
Recovery is Possible!

Peer Advocacy and Leadership Guide





Montana's Peer Network is a peer run 501c3 non-profit organization with a mission to lead the expansion and development of recovery-oriented behavioral health services in Montana.

With over 1,400 members across Montana in more than 78 communities we advocate to improve treatment systems, provide educational presentations on wellness and recovery, and host trainings on peer support and wellness tools through workshops, webinars, social media and peer groups.

Peer Supporter Training

Healthy Minds Healthy Bodies Workbook

Peer Support Demonstration Projects

Podcasts & Webinars

Online Resources

Annual Recovery Conference

Recovery Programming Consultation

Advocacy

*Leading the Recovery Movement
in Montana since 2011*

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and follow us on



NOTES:

Peer Advocacy and Leadership Guide

by
Montana's Peer Network
Staff

additional guides at can be found at
www.mtpeernetwork.org

In October 2019, MPN embarked on the next phase in statewide networking with the Peer Advocacy and Leadership (PAL) Project funded through SAMHSA Statewide Consumer Network Grant program (grant number 1H79SM081947-01).



The PAL Project is designed to improve consumer/peer participation and voice in the mental health system through leadership development, advocacy, increased participation and training.

We have seen that Local Advisory Councils (LAC's) and Service Area Authorities (SAA's) often struggle to meet the requirement that their membership have at least 51% consumers and family members. MPN's vision mobilize people in recovery, increase membership and train new leaders and advocates across Montana as we work to have a more recovery oriented behavioral health system and communities.

“Time is neutral and does not change things. With courage and initiative, leaders change things.”

Jesse Jackson

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“If you want to have a positive impact on the world, learning to lead better will help you do it.”

John C Maxwell

“The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves.”

Ray Kroc founder of McDonalds Inc.

“True leadership is only possible when character is more important than authority.”

Joseph Marshall, Lakota Sioux

“People need to know they have all the tools within themselves”

Deepak Chopra

How do I make a difference for people like me?

Giving back to the recovery movement can be rewarding and we are glad that you are interested in making a difference. Montana’s Peer Network’s members advocate for increased funding and improvements in the system and we encourage people to get involved. There are lots of ways you can make a difference including joining your Local Advisory Council or Service Area Authority, speaking to the legislature or writing bills, or sharing your lived experience. It can be inspirational to others to hear how you have succeeded in your recovery.

How can MPN help me become a voice in my community?

That is the point of the Peer Advocacy and Leadership Project. The recovery movement needs people like you to share your experience with others in your community. We have developed 6 trainings. Each one is designed to address components of effective leadership and advocacy for people in recovery. The trainings are listed below.

- Intro to Recovery
- Advance Psychiatric Directives
- How to be Effective on Boards and Councils
- Fostering Partnerships
- Development of Affiliates
- Peer Leadership

Why is the center of the Passport a separate circle?

One important factor in becoming a leader is taking action. Getting the training is important but what you do with that training is even more so. Being a leader in the recovery movement means working to improve systems and being a voice for those who may not have the ability to do that. To be a true peer leader you have to take action. This is how things happen. Leaders don't just talk about change they take the action steps. They bring people with them, they are not passive, they lift people up and find solutions to obstacles in their way. We have a list of action steps you might consider taking on our webpage <https://mtpeernetwork.org/pal/>

My Passport is full. Now what?

Congratulations on completing all of the Peer Advocacy and Leadership trainings and taking action! Now you have the foundational skills to be a leader in the recovery movement. If haven't already decide what you would like to advocate for. What or where would you like to see change. Are you attending our monthly member networking calls? Check our website for dates/times to connect with other MPN members.

To commemorate your achievement, snap a picture and send it to us. jim@mtpeernetwork.org Then MPN will send you an exclusive MPN Peer Leader keychain to show that you are a Peer Leader. Go forth and make a difference!

How do I become a peer supporter?

Peer support specialists are required to be certified in Montana. The Board of Behavioral Health oversees the certification process. You must attend a 40 hour training that includes a written exam, fill out an application, and pay a licensure fee. MPN offers PS101 quarterly which is approved as a certification training.

I want to be a leader in the recovery movement but I don't want to be a peer supporter. Can I do that?

Yes! Peer support is just one way you can be a leader but there are many others. By getting involved in the recovery movement you improve your own recovery. You can make connections with others in person or online through social media and support groups. You can tell your recovery story using the Recovery Talks format and share it in person, on a podcast, or online. MPN posts member recovery stories on YouTube, Soundcloud, and Facebook. If you are not currently a member of MPN, you can join at mtpeernetwork.org/membership/



Why should I take the Intro to Recovery class if I am already doing well in my recovery?

We all have our own recovery pathways and it is helpful to learn about other pathways, especially for people who

have been in recovery for a while. This training also covers the 10 Guiding Principles of Recovery that you can use to help others understand what recovery involves.



I have been in recovery for a long time, I've never heard of an Advanced Directive. What is that?

An Advanced Psychiatric Directive is similar to a recovery plan but it has the weight of the law behind it. Montana Code Annotated (2012) Title 53, Part 13 states that any signed dated notarized document can be serve as a mental health Advance Directive. It is a way for you to let other people know what you do and don't want to happen if you become incapacitated.

What is an affiliate?

An affiliate is a local business or entity that is officially associated with MPN. We share values and a vision for recovery oriented behavioral health systems. Affiliates can provide training, presentations, support groups, and other services and that are supported by the larger organization. Montana's Peer Network can provide business development, fiduciary, and strategic planning consultation to affiliates to support them as they grow. Ideally we would have them across Montana.

Why are partnerships important?

Partnerships are important to further shared hopes and dreams. Finding like minded individuals allows us to achieve greater success than we can alone. Having a shared vision ensures that everyone is working toward the same goals and not causing confusion within the system. A consistent message is vital to making change.

I looked at the website and saw that I can get a PAL Passport. How do I do that?

Passport cards are available at all of the trainings. If you attend in person, you will receive the card and the sticker for that training when you have completed it. If you attend an online training, we will mail you the passport card and stickers as you complete each training.

