



NORTH CAROLINA CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Training Core Concepts

**NORTH CAROLINA CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROGRAM
TRAINING CORE CONCEPTS**

Number	Domains	Core Concepts
010000	<p>Commitment to Personal Recovery: PSS demonstrate a commitment to <i>their own personal recovery</i> by showing that they</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value the concepts of personal wellness and how these concepts apply to the PSS 2. Understand the reasons for, and methods used, to self-monitor their own wellness. 3. Can define and demonstrate how to communicate (written, verbal, etc.) to the right people when issues of personal wellness interfere with the PSS’s ability to do their job. 4. Are able to define and use person-first recovery language at all times to support personal recovery and empowerment. 5. Can show understanding of how the PSS’s personal wellness impacts agency standing in the community. 6. Know the effect of their personal limits (e.g., when confronted with another individual’s trauma) on their own wellness, and how to maintain their personal wellness.
020000	<p>Relationship Building: PSS demonstrate an understanding of the concepts necessary to develop and maintain healthy relationships with the people they serve, within the agency they work in, other agencies, and their community, by showing that they:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value the importance of trustworthiness, how to develop and maintain trust, and the impact of failure to maintain trust. 2. Understand and can demonstrate the ability to listen empathetically without judgment (e.g., without presumption of wrongness or formal assessment), accepting the individual as he or she is right now. 3. Are able to understand and demonstrate the importance of clear verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and how different situations may require different communication skills. Can demonstrate the process of active listening, especially the use of open-ended questions. 4. Are able to define and use person-first recovery language at all times to support the development and maintenance of community wide regard for individuals served. 5. Understand and can demonstrate the importance of developing and maintaining mutual respect, genuineness, and unconditional positive regard in building personal connections. 6. Are able to demonstrate that the PSS knows when and how to share their personal recovery story (e.g. comfort with disclosure, sitting comfortably with silence) in

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		<p>order to establish points of commonality to offer hope and acceptance of recovery.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Can communicate with coworkers, community members, etc., the importance and creation of a wellness identity, by stripping away the old “illness identity” through open sharing and challenging viewpoints. 8. Can define and communicate alternatives to prevent hospitalization and to support individuals served in the community whenever possible.
<p>030000</p>	<p>Peer Support Interaction: PSS demonstrate an understanding of the concepts necessary to support the people they serve, by showing that they:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can define and demonstrate outreach and engagement skills with individuals served, being aware of such issues as gender, culture, etc., to begin building a relationship. 2. Can demonstrate their skills to support the individual served to develop a wellness identity in order to support the individual’s goals and dreams. 3. Can understand their role and the role of others, in accordance with a variety of plans (e.g., WRAP, crisis) and trauma-informed practices, to support the individual served during crisis. 4. Can define, model, and mentor recovery values, attitudes, beliefs, and personal actions in order to encourage wellness and resilience for individuals served, and to promote a recovery environment in the community, including home and the workplace. 5. Can explore with individuals served, the importance and creation of a wellness identity full of potential and possible futures, by stripping away the old “illness identity” through open sharing and challenging viewpoints. 6. Can promote an individual’s opportunity for personal growth by identifying teachable moments for building relationship skills (e.g., assertiveness, conflict resolution, risk taking), in order to empower the individual and enhance personal responsibility. 7. Can understand, model, and share, a variety of decision making tools to enhance an individual’s healthy decision making (e.g., harm reduction, pros and cons, etc.). 8. Can help individuals served to reestablish themselves as a valued member of the community by providing examples of healthy social interactions and facilitating familiarity with, and connection to, the local community. 9. Can discuss what is and is not peer support and how it is different from other therapeutic relationships, with individuals served, team members, and the wider community.

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Understand the value of discussing, documenting, and continuously defining obligations around “safety” and “support” (e.g., issues around self-harm) with the individual served. Are able to build and preserve the relationship between the PSS and the individual served by exploring what has worked and not worked in the past in order to identify effective peer support interactions. 11. Understand personal limits and value the importance of the PSS sitting with discomfort and staying in their role as a peer when confronted with an individual’s ability to feel safe, their emotional state, vulnerability, and ability to risk relationships. 12. Can recognize and appropriately respond to conditions that constitute an emergency situation to include both physical and behavioral health crisis. 13. The CPSS is aware of the need to be knowledgeable of and understand the importance of following an employer’s emergency response procedure.
<p>040000</p>	<p>Systems Competencies: PSS demonstrate an understanding of the concepts necessary to support the people they serve and the agency they work in, by showing they:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a basic knowledge of the history, including N.C. history, of the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Consumer/ Survivor Movement and its relationship to social justice (to include, at a minimum: Civil Rights Movement; Olmstead Decision; Americans with Disabilities Act; Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Deinstitutionalization; MH Parity and Addiction Equity Act; history of peer support; NC Department Of Justice settlement 2012; Eugenics/Sterilization) 2. Can support the individual in navigating systems (medical, social services, legal, etc.) through activities such as: accompanying him or her; coaching on court protocol; promoting timely appearance, proper dress, behavior, and speech for each unique setting. 3. Understand the process of working with their team/co- workers/ supervisor, to provide support to individuals who show a need to be referred to other resources. 4. Understand the importance of being able to support each individual in accessing community resources by facilitating familiarity with, and connection to, the local community in order to achieve desired integration. 5. Can promote self-advocacy by facilitating each individual’s learning about his or her human and legal rights and supporting the individual while exercising those rights in order to support the empowerment of the individual.

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Can understand the importance of job responsibilities defined within an agency, demonstrate they can identify the PSS’s roles and responsibilities, and know the reasons for adhering to agency policy, procedures, and code of conduct. 7. Provide complete, accurate, and timely documentation in recovery language for all services provided in a manner that is consistent with agency, state, and federal requirements in order to obtain compensation, maintain medical records, and demonstrate quality of care. 8. Understand the critical importance of maintaining, securing, and keeping confidential personal medical information and records in adherence to federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations. 9. Can report pertinent observations and events in accordance with their role as a PSS and agency/team requirements, in order to improve service delivery and to help the individual achieve their goals.
050000	Ethics and Boundaries: PSS demonstrate application of the <i>North Carolina Certified Peer Support Specialist Code of Ethics</i> in everyday activities by showing that they:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are knowledgeable of legal responsibilities around mandatory reporting (e.g. regarding the care of children, adults with disabilities and older adults, etc.). 2. Understand and can apply ethical decision-making around boundaries or limits of the PSS relationship with others (i.e. colleagues, parents and family members, individuals served, etc.)
060000	Substance Use Disorders: PSS demonstrate an understanding of the concept of addiction as a disease vs. moral failure by showing that they:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accept that there are many paths to recovery and can identify examples. 2. Understand return to use (formerly referred to as “relapse”) can be a component of recovery and may be a stage in the change process. Are able to assist in planning for prevention of return to use and a renewed commitment to wellness. 3. If “return to use” occurs, the PSS understands the importance of reassuring the individual served of their ongoing commitment to support him/her non-judgmentally. 4. Be knowledgeable of the prevalence of co-occurring substance use disorders and mental health challenges.
070000	Trauma-Informed Practice: PSS demonstrate an appreciation for the role and influence of trauma on behavioral health by showing that they:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can define trauma and identify possible sources of, and coping mechanisms associated with, trauma (e.g. fight, flight, or freeze). 2. Understand that people react differently to the same trauma and can recognize short and long term effects of trauma (e.g. Adverse Childhood Experiences Study findings) and pathways to healing.

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Have a basic knowledge of the prevalence of Traumatic Brain Injury and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and their impacts on mental health challenges and substance use disorders.
080000	<p>In Support of Service Members and Families: PSS demonstrate an understanding of the military as a unique culture with different subcultures by showing that they:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are able to recognize and address the stigma associated with having behavioral health challenges in the military. 2. Are knowledgeable about how to navigate resources available specifically for military members and their families.
090000	<p>Cultural Competence/Awareness: PSS demonstrate a respect for cultural differences and can cultivate successful approaches to diversity by showing that they:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an increasing awareness of one’s self and value system. 2. Develop an increasing awareness of unstated institutional cultural norms in workplaces, communities, and society. 3. Maintain a working knowledge of the history, culture, beliefs, values and needs of diverse individuals and communities.