

WILDA L. WHITE justice through
words and ideas

Certified Peer Support Provider
Screening Application

Phase 2: Mental Health Peer Certification Stakeholder Process

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Via Zoom

Wilda L. White, Facilitator

Zoom Protocol



Questions	Raise hand, actual or virtual; write question in Chat; or shout it out
Comments	Zoom Chat
Slides	Link to PowerPoint slides is in Zoom Chat
Recording	All meetings are being recorded

Background

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

What are the meetings about?

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is partnering with the Peer Workforce Development Initiative (PWDI) to identify a model and develop an implementation plan for peer specialist credentialing in Vermont.

PWDI is facilitating a series of stakeholder meetings solicit feedback about the development of a statewide peer support provider certification program in the State of Vermont. Wilda White will be overseeing these stakeholder meetings. DMH will participate in these meetings along with representatives from other Vermont stakeholders including service users and their families; peer support specialists; staff from community mental health programs, hospitals, and peer-run service organizations; family networks and organizations; the recovery community and mental health advocates; private insurers; and staff from other State agencies.

Recommendations from these meetings will be compiled by Wilda White for use in developing a peer support provider credentialing process in Vermont.

What is the PWDI

Department of Mental Health (DMH) developed the Peer Workforce Development Initiative (PWDI) grant to help the state build and maintain an infrastructure for a statewide mental health peer workforce.

Initiative goals include creating a steering committee, evaluating statewide peer workforce needs, and ensuring the availability of peer support worker training.

DMH awarded PWDI grant to Pathways Vermont.

PWDI Steering Committee

Hilary Melton Pathways Vermont	Tara Miller Lamoille County Mental Health Services
Walt Wade Vermont Psychiatric Survivors	Malaika Puffer HCRS
Dan Towle Parker Advisors	Gloria van den Berg Alyssum
Amey Dettmer Copeland Center	Ken Russell Another Way Community Center
Will Eberle Vermont Association for Mental Health and Addiction Recovery (VAMHAR)	Leslie Nelson Howard Center

About the Facilitator



Wilda L. White

Education:

JD, MBA

Occupation:

Management Consultant

Passion:

Justice for all

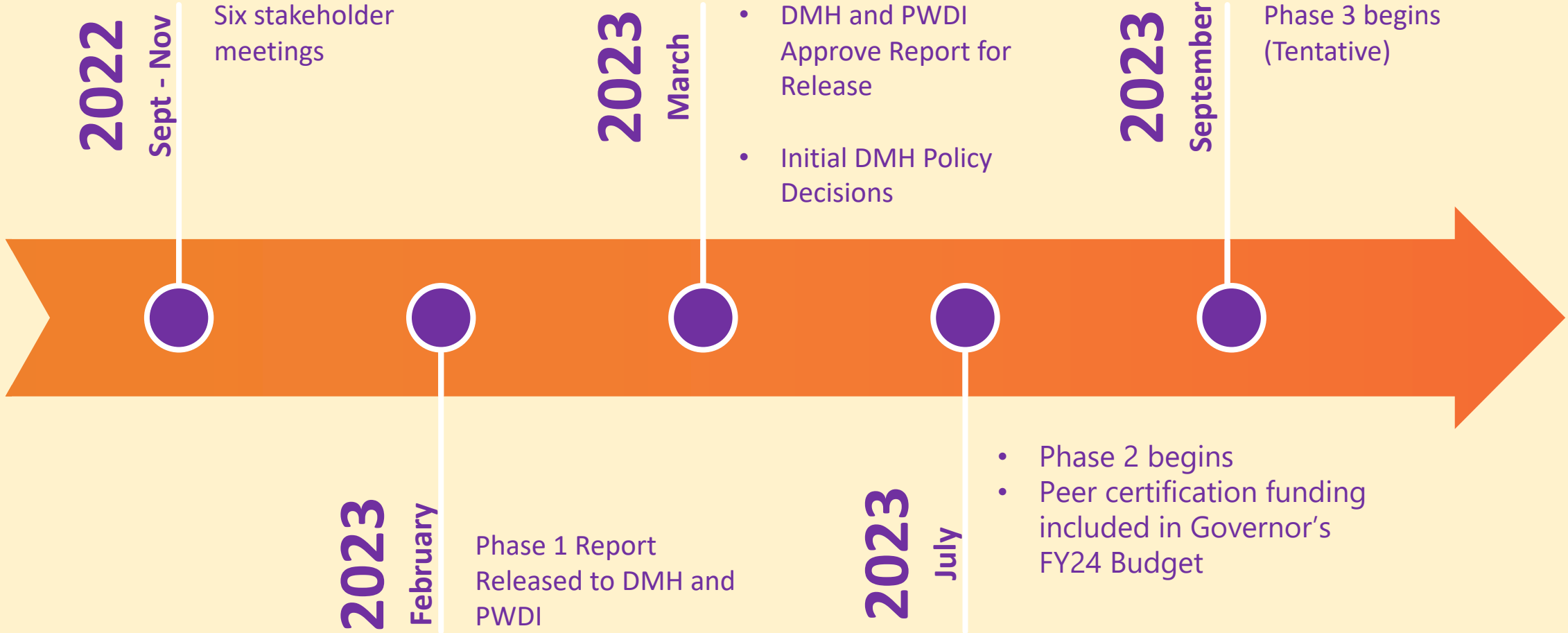
Experience

- Principal, Wilda L. White Consulting
- Founder, MadFreedom, Inc.
- Executive Director, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors
- Executive Director, Center for Social Justice, UC Berkeley School of Law
- Partner, Walker, Hamilton & White (San Francisco, CA)
- General Management Consultant, McKinsey & Company (San Francisco, CA)
- Assistant City Editor, *The Miami Herald* (Miami, FL)

Relevant Publication

“Peer Specialist Certification: An Analysis of U.S. and Canadian Efforts to Promote and Expand Mental Health Peer Specialist Workforce Capacity,”
February 2021

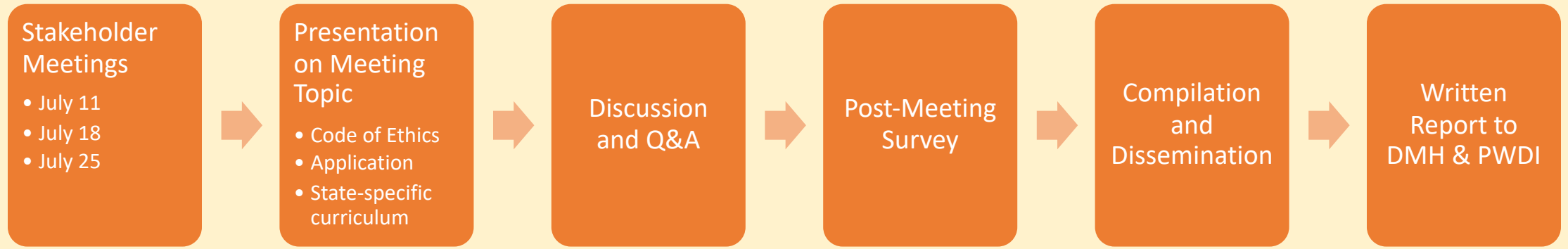
Peer Support Certification Timeline



Overview of Phase 2

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

Phase 2 Meeting Process



Codes of Ethics Survey

Certified Peer Support Provider Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics Structure

Role, Scope, and Responsibilities	Boundaries	Conflicts of Interest	Confidentiality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect and uphold peer support values (1)• Authenticity and Lived Experience (2)• Self and Other Awareness (3)• Scope of Practice (7)• Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity ((8)• Continuous Learning and Professional Development (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and Respect Boundaries (4)• Ethical Responsibility (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflicts of Interest (5)• Ethical Responsibility (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confidentiality and Consent (6)• Ethical Responsibility (10)

Revisions to Draft Code of Ethics

- Replaced the word “profession,” “professional,” and/or “professionalism” throughout
- Adopted first-person plural pronoun language, in place of third-person plural language (we vs. they)
- Stated more strongly the prohibition against romantic/sexual/activities (do not vs. refrain from)
- Deleted ethical standard to “abide by the law.”
- Opted not to refer to and contrast “peer values” with “clinical values”
- Opted not to cite specific laws regulating privacy/confidentiality

Preamble

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to promote ethical practice, protect the rights of individuals, and uphold certified peer support provider standards. It serves as a compass in guiding certified peer support providers in our pursuit of ethical practice, integrity, and accountability. In agreeing to abide by the Code of Ethics, we are committing to upholding the values and standards that promote the welfare, dignity and rights of all to foster a culture of trust, respect and accountability.

1-Respect and Uphold Peer Support Values



Certified peer support providers understand and embrace the values of the peer support movement, including respect for individuals' autonomy, non-judgment, and the importance of self-determination. We acknowledge the history of peer support and the relevance of human rights and social justice issues in our practice.

2-Lived Experience and Mutuality

Certified peer support providers share personal stories thoughtfully and selectively, ensuring that it is useful and relevant to the relationship. We bring our lived experience into the conversation, along with the skills and tools we have acquired, fostering meaningful connections. We aspire to inspire and support others through mutual understanding.

3-Self and Other Awareness

Certified peer support providers continually cultivate self-awareness through introspection and self-reflection. We communicate our own discomfort and needs openly while remaining attuned to the discomfort and needs of others. We maintain a multi-dimensional awareness that includes ourselves, others, and the evolving relationship dynamics.

4-Establish and Respect Boundaries

Certified peer support providers encourage open discussions about personal needs and boundaries. We recognize and clarify our own limits and encourage others to explore their boundaries. We understand that boundaries can be physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, or energetic. We negotiate boundaries respectfully and in alignment with the values and needs of all involved parties.

5-Conflicts of Interest

Certified peer support providers are aware that our position can influence the individuals with whom we provide peer support. We do not exploit the trust and/or dependency of such individuals. We make every effort to avoid dual relationships or commitments that could impair professional judgment, increase the risk of exploitation or create conflict with the interests of individuals we support. We disclose and discuss dual relationships that cannot be avoided. We do not engage in sexual/intimate/romantic activities within a formal peer support role.

6-Confidentiality and Consent

Certified peer support providers treat all information shared by individuals with the utmost confidentiality, unless legally required to disclose. We explicitly seek consent before sharing any personal information or experiences of the individual we support, ensuring privacy and autonomy.

7-Scope of Practice

Certified peer support providers perform peer support only within our scope of practice, which includes our lived experience, training, expertise, and competence. We meet and comply with all the terms, conditions or limitations of our certification.

8-Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity

Certified peer support providers embrace diversity and inclusivity, valuing individuals from all backgrounds and with varying identities. We are committed to promoting anti-oppressive practices, combating discrimination, and creating a safe and inclusive space for all.

9-Continuous Learning



Certified peer support providers commit to ongoing learning, staying updated with best practices, and enhancing our knowledge and skills in the field of peer support. We actively engage in self-education and co-learning, attend relevant training, and stay informed about emerging research and developments.

10-Ethical Responsibility

Certified peer support providers recognize and uphold our ethical responsibilities towards the individuals we support, the practice of peer support, and the wider community. We are truthful and principled in our dealings with others. We engage in regular supervision or consultation and seek guidance when facing ethical dilemmas.



Attestation

I affirm that I have read, understand, and will abide by the Code of Ethics for Certified Peer Support Providers in the State of Vermont.

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Date: _____

Introduction to Screening Applications

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

Peer Support Certification Screening Applications: General Purpose



- Determine eligibility for certification (whether candidate meets the jurisdiction's requirements)
- Determine eligibility for training
- Determine fitness for training
- Determine willingness to attest to and abide by Code of Ethics
- Determine what "reasonable accommodations" candidate will require

Typical Screening Application Elements



Overview of Peer Support

- What is peer support
- What do peer support providers do
- Etc.

Eligibility Requirements

- Age
- Education
- Work History
- Lived Experience
- Attest to recovery
- Etc.

Instructions and Caveats

- Reminder that certification does not guarantee employment
- Eligibility checklists
- Underscore requirement to speak publicly about one's recovery
- Description of demands of training

Typical Screening Application Elements (cont'd)



Contact Information

- Name
- Email address
- Mailing address
- Telephone number

Screening Questions

- Date of birth
- Education
- Work History
- Lived Experience
- Attest to recovery
- Criminal history and disciplinary actions

Work History

- Current employment
- Past employment
- Volunteer experience
- Supervisor names
- References

Typical Screening Application Elements (cont'd)



Essay Questions

- Why peer support?
- Recovery story
- What supports helped in recovery
- Examples of times you shared your recovery story publicly

Accommodations Needed

- Sign Language Interpreter
- Scent-free
- Large Print
- Reader
- Other

Fitness for Training

- What might interfere with applicant's ability to complete training
- How will applicant overcome the interference
- Access to transportation, computer, etc.

Typical Screening Application Elements (cont'd)



Personal Essays

- Why do you want to be a peer support provider
- What strengths do you bring
- Tell your recovery story
- Describe how you would share your recovery story
- Etc.

Attestation

- Attest that answers true to best of applicant's knowledge
- Agree to attend all training sessions
- Agree to take the certification exam within a certain period after completing training

Code of Ethics

- Agree to adhere to the jurisdiction's Code of Ethics

Draft Vermont Screening Application

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

Purpose of Vermont Screening Application



Prospective Candidates

- To apply for admission to training



Screening/Training Entity

- To determine eligibility for certification and admission to training



Certifying Entity

- Certifying entity will verify relevant information in Application before certification (e.g., 250 hours of supervised peer support)

Draft Application: Introduction

Instructions

- Answer questions truthfully to best of your ability
- Checklist of eligibility requirements
- Overview of certification process

Code of Ethics

- Explain that certification requires agreement to adhere to Code of Ethics

Contact Information

- Name
- Address (email and snail mail)
- Telephone Number

Draft Application: Criminal History

CRIMINAL HISTORY

Criminal convictions do not outright prohibit certification in Vermont. However, you are required to disclose any criminal convictions. In addition, certification as a Vermont certified peer support provider does not mean a certified peer support provider should not disclose the information to prospective employers, if asked. Vermont certification also does not expunge the conviction. Please note that some prospective employers may require you to pass a background check to be employed as a certified peer support provider.

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

Yes

No

Draft Application: Eligibility

- Are you 18 years of age or older
 - Yes
 - No
- Do you have lived experience of trauma, mental health and/or substance use challenge?
 - Yes
 - No
- Have you previously applied to the Vermont peer support provider certification training?
 - Yes
 - No

Definition of “Lived Experience”

SAMHSA

“Personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people.”

ALTERNATIVE

Personal knowledge, understanding, and insight gained through direct participation or exposure. Lived experience includes one’s subjective perception and interpretation of one’s own experiences, including one’s thoughts, emotions, and interactions with others. “Lived experience” contrasts with experiences that are not directly lived or personally encountered but are instead gained through indirect means, such as hearing about someone else’s experiences or witnessing the events from a distance.

Draft Application: Provisional vs. Full Certification



Are you able to document at least 250, supervised volunteer or paid peer support hours within the previous two years?

Yes

No

Documentation requires you to list the name of each supervisor, each place of supervised volunteer or paid peer support hours, the number of supervised paid or volunteered hours at each location, and the dates the supervised hours were worked or volunteered at each location and with each supervisor

Draft Application: Previous Certifications



Do you hold any past or current peer support provider certifications or credentials?

Yes

No

If yes, is each certification or credential in good standing?

Yes

No

If no, please identify the credential and explain why it is not in good standing. _____

Draft Application: Work History

Are you currently employed in a peer support position?

Yes

No

Is this training and certification a requirement for your employment?

Yes

No

Draft Application: Personal Statement

Sample Questions

1. Why do you want to be a certified peer support provider in Vermont?
2. Why are you interested in becoming a certified peer support provider in Vermont?
3. What makes you a good candidate to provide peer support?
4. Describe what strengths you would bring as a certified peer support provider in Vermont?

Draft Application: Personal Statement (cont'd)



Sample Questions

5. How do you plan to use the certified peer support provider training?
6. Is there anything more you would like to share for consideration of you for the certified peer support provider training program?

Draft Application: Attestation

I attest that all answers in this application are true to the best of my knowledge. I also acknowledge that certification does not guarantee me a job. It is my responsibility to secure employment.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Discussion and Q&A

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

Questions for Discussion

1. Should Instructions include any other elements?
2. Is Criminal History section clear and appropriate?
3. What is preferred definition of “lived experience” (both for Application and Code of Ethics)?
4. “Provisional” versus “Full” Certification – are these terms clear? Are there better terms?
5. Is Work History section sufficient?
6. Which Personal Statement question(s) should be selected for the Application?
7. Is the Attestation sufficient?
8. Is there anything missing in the Application?

Additional Resources

Certified Peer Support Provider Screening Application

Useful Links



[Peer Specialist Certification: An Analysis of U.S. And Canadian Efforts to Promote and Expand Mental Health Peer Specialist Workforce Capacity](#), Final, February 24, 2021

[Vermont Mental Health Peer Support Provider Stakeholder Meeting Series](#), September – November 2022

[Letter to House Health Care Committee](#), February 25, 2023

[Mental Health Peer Support Certification Stakeholder Meetings: Report and Recommendations](#), March 2023

[Vermont Peer Support Provider Core Competencies](#), March 2023

[Draft Code of Ethics](#), revised July 18, 2023

State and National Codes of Ethics

<u>AK</u>	<u>AR</u>	<u>CA</u>	<u>CO</u>	<u>CT</u>
<u>DC</u>	<u>GA</u>	<u>HA</u>	<u>IA</u>	<u>ID</u>
<u>IL</u>	<u>IN</u>	<u>KS</u>	<u>KY</u>	<u>LA</u>
<u>MA</u>	<u>MD</u>	<u>ME</u>	<u>MI</u>	<u>MN</u>
<u>MO</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>ND</u>
<u>NE</u>	<u>NH</u>	<u>NJ</u>	<u>NM</u>	<u>NV</u>
<u>NY</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>OK</u>	<u>OR</u>	<u>PA</u>
<u>SC</u>	<u>TN</u>	<u>TX</u>	<u>UT</u>	<u>VA</u>
<u>WA</u>	<u>WI</u>	<u>WV</u>	<u>WY</u>	<u>NAADAC</u>
<u>NATIONAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES</u>	<u>SAMHSA NAT'L MODEL STANDARDS</u>	<u>MODEL CODE OF ETHICS</u>		

Questions, Comments, Concerns



Wilda L. White

Wilda L. White Consulting

PO Box 502

Dorset, VT 05251-0502

T: (802) 779-0570

E: wilda@wildalwhite.com

W: <https://www.wildalwhite.com/certification>