



Peer Support Specialist For Behavioral Health Medi-Cal Services Listening Session #1

Hosted by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

*Marlies Perez, Chief
Community Services Division*



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Peer Certification Program Timeline
- Overview of SB 803, Listening Session Structure, and Goals
- Training Requirements
- Break
- Scope of Practice
- Closing Comments and Next Steps



DHCS Peer Certification Website

Current information regarding the implementation of Senate Bill 803, and the Peer Support Specialist Certification Program can be found online:

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/Peer-Support-Services.aspx>



Listening Session Format

- Listening Session #1 (today) will focus on the following areas:
 - Training Requirements
 - Peer Support Specialist Scope of Practice including:
 - Qualifications
 - Range of Responsibilities
 - Practice Guidelines
 - Supervision Standards



Listening Session Format

- Listening Session #2 (March 2, 2021) will focus on the following areas:
 - Process requirements for setting up a certification program
 - Code of Ethics
 - Initial Certification and Biennial Renewal Process
 - Grandfathering & Reciprocity
 - Complaints, Corrective Action, Suspension, Revocation, Appeals
 - How to initiate and report on the county pilot program
 - Required Submission Items
 - Periodic Reviews
 - Annual Program Reports



Listening Session Format

For each topic, DHCS will:

1. Present the information specified in SB 803 statute
2. Provide a prompt related to areas that are not specified in statute
3. Solicit stakeholder feedback on the prompt



How to Provide Feedback

1. “Raise your hand” to provide verbal feedback during the Listening Session
2. Submit your feedback in writing:
 - Type your comments in the chat/questions box located on your GoToWebinar control panel
 - Send an email to peers@dhcs.ca.gov – Feedback on the topics addressed in this session will be accepted through February 5, 2021



SB 803 Overview

- Enacted January 1, 2021.
- Requires DHCS to seek federal approval to establish Peer Support Specialist as a Medi-Cal provider type, able to provide distinct peer support services
- DHCS is proposing to add peers as a unique provider type within specific reimbursable services and to allow counties to opt-in to provide this valuable resource
- DHCS will post information regarding proposed federal authorities on the peers webpage for public comments.



SB 803 Overview

By July 1, 2022, DHCS shall:

- Establish statewide requirements to use in developing certification programs
- Define the qualifications, range of responsibilities, practice guidelines, and supervision standards for peer support specialists
- Determine curriculum and core competencies required for certification, including areas of specialization
- Specify peer support specialist employment training requirements
- Establish code of ethics
- Determine continuing education requirements



SB 803 Overview

By July 1, 2022, DHCS shall (continued):

- Determine process for initial certification
- Determine process for investigation of complaints and corrective action
- Determine process for an individual employed as a peer support specialist on January 1, 2022, to obtain certification
- Determine requirements for peer support specialist certification reciprocity between counties and out of state



SB 803 Overview

- For certain topics, the Senate Bill establishes in law the requirements. These cannot be altered by DHCS.
- Other areas are not specified, and those areas are the focus of today's listening session and Listening Session #2 in March



DHCS Peer Certification Timeline

January 2021	Peer Support Listening Session #1
March 2021	Peer Support Listening Session #2
April 2021	Behavioral Health Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting
June-July 2021	Disseminate initial BH Information Notice on Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Standards
August-December 2021	State technical assistance for Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Standards available to counties (<i>more information to come</i>)
January 2022	Seek federal approvals deemed necessary to implement SB 803



Training Requirements

Employment Training, Core Competencies,
and Areas of Specialization



Training Requirements

Topic	Statute	Research Results
Employment Training	Required training hours not specified	40 hours required (average figure based on existing programs in CA counties and other states)
	Continuing education requirements for recertification every two years must be determined	20 hours every two years , 6 of which must be in ethics (based on industry best practices)



Feedback

1. Is a requirement of 40 hours of training appropriate for Peer Support Specialists?
2. Is 20 hours of continuing education (6 of which must be in ethics) reasonable?



Training Requirements

Topic	Statute	Initial Recommendation
Core Competencies	16 core competencies listed in statute must be included in training at a minimum	Keep state standard to 16 core competencies listed in statute



Feedback: Are any core competencies missing?

- (1) Concepts of hope, recovery, and wellness
- (2) The role of advocacy.
- (3) The role of consumers and family members.
- (4) Psychiatric rehabilitation skills and service delivery, and addiction recovery principles, including defined practices.
- (5) Cultural competence training.
- (6) Trauma-informed care.
- (7) Group facilitation skills
- (8) Self-awareness and self-care.
- (9) Cooccurring disorders of mental health and substance use.
- (10) Conflict resolution.
- (11) Professional boundaries and ethics.
- (12) Preparation for employment opportunities, including study and test-taking skills, application and résumé preparation, interviewing, and other potential requirements for employment.
- (13) Safety and crisis planning.
- (14) Navigation of, and referral to, other services.
- (15) Documentation skills and standards.
- (16) Confidentiality.



Training Requirements

Topic	Statute	Initial Recommendation
Areas of Specialization (in addition to the required 40 hours of training)	DHCS may define areas of specialization, including transition-aged youth, veterans, gender identity, and sexual orientation, and any other areas identified by DHCS	Areas of specialization should be limited and relevant to both SMHS and SUD



Feedback

1. Should DHCS add any specific areas of specialization to be required for peers in both SMHS & SUD?
2. If so, what are the priority areas of specialization?



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Scope of Practice

Qualifications, Range of Responsibilities,
Practice Guidelines, and Supervision
Standards



Scope of Practice: Limitations

Reminder: Peer support specialist scope of practice defined in SB 803 does not allow peers to diagnose an illness, prescribe medication, or provide clinical services.



Scope of Practice

Topic	Statute	Initial Recommendation
Range of Responsibilities	Required, but not specified	Structured, scheduled interactions and activities that promote socialization, recovery, self-advocacy, relapse prevention, development of natural supports, and maintenance of community living skills



Feedback

Are any responsibilities missing from the prompt?

Initial Recommendation

Structured, scheduled interactions and activities that promote socialization, recovery, self-advocacy, relapse prevention, development of natural supports, and maintenance of community living skills



Scope of Practice

Topic	Statute	Initial Recommendation
Qualifications	<p>Peers must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 18 years old• Have a high school diploma or GED• Self-identify as having lived experience either themselves or as a parent or family member• Be willing to share their experience• Have a strong dedication to recovery• Sign a written agreement to the code of ethics• Complete all training requirements• Pass a certification exam	<p>To ensure qualified peers are encouraged to complete the certification process, no more qualifications would be added</p>



Feedback

Should Peer Support Specialists have any required additional qualifications that are missing from the list?



Scope of Practice

Topic	Statute	National Standard
Practice Guidelines	Required, but not specified	To ensure continuity with other states and many CA counties, the state practice guidelines could be modeled after SAMHSA's Practice Guidelines: What Are Peer Recovery Support Services? ¹

¹<https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma09-4454.pdf>



Feedback

Are there existing practice guidelines (other than SAMSHA's) that the State should consider?



Scope of Practice

Topic	Statute	Best Practice
Supervision Standards	Required, but not specified	In keeping with best practices peer support specialists must provide services under the consultation, facilitation, or direct supervision of a behavioral health professional within their scope of practice.



Feedback

Are there important supervision considerations for Peer Support Specialists not captured in the prompt?

Best Practice

In keeping with best practices **peer support specialists must provide services under the consultation, facilitation, or direct supervision of a behavioral health professional within their scope of practice.**



Next Steps

- Additional written comments will be accepted through **February 5, 2021**. Submit comments to Peers@dhcs.ca.gov
- Listening Session 2: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
 - Register here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1540124831663561230>



Appendix



Definitions

- (a) “**Certification**” means the activities related to the verification that an individual has met all of the requirements under this article and that the individual may provide peer support specialist services pursuant to this article.
- (b) “**Certified**” means all federal and state requirements have been satisfied by an individual who is seeking designation under this article, including completion of curriculum and training requirements, testing, and agreement to uphold and abide by the code of ethics.
- (c) “**Code of ethics**” means the standards to which a peer support specialist is required to adhere.
- (d) “**Core competencies**” means the foundational and essential knowledge, skills, and abilities required for peer specialists.



Definitions

(e) “**Cultural competence**” means a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency that enables that system or agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. A culturally competent system of care acknowledges and incorporates, at all levels, the importance of language and culture, intersecting identities, assessment of cross-cultural relations, knowledge and acceptance of dynamics of cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge, and adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs to provide services in a culturally competent manner.

(f) “**Department**” means the State Department of Health Care Services.

(g) “**Peer support specialist**” means an individual who is 18 years of age or older, who has self-identified as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, or both, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent or family member of the consumer, and who has been granted certification under a county peer support specialist certification program.



Definitions

(h) “**Peer support specialist services**” means culturally competent services that promote engagement, socialization, recovery, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, development of natural supports, and identification of strengths. Peer support specialist services include, but are not limited to, prevention services, support, coaching, facilitation, or education that is individualized and is conducted by a certified peer support specialist.

(i) “**Recovery**” means a process of change through which an individual improves their health and wellness, lives a self-directed life, and strives to reach their full potential. This process of change recognizes cultural diversity and inclusion, and honors the different routes to resilience and recovery based on the individual and their cultural community.