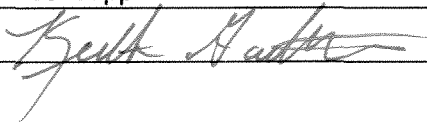




TENNCARE POLICY MANUAL

Policy No:	BEN 11-002		
Subject:	Peer Support Services		
Approval:		Date:	5/18/2011

PURPOSE:

The Managed Care Organization (MCO) Contractor Risk Agreements (CRAs) require coverage of psychiatric rehabilitation services, with peer support being identified as a component of psychiatric rehabilitation services.¹

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the Bureau of TennCare's expectations with respect to provision of peer support services.

BACKGROUND:

Peer support is a service model that allows persons who have experienced, or who are still experiencing, a mental illness and/or substance abuse disorder to provide support to individuals who are dealing with similar experiences. Peer support is intended to supplement other mental health services, such as psychotherapy or medication management, and is not intended to be a substitute for these services.

Peer support services are not usually required for individuals whose needs can be met through basic psychotherapy and counseling services. Peer support services are employed instead for persons with serious mental illnesses who need intensive supports to aid their recovery. Because a major goal of peer support is to encourage independence and the ability to make one's own decisions, services may be intense at the beginning and decrease over time.

Peer support may include a wide range of direct services, such as:

- Assisting the enrollee in developing community support
- Assisting in the development of recovery goals
- Serving as an advocate, life coach, mentor, or facilitator for resolution of issues the enrollee is not able to resolve on his own
- Providing education on the importance of maintaining personal wellness and recovery.

¹ See MCO CRA, Attachment I.

POLICY:

Providers of TennCare-reimbursed peer support services must be Tennessee Certified Peer Support (TCPS) Specialists, as determined by the Department of Mental Health (DMH). Information about the TCPS program may be found at <http://www.tn.gov/mental/recovery/oca3.html>. This website contains a variety of materials, including guidelines and standards, application forms, and frequently asked questions.

There is an additional requirement that TCPS Specialists must meet in order for their services to be reimbursed by TennCare. They must be employees of a TennCare provider, such as a licensed Community Mental Health Center, that provides general supervision for their services and ensures that they meet all applicable TennCare provider requirements. TennCare does not recognize peer support providers as independent providers, nor does TennCare recognize peer support providers who are associated with agencies that are not TennCare providers.

It should be noted that Peer Support Centers (formerly called “Drop-in Centers”) are not recognized TennCare providers. TennCare enrollees may certainly seek assistance from Peer Support Centers, but this assistance is offered without charge to all persons having a need for the service and is not separately reimbursable by TennCare. On the other hand, a person who is receiving peer support services funded by TennCare may certainly receive these services in a Peer Support Center when the peer support specialist meets TennCare’s criteria as stated above. In this situation, the Peer Support Center is not the provider of the service, but the place where the service is delivered. If the peer support service is being provided to an individual at a Peer Support Center or any other place where other people may be present, there must be an expectation of privacy and confidentiality. In other words, the place must have a location where private counseling services can occur.

TennCare-reimbursed peer support services must be authorized as part of an enrollee’s plan of care.

The differentiation among services provided by peer support specialists and services provided by other mental health professionals is illustrated in the table on the following page.

Division of Responsibilities among Mental Health Professionals

	Peer Specialist	Case Manager	MH Professional	Employment/ Housing/ Psychosocial Staff
Planning Service	Assist consumer in developing recovery plan/WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)	Assist consumer in developing a service plan	Develop treatment plan with consumer	Assist consumer in developing employment/housing plan
Resource Service	Teach/role model/coach how to utilize resources and navigate the Mental Health system	Referral & Linkage	Clinical assessment	Identify resources needed to implement plan
Illness Management Service	Teach/support/coach the acquisition and exercise of skills needed for management of symptoms	Ensure consumer has access/continuity of care throughout the Mental Health and primary health care system	Clinical education and training regarding symptomatology and medication management	Assist consumers so that illness/symptoms does not negatively impact employment and housing goals
Medication Management Service	Teach/model/coach importance of monitoring symptoms and/or medication reactions, effective communication with doctors/therapists	Ensure consumer has resources to acquire medication, has transportation for appointments and consumer attendance to appointments	Clinical treatment to include individual and group therapy	Educate employers/landlords on the treatment process and role of medication and symptoms in the management of the illness, as appropriate
Employment/ Housing Service	Teach/model/coach skills/attributes needed to attain and maintain employment and housing	Ensure consumer has access to psychosocial rehabilitation, supportive employment, and housing options	Clinical consultation and assessment	Employment and housing support by facilitating opportunities for housing and job placement
Education Service	Teach consumers through BRIDGES(Building Recovery and Individual Dreams and Goals through Education and Support / IMR (Illness, Management & Recovery) curriculum understanding/skills needed to manage illness	Encourage consumer to utilize community/natural supports to assist in illness management	Provide clinical support through individual therapy sessions	Teach skills needed to maintain housing and employment

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

Managed Care Networks

REFERENCES:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

State Medicaid Director Letter (SMDL) #07-011 (Peer Support Services), August 15, 2007

<http://www.cms.gov/SMDL/downloads/SMD081507A.pdf>

Managed Care Contractor/Contractor Risk Agreements (MCO/CRAs)

East/West (Attachment I)

<http://www.tn.gov/tenncare/forms/eastwestmcocontract.pdf>

Middle Tennessee (Attachment 1)

<http://www.tn.gov/tenncare/forms/middletnmco.pdf>

Office of Consumer Affairs

Tennessee Certified Peer Specialist Certification Program

<http://www.tn.gov/mental/recovery/oca3.html>

Peer Support Centers in Tennessee

<http://www.tn.gov/mental/recovery/PSCenters.html>

Original: SB: 05-18-2011

Reviewed/ No revisions required: 04/18/12: PMD