

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Defines recovery as a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential.

SAMHSA has identified four major dimensions that support a life in recovery:

1. Health — Learning to overcome, manage, or more successfully live with symptoms and making healthy choices that support one's physical and emotional wellbeing.
2. Home — A stable and safe place to live.
3. Purpose — Meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteer work, or creative endeavors; increased ability to lead a self-directed life; and meaningful engagement in society.
4. Community — Relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope.

Peer workers help people in all of these dimensions.

The information above was attained from www.samsha.gov

**COMMUNITY
INTEGRATED**
Health Services
Peer Bridgers



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**COMMUNITY
INTEGRATED**
Health Services

**Peer Bridger
Program**

“We support each other to get out of the hospital, stay out of the hospital and get the hospital out of us”



Serving Cowlitz, Grays Harbor,
Lewis, Pacific
and
Wahkiakum Counties

What do Peer Bridgers Do?

Peer Bridgers will be using their lived experience to provide support, guidance and hope to those discharging from the State Hospital. A Peer Bridger develops a relationship of trust with the participant. In developing this trust, the Peer Bridger may function as a role model, peer support, a mentor, a teacher, an advocate, and an ally as he or she communicates hope and encouragement.

Peer Bridgers help set the stage and lay the ground work for independence. Peer Bridgers work with the peer in identifying their skills and assisting in the development of skills that are needed to succeed in the community.

Peer Bridgers support the peer in establishing a wider circle of support in the community and enhanced social activities.



What is a Peer Bridger?

A Peer Bridger is a Washington State Certified Peer Specialist with their own lived experience with mental health challenges and are personally experiencing mental health recovery. He or she has addressed and overcome many of the challenges those being discharged from a state hospital may face, making him or her uniquely qualified to support individuals on their recovery journey.

Core Values of Peer Support

- *Peer support is voluntary*
- *Peer support is hopeful and open minded*
- *Peer supporters are empathetic*
- *Peer support is respectful*
- *Peer support facilitates change*
- *Peer support is honest and direct*
- *Peer support is mutual and reciprocal*
- *Peer support is equally shared power*
- *Peer Support is strengths-focused*
- *Peer support is transparent*
- *Peer Support is person-driven*

What Kind of Support is offered from a Peer Bridger?

- Providing social support and companionship.
- Teaching coping and community adjustment skills.
- Linking peers with important community resources.
- Assistance with budgeting.
- Help with menu planning and shopping.
- Learning bus routes and other forms of transportation.
- Help following through with medical needs.
- Assistance with follow through on getting/keeping necessary entitlements and social services.
- Regular visits to talk, have coffee, and discuss ways for being positively engaged in their community.