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Guidelines and Requirements of the Alabama Certified Peer Specialists Training Program 2015

The Alabama Certified Peer Specialist Training is designed to prepare individuals for employment as a Certified Peer Specialist in a mental health provider setting.

The training is open to individuals who are interested in and willing to pursue employment as a Certified Peer Specialist.

The training is designed to provide individuals with the skills to use his/her life experience with mental illness to promote recovery in recovery from mental illness. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Using personal experience with mental illness to assist consumers in understanding their own mental illness
- Identifying barriers to recovery including individual early warning signs of relapse
- Developing communication skills including effective communication with staff and doctors regarding treatment in both their medical and mental health needs
- Developing social skills and healthy social networks including peer and natural support systems
- Developing self-help and self-advocacy skills
- Identification of personal recovery goals and ways to achieve the goals including strategies such as Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAP)
- Developing coping skills
- Developing problem-solving skills
- Providing information regarding community resources that support goal achievement, e.g. education, recreation, job training, housing, etc.
- Planning and facilitating activities that promote self-worth and combat negative self-talk

Qualifications to Become a Certified Peer Specialist:

- You must be in recovery from a diagnosed mental illness
- You must be open minded and willing to share your recovery story publicly
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You must be a High School Graduate or have obtained GED
- You must have effective communication skills, both written and oral.
- You must have a clear understanding of recovery from mental illness.

- You must have a basic understanding of mental illness and the mental health system.
- You must have a basic knowledge of empowerment and the goals and objectives of the consumer movement.
- You must have the ability to work with individuals or groups.
- You must have a basic knowledge of consumer rights and advocacy.
- You must have the ability to work a set schedule.
- You must have the ability to connect with individuals in treatment for mental illness.
- You must have the ability to understand the unique experience of mental illness.
- You must have the ability to serve as a role model, showing by example that recovery is possible.
- You must have the ability to relay coping skills, positive attitude skills and self- esteem building strategies.
- You must have the ability to assist in establishing support systems and interface with agencies, organizations, and groups.
- You must have the ability to facilitate peer support/self-help groups.

The Alabama Certified Peer Specialist Training Program is a five day training program that includes instruction, discussion and role play with an examination after the training.

Successful completion of the training and exam results in Certification as a peer specialist and makes you eligible to apply for open Certified Peer Specialists positions at community mental health providers and at state mental health facilities.

Priority is given to individuals already employed as peer specialists, peer bridgers, and those who have employment commitments pending certification.

Maintaining certification requires attending Certified Peer Specialists quarterly continuing education training.

Note: Successful completion of Certification training and examinations does not guarantee employment. You are responsible for pursuing employment opportunities.

For Additional information Contact: The Office of Consumer Relations
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