



PEERSTAR*LLC

SUPPORT THAT UNDERSTANDS

ANNUAL REPORT

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“Mental Illness is not a **CHOICE**,
but **RECOVERY** is”

★ *Welcome* ★

WE ARE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU

Message from the President Larry J. Nulton, Ph.D.

I am proud to say that over the past year, our company has continued to grow and significantly impact the lives of those struggling with mental health issues.

With our dedicated team of trained peer support specialists and innovative technology, we have reached more individuals and offered them the support and resources they need to improve their mental well-being.

Our goal remains unchanged as we look towards the future: to continue improving access to mental health care and empower people to take control of their mental health. We are committed to providing the highest quality care and creating a supportive community.

Together, we can help break down mental health stigma and create a world where everyone feels comfortable seeking the support they need.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission.

Let's make this year our best yet!

Sincerely,
Larry J. Nulton, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

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Our Vision

Each individual or family member affected by mental illness has a unique history that can affect their treatment outcome. Each has the opportunity to be supported by a system of recovery that integrates the provider systems with community or other natural supports in an effort towards independence and individual healing.

Our Guiding Principals

Peerstar's Peer Support Specialists, Peer Support Specialist Supervisors, and Administrative Staff follow the

“10 fundamental elements and guiding principles of mental health recovery that serve well as guideposts for recovery-oriented services.”

SELF-DIRECTION

INDIVIDUALIZED AND PERSON CENTERED

EMPOWERMENT

HOLISTIC

NON-LINEAR

STRENGTH-BASED

PEER SUPPORT

RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

HOPE

2023 Highlights

Administrative Updates ••

Peerstar's staff expansion contributed to the relocation of Peerstar's Altoona administrative staff to a new building. Administrative staff were reorganized to serve Peers more efficiently. The Intake Department changed processing methods of incoming referrals, which included hiring two Referral Specialists to focus solely on incoming referrals. This allowed Intake Specialists to dedicate time to assigning and scheduling Peers in their regions. The administrative department began working with a translation service, **allowing staff to communicate with Peers in over 40 different languages.**

In addition, the position of Administrative CPS was created and placed in the Altoona Office. The Administrative CPS tasks include supporting Peers via telehealth and working to assist the office through administrative tasks.

Value-Based Payment Benchmarking Program ••

Peerstar participated in CCBH's Value-Based Payment Benchmarking Program and was **awarded an incentive check for meeting goals of no hospital readmissions in 2023.** Peerstar's Intake Department works closely with hospital staff in Blair, Bedford, and Somerset counties to allow Peers to start peer support before discharging from the hospital. This collaboration allows Peers to have immediate support while readjusting back to their homes and communities and has contributed to Peerstar's success with low readmission rates. In 2024, Peerstar will develop training for CPS and CPSS to expand their skills when working with Peers discharging from the hospital or at risk for another hospital admission.



Safety Committee ••

Peerstar's Safety Committee, consists of the **Administrative Manager, Director of Compliance , HR Specialist, and a Regional Director.**

The Safety Committee conducted yearly inspections and investigations ensuring Peerstar staff is practicing safety in all aspects of their positions. The Safety Committee develops and sends out monthly safety reminders.

A new warning process was implemented to ensure any safety concerns regarding work with our Peers are documented and communicated to all staff involved. Through 2024, the Safety Committee plans to develop reminders in topics of **internet and email safety, ergonomic hazards, and weather safety.**

Extra Support Team ••

Peerstar's Extra Support Team continues to provide extra support to CPS and Peers **who may need extra intervention when working on goals**. The Transition Team continues to work with Peers who have been in services for over 4 years. Both teams ensure Peers are offered quality care and connected to providers and resources as needed.

•• Electronic Medical Records

Peerstar's Credible Committee reviewed and updated all forms and resources on Credible and the **Peerstar website**, allowing them to be easily accessible to all staff.

New Partnerships ••

Peerstar developed new partnerships, providing non-traditional peer support work in two of our servicing counties. **In Cambria County, a new walk-in crisis center** was opened with Peerstar peer specialists imbedded within it. **In Lehigh County, a partnership** was developed to have a peer specialist facilitate quality assurance surveys within mental health residential facilities.

•• Advisory Board

The Recovery Advisory Board had an active year developing **social media resources** geared at inspiring hope that recovery is possible! **New Blogs, Podcasts, Caffeinate and Advocate episodes, and Recovery stories** were created and shared, in addition to TikTok trends and creative outreach.

The Advisory Board Chairperson developed **monthly newsletters** and distributed them throughout the company to share the outreach and connection being built by the Advisory Board.

Specialty Services

Forensic

The Forensic Training was reorganized and updated to ensure that future participants are receiving **relevant and updated information** for current trends in recovery support for the forensic population. Peerstar's Forensic training will now be offered in a hybrid model including **online prerequisite trainings with one live day of training.**



EAPS

The Empowered Aging Peer Support Program saw **increased interest specifically in region A**, with two facilities incorporating peer support for the aging population. In 2024, the Empowered Aging Peer Support Training will be reviewed and updated to meet current trends and needs in providing peer support to older adults.



Dual Diagnosis

The Dual Diagnosis program underwent a content audit and will be updated in 2024 to include identified needs of Dual Diagnosis staff, specifically practical strategies for **supporting peers with a dual diagnosis** and additional information for supporting individuals with an autism diagnosis.

CRS

Our Certified Recovery Support Services continue to expand. Peerstar had its first CRS peer in both Susquehanna and Cambria Counties. There was a **70% increase** in the overall CRS census and provided **75% more units were provided than in 2022.**

We currently have **11 CRS's employed at Peerstar.** We look forward to starting CRS services in Philadelphia in early 2024 and hope to add additional counties in 2024.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Supervisor II ..

In an effort to increase quality of new hire training, mentorship and consistency across our growing regions, Peerstar implemented the position of Supervisor II. The Supervisor II **conducts initial field supervision with all new employees** and acts as a supervisor and **mentor for new staff**. The Supervisor II also provides mentorship and support for existing Peer Specialists and Supervisors through scheduling, paperwork completion, supporting peers, training needs, etc. to **maximize the employee's opportunity for success and quality services for peers**.

Staff Orientation & Training ..

The quality improvement team reviewed and updated orientation material to ensure that **new employees are receiving accurate and effective information** to provide peer support services as they begin their peer support career. In addition, a new **Supervisor orientation process** was developed and implemented, which included a training update review with all supervisors.

The training included a review of the **supervisor job description, tasks, quality documentation and strategies for supporting Peer Specialists**. A fall documentation training was provided to Supervisors focusing on reviewing CPS documentation and supporting CPS staff with the documentation process. **Documentation training** also focused on discharge planning and documenting peer progress towards goals.

Transit Changes ..

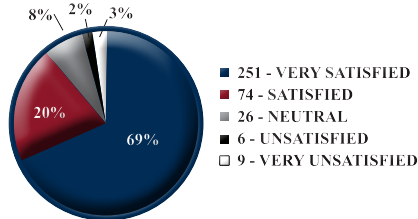
In December 2023, all Peerstar staff attended a workshop to review changes with **providing services while in transit**. During this workshop, the updates to the state regulations were reviewed as well as the changes made within Peerstar documentation. Peerstar implemented changes to **Contact Notes and Individual Recovery Plans** to allow for accurate documentation of services provided while in transit.

Peer Support Service Description ..

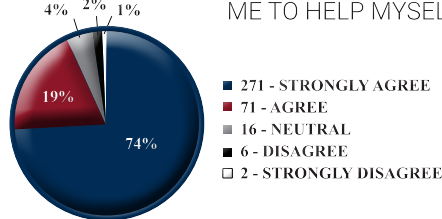
As of 2023 the Peerstar **PSS service description was reviewed and found to be following state and managed care regulations**. The provision of services was reviewed, and all services are found to be delivered in accordance with the Service Description and regulations. As needed, updates to the Services Descriptions will be completed. Also, copies will be sent to the various regional State Licensing offices for review and approval.

Satisfaction & Outcomes

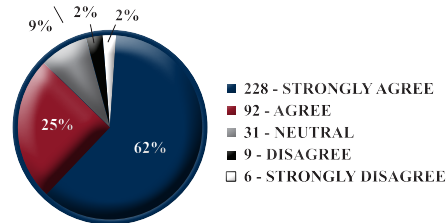
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PEER SUPPORT SERVICES



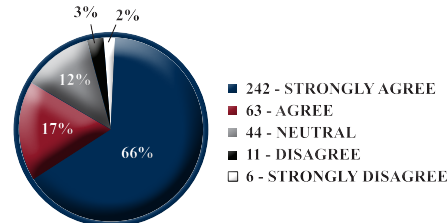
MY PEER SPECIALIST PROVIDES ME WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECOVERY AND ENCOURAGES ME TO HELP MYSELF



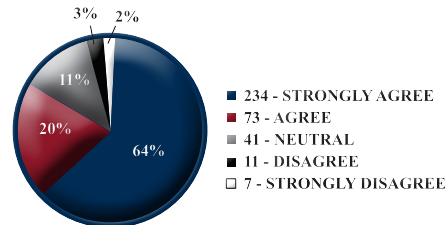
MY PEER SPECIALIST TEACHES ME NEW SKILLS THAT I USE FOR RECOVERY



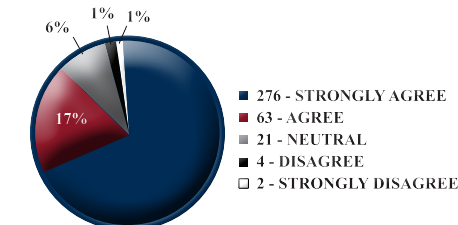
MY PEER SPECIALIST HELPS ME FIND OTHER SERVICES THAT I NEED



MY PEER SPECIALIST HELPS ME USE NATURAL RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY



MY PEER SPECIALIST SUPPORTS MY SENSE OF WELL-BEING



There were **366 peer surveys completed in 2023**. No significant deficiency trends were found in quality or satisfaction. Peerstar utilizes data in the Credible electronic health record to gather more specific and objective outcome data related to overall outcomes and individual outcomes utilizing ANSA scores and daily rating of progress.

Individual Record Reviews

In 2023, Compliance Department staff reviewed on average 1200 individual peer charts performed with no significant trends noted. The review included the timeliness and appropriateness of service by reviewing medical necessity of service provision. Record reviews verified all services began timely, within one year of LPHA recommendation, as per OMHSAS policy, and as per the individual recovery plan. Benefits are verified upon referral and through bi-monthly EVS checks. Also, **outcomes of individual peers are provided on the home page of the individual's medical chart.**

Certified Peer Specialist Program

The focus for 2024 will be adding enhancements to promote better quality of documentation by working with individual CPS staff members to assist them in becoming even better documenters. A Mental Health Professional/Quality Auditor position was added to assist in improving documentation, especially the narrative of peer sessions over three hours. Several reports have been implemented to assist office clerks in screening contact notes and documentation more efficiently. **A survey for referring providers will be implemented in late 2024 to identify any improvements in Peerstar's referral process.**

Employee Surveys ••

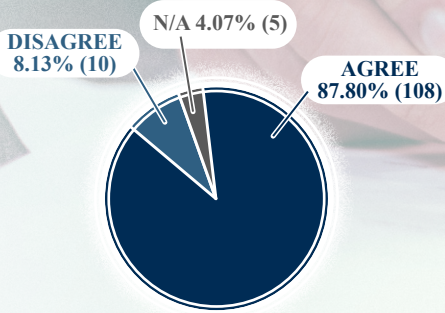
All supervisors were sent a **supervisor survey** in September to which **29 supervisors responded**. These supervisors provided feedback regarding: **understanding of job expectations, motivation for supervising, resources/trainings to support with supervisor role.**

New employees were also provided a survey in September to which **16 employees hired in 2023 responded**. These staff members provided feedback regarding effectiveness of initial field training, understanding of job expectations, effectiveness of supervision/mentoring.

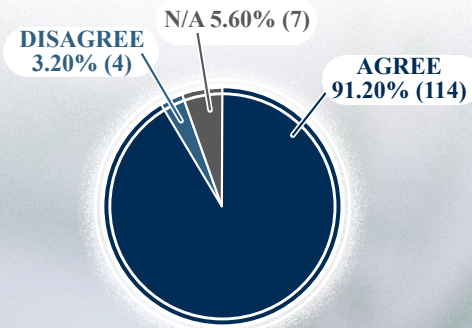
A COMPANY WIDE EMPLOYEE SURVEY WAS ALSO CONDUCTED IN DECEMBER 2023.

130 STAFF RESPONDED, REVEALING THE FOLLOWING DATA:

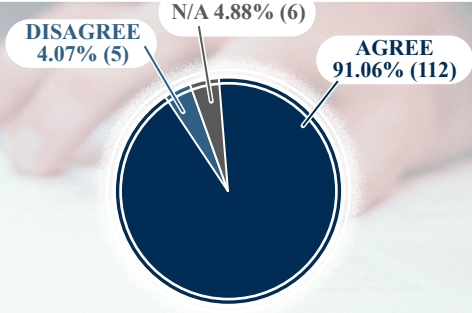
Q8 I BELIEVE PEERSTAR IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A HIGH LEVEL OF SUPPORT TO PEERS



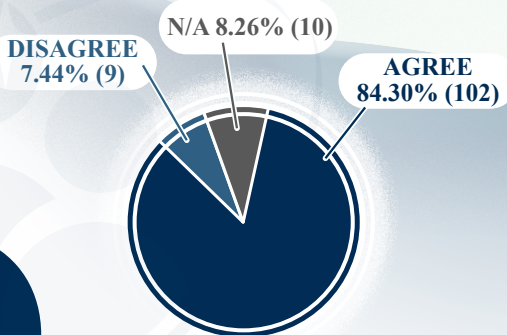
Q6 THE WORK I DO GIVES ME A FEELING OF PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT



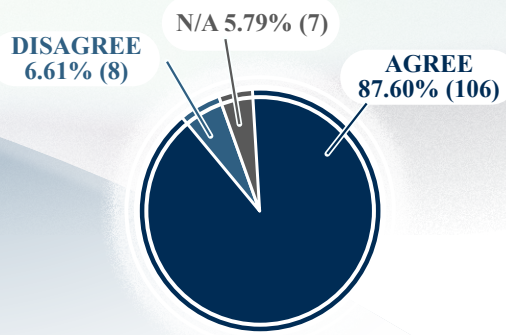
Q9 I BELIEVE PEERSTAR PROVIDES A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT FOR PEERS



Q14 I WOULD RECOMMEND PEERSTAR FOR EMPLOYMENT



Q15 I FEEL PROUD TO TELL PEOPLE THAT I WORK FOR PEERSTAR

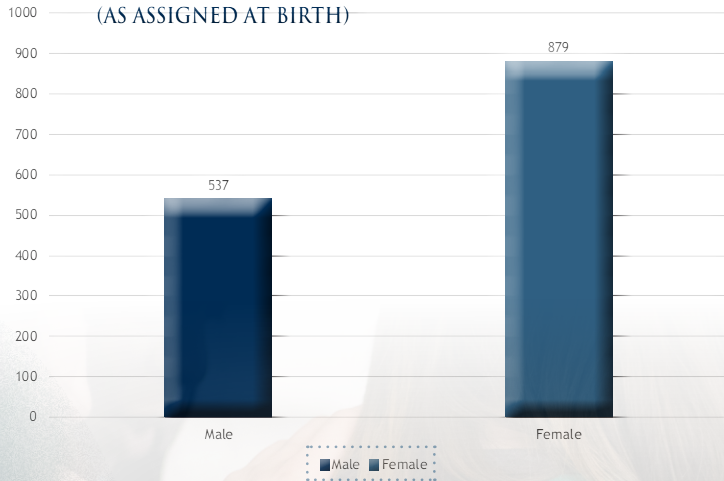


2023 Outcomes Report

JANUARY 1ST THRU DECEMBER 31ST

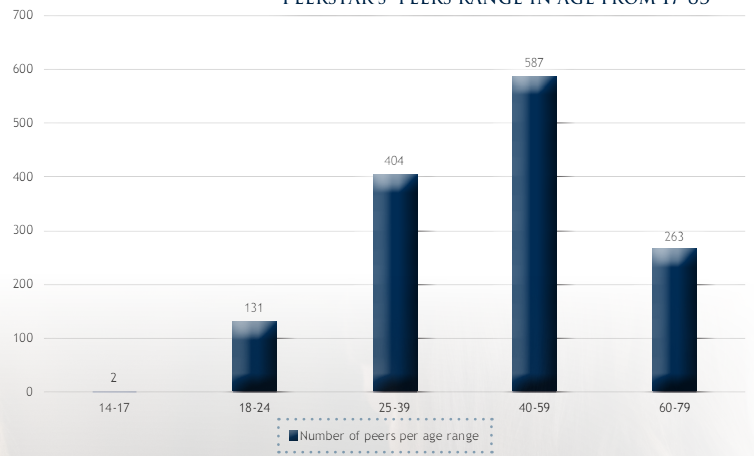
Demographics

PEER GENDER (AS ASSIGNED AT BIRTH)

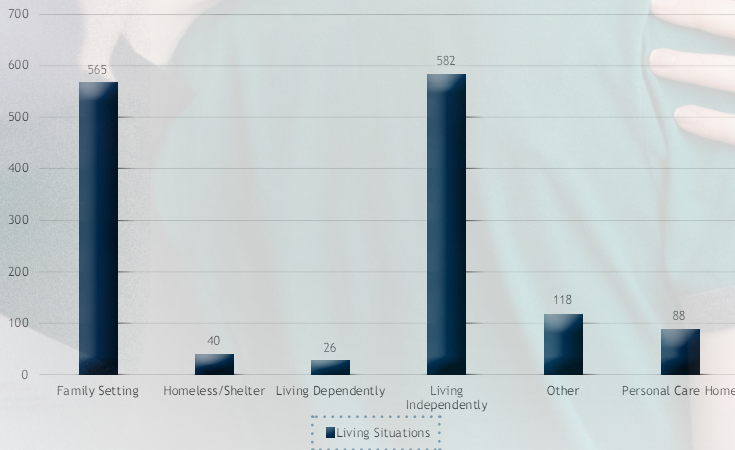


PEER AGE

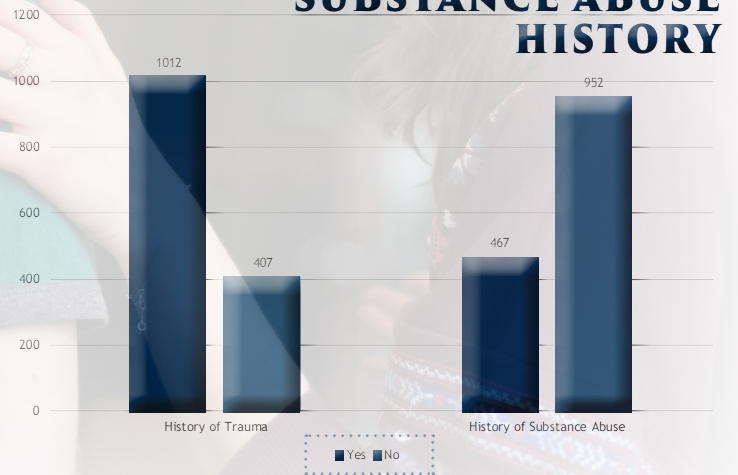
PEERSTAR'S PEERS RANGE IN AGE FROM 17-83



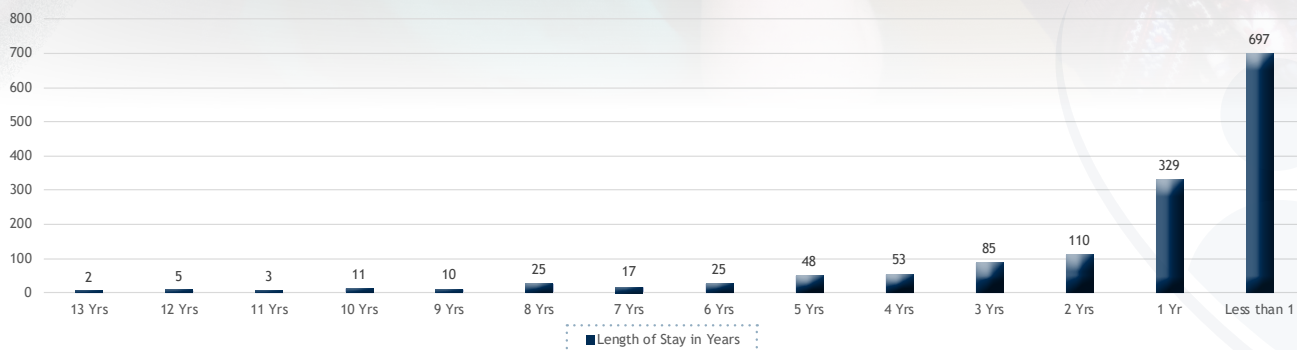
LIVING SITUATION



TRAUMA AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE HISTORY

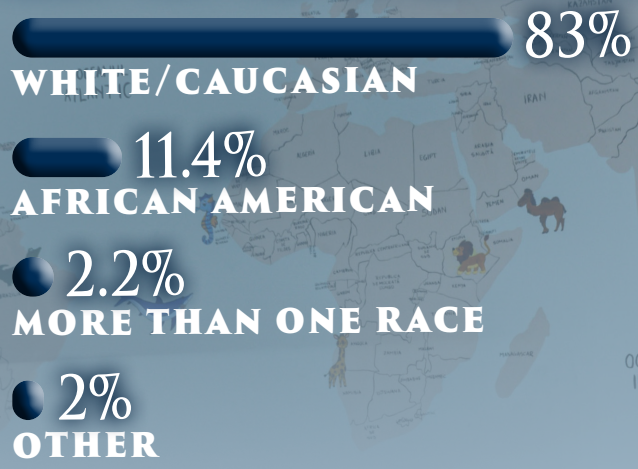


LENGTH OF STAY 80% OF PEERS HAVE BEEN IN SERVICES FOR 2 YEARS OR LESS



RACE PEERSTAR'S PEER POPULATION IDENTIFIES PREDOMINANTLY AS WHITE OR CAUCASIAN AND NOT HISPANIC OR LATINO

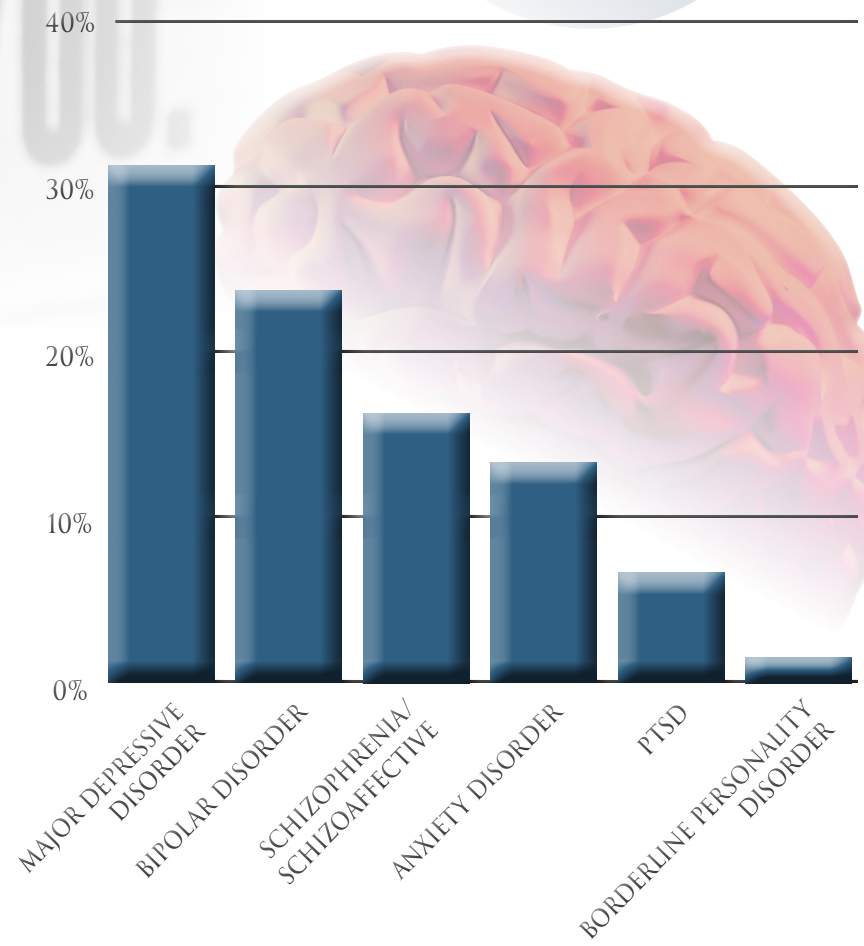
PENNSYLVANIA



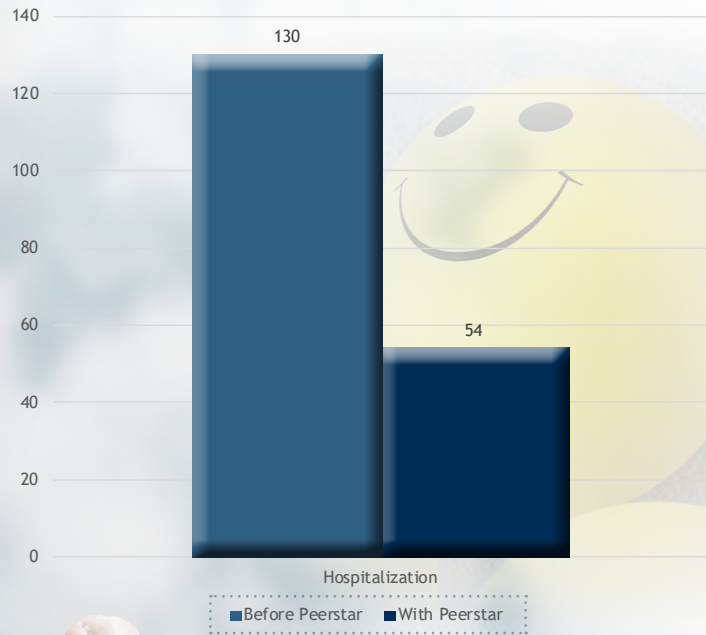
WE HEAR YOU.

PEER DIAGNOSIS

Identifying the most prevalent peer diagnoses helps the organization **identify training and resource needs**. Future training and resource development should focus on supporting the diagnoses noted: **Major Depressive Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia/Schizoaffective Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, and PTSD.**



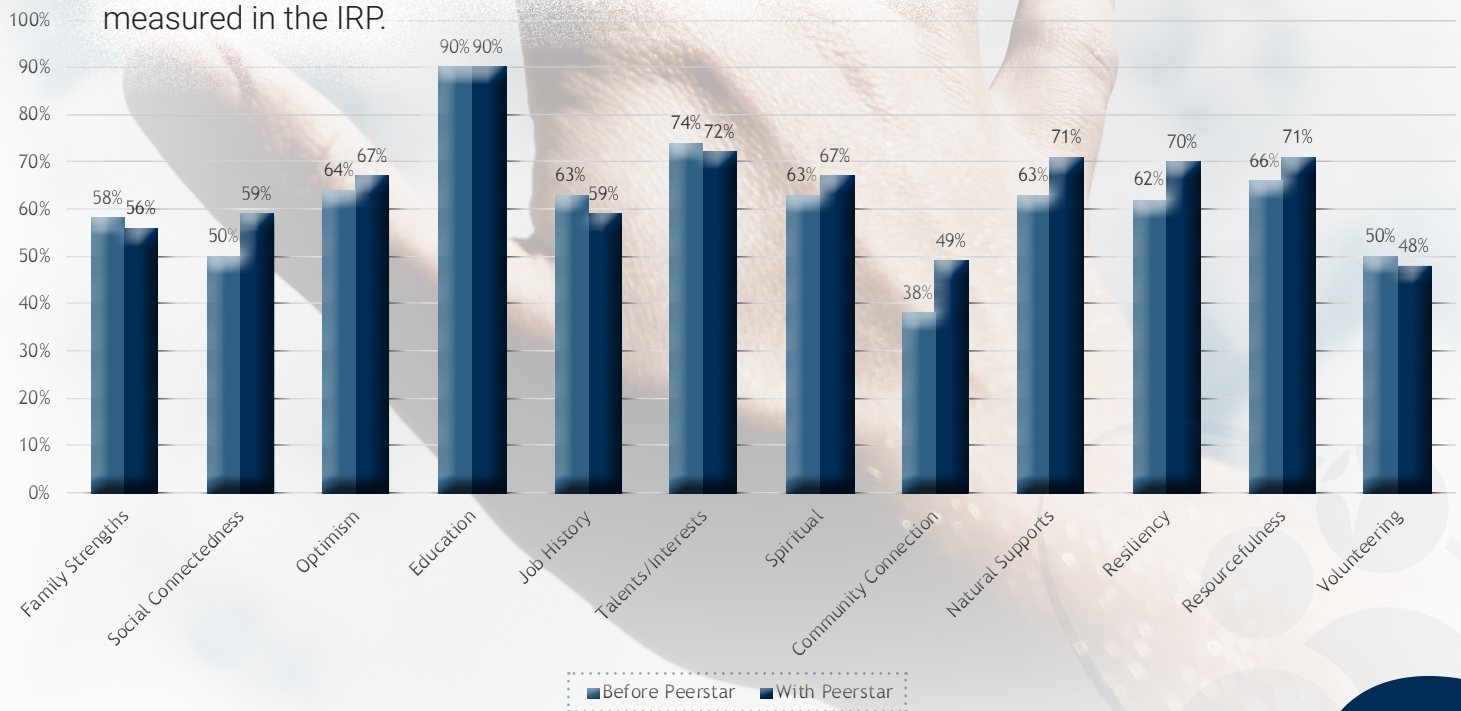
HOSPITALIZATION



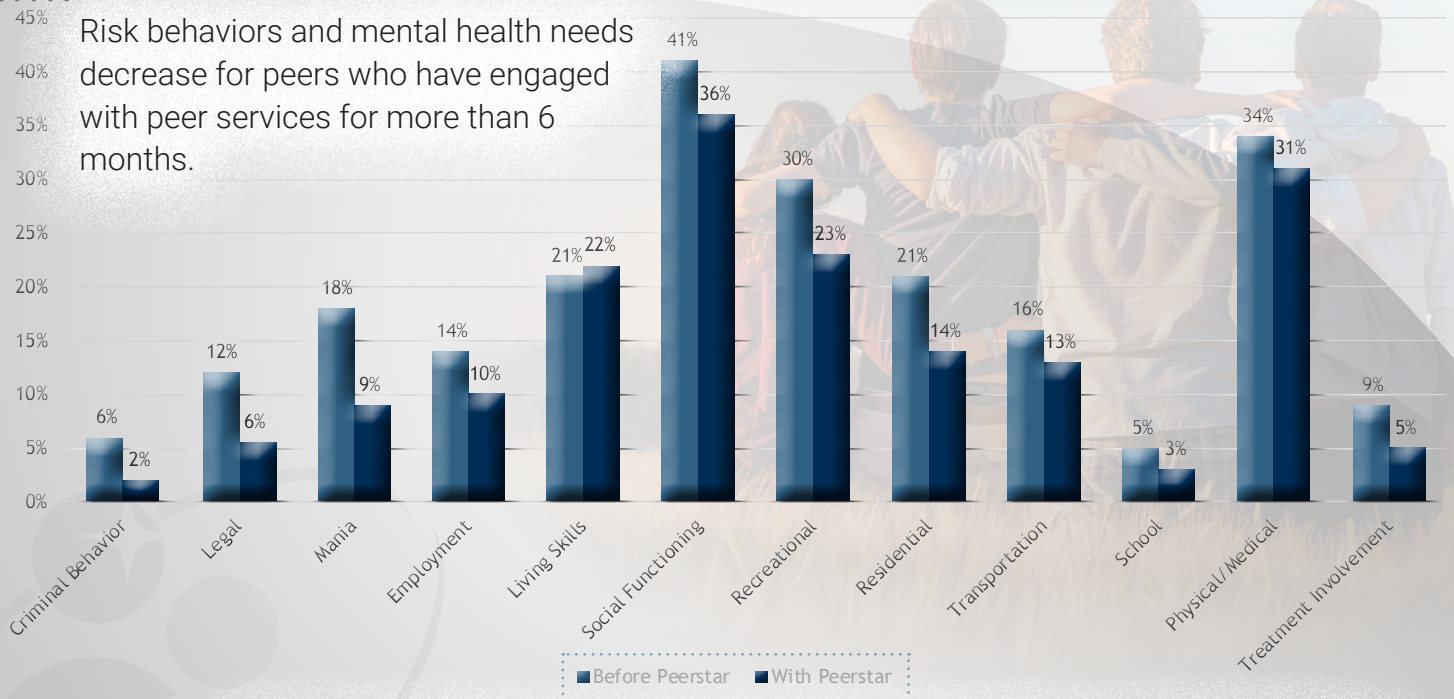
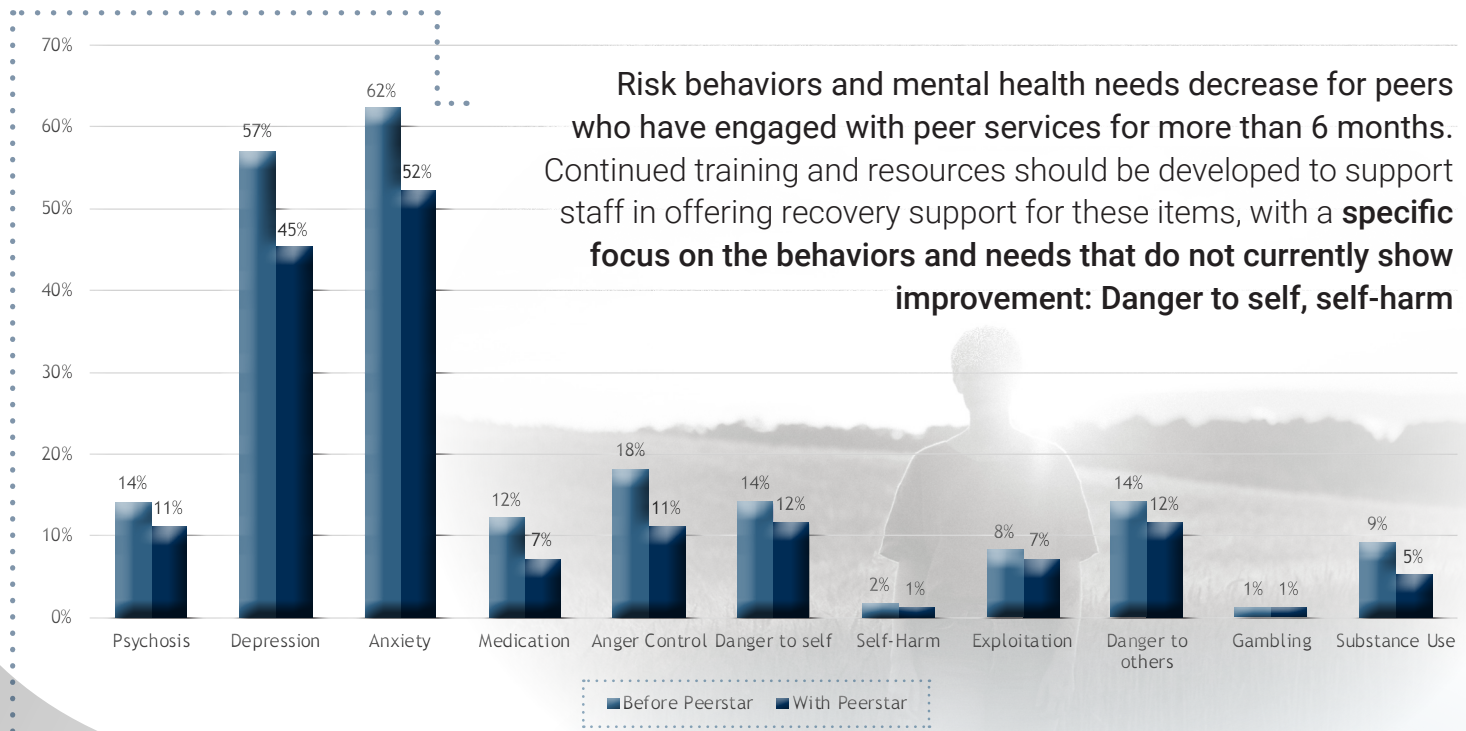
YOU'RE NOT LOST
YOU'RE HERE

Peer strengths are increased with peers who have been engaged in peer support services for more than 6 months. Peerstar should continue to develop and create training and resources that can support peers in developing the strengths measured in the IRP.

STRENGTHS

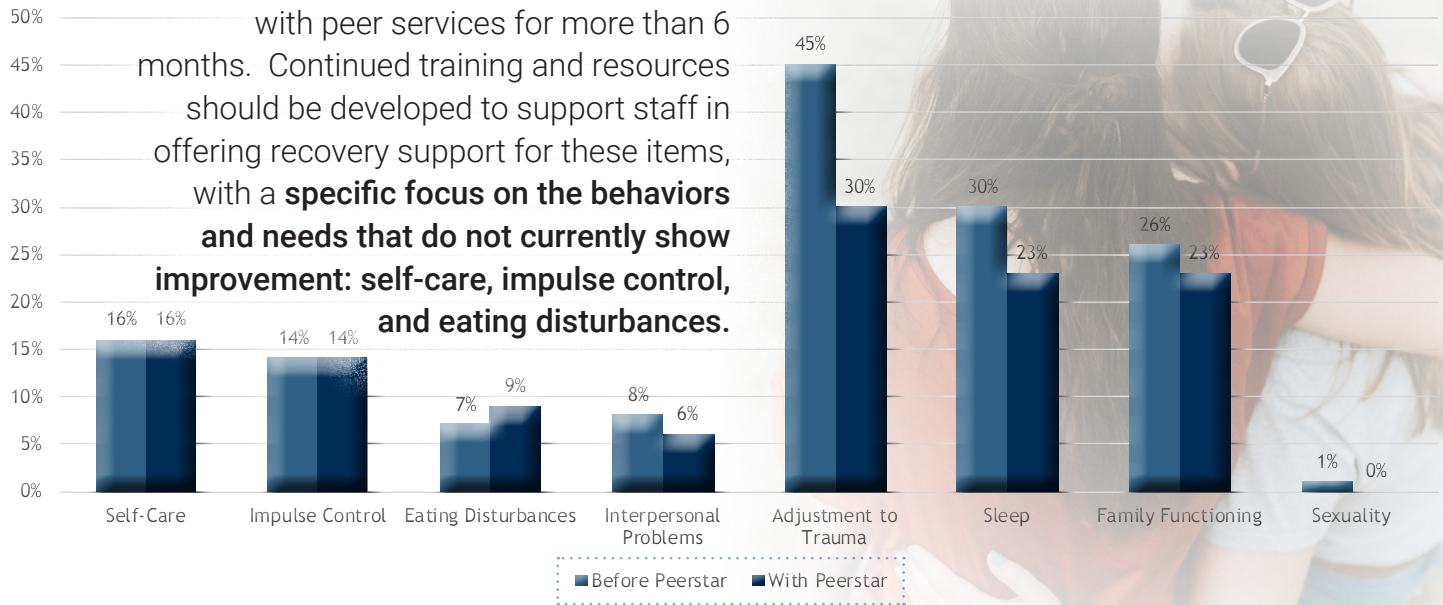


RISK BEHAVIORS NEEDS: ACTIONABLE ITEMS

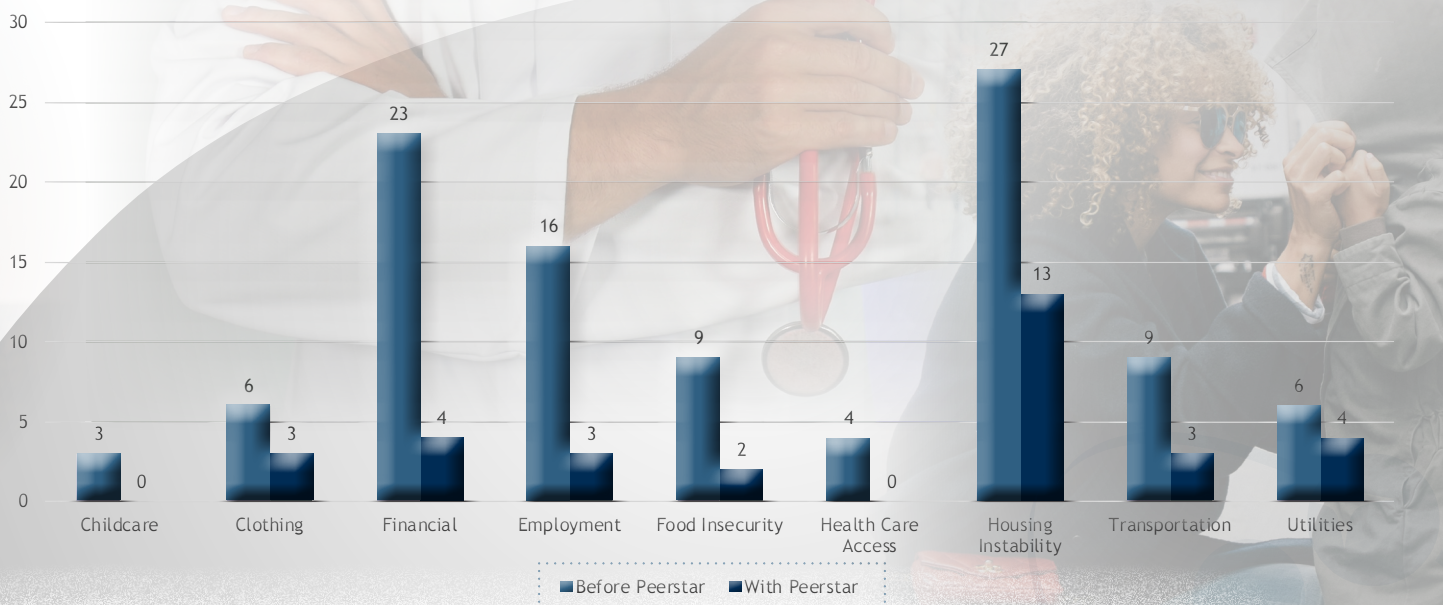


Continued training and resources should be developed to support staff in offering recovery support for these items, with a **specific focus on the behaviors and needs that do not currently show improvement: Living Skills**

Risk behaviors and mental health needs decrease for peers who have engaged with peer services for more than 6 months. Continued training and resources should be developed to support staff in offering recovery support for these items, with a **specific focus on the behaviors and needs that do not currently show improvement: self-care, impulse control, and eating disturbances.**



SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH ACTIONABLE ITEMS



Social determinants of health needs were only identified within less than 3% of peers serviced in the beginning half of 2023.

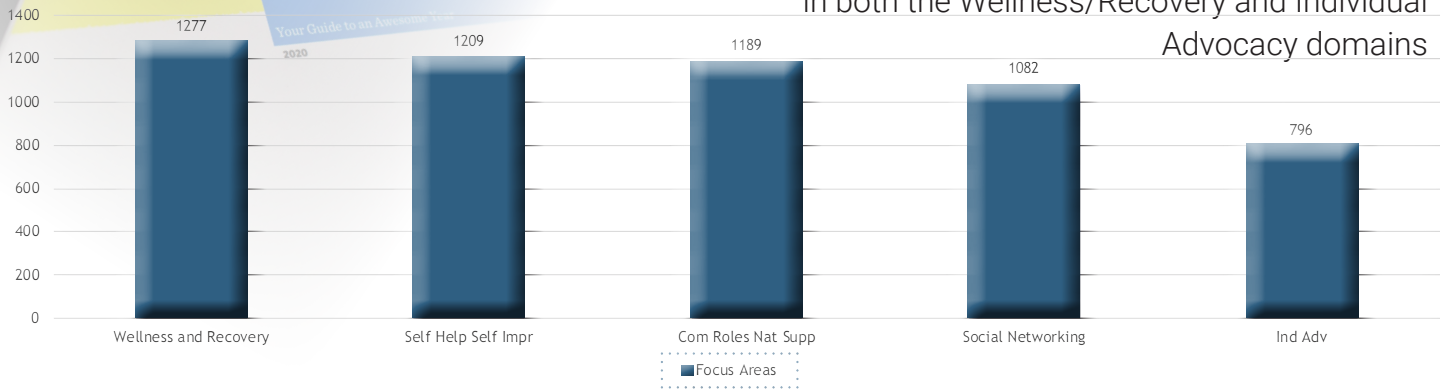
Peerstar regions should continue to ensure their resources list for SDoH needs are regularly updated and dispersed to staff, especially those working with an individual who has identified an SDoH need.



Goals

FOCUS

Peers **increased their level of independence** in both the Wellness/Recovery and Individual Advocacy domains

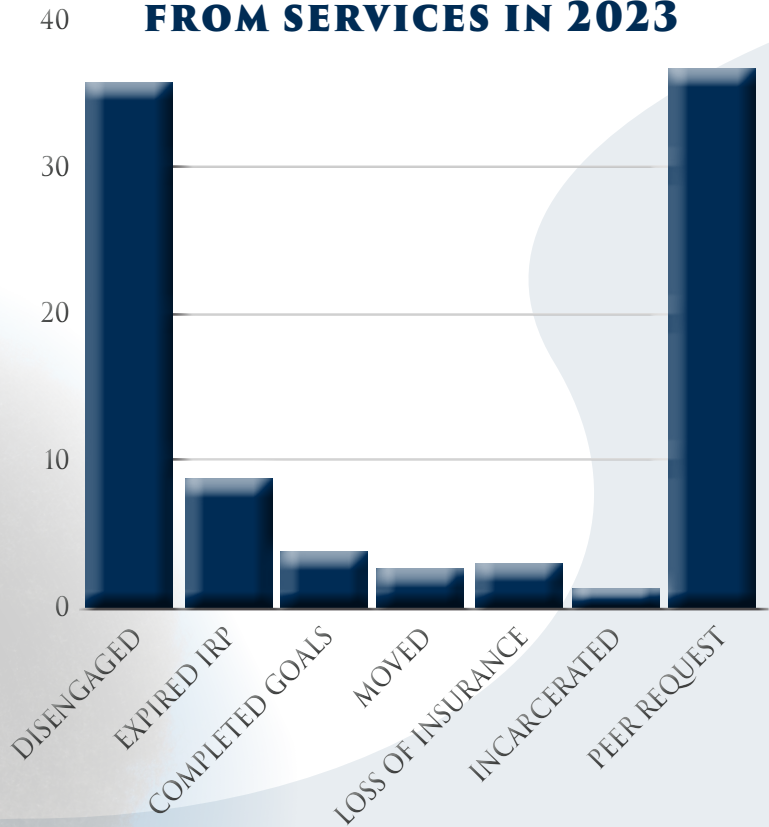


Reasons for Discharge

The main reason for discharge in the 2023 was “peer request”. It is recommended that this option be altered to capture a more specific reason for discharge (i.e.: peer requested: peer support has met their recovery needs, peer requested: service did not meet their recovery needs, etc..)

Peerstar should continue to **identify ways to engage peers** from the start of services and throughout their length of stay, and train staff on improving engagement.

869 PEERS DISCHARGED FROM SERVICES IN 2023



561 PEERS DISCHARGED IN THE 1ST HALF OF 2023 WITH ONLY 308 DISCHARGING IN THE SECOND HALF

Looking Ahead ...

★ GROWTH AND EXPANSION ★

The need for peer support continues to grow throughout the Commonwealth and Peerstar will be expanding to meet these needs. Peerstar will be expanding into two new counties in 2024 and will be hiring additional Certified Peer Specialists and Certified Peer Specialist Supervisors to accommodate this growth.

★ ADMINISTRATIVE GOALS ★

Administrative goals for the 2024 include focus on utilization to better serve Peers' requested hours, utilize newly developed reports for more efficient contact note and document review, and conducting a thorough manual review for consistency and inclusion of all necessary workflows.

★ DOCUMENTATION QUALITY ASSURANCE ★

At the end of 2023, Peerstar welcomed an additional mental health professional and quality auditor in our quality department. These roles will be focusing on reviewing the quality of Peerstar's Individual Recovery Plans, Contact Notes, and additional documentation and will inform 2024 training initiatives by identifying documentation strengths and areas of need.

★ BUILDING TRAINING LIBRARY ★

Informed by 2023 Outcomes, Peerstar will be developing trainings to support staff in the areas of need identified by the 2023 data analysis. Trainings will be developed to build skills in supporting peers with living skills, self-care, building relationships, and creating action plans.

★ RESOURCES FOR STAFF ★

The Peerstar Recovery Advisory Board continues to build resources for staff, including wellness videos, creative activities, blogs, and a podcast. In 2024, the Recovery Advisory Board will be working on developing wellness and self-care worksheets, additional video resources, and updating region-specific resource lists.

Our Leaders About Corporate



LARRY NULTON, PH.D.

President & CEO
Bowling Green State University



ELISSA NULTON, MBA

Chief Operations Officer
Indiana University of Pennsylvania



JESSICA PEACOCK, ED.D.

Chief Recovery Officer

Our Team

“We Are Not A Team Because We Work Together, We Are A Team Because We Respect, Trust, & Care For Each Other”

DIRECTORS



MICHELLE SEAMAN, BA

Director of Onboarding



CHRISTINE BUTTERBAUGH, MS

Regional Director/ Director of Certified Recovery Specialists
Cambria and Director of CRS Services



HEATHER MORAN, MA, LBS

Director of Operations and Quality



CHRISTY DISTEFANO, BS

Regional Director and Director of Forensics
Philadelphia and Delaware



THOMAS MCHUGH, MS

Regional Director
Lackawanna, Susquehanna, Luzerne, Wayne, and Wyoming



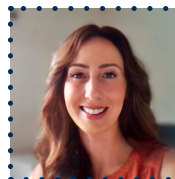
RONALD NASE JR., BS

Regional Director
Lehigh, Northampton, Carbon, Monroe, and Pike



TYLER HINDINGER

Regional Director
Blair, Bedford, Somerset, Franklin, and Fulton



JESSICA WEST, MBA

Director of Compliance



MONICA CARROLL

Regional Director
Armstrong, Indiana, and Westmoreland



ELISE HARMON, BS

Regional Director
Clearfield and Jefferson



CAROL WINTERS

Regional Director
Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, and Centre



KELLY SMITH

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