecting with the Centre for Excellence in Peer Support, peer work is enhanced by the following outcomes:

- peer roles true to peer support values
- mentally healthy workplaces
- a person-centered, recovery-oriented system
- support for peer workers to maintain their mental wellness.



Canadian Mental Health Association  
Waterloo Wellington

Association canadienne pour la santé mentale  
Waterloo Wellington

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