Certified Peer Specialists Recognized with Full Certification Process

To more formally recognize the value of peers in the workforce, Pennsylvania is moving to a new full peer certification offered by the Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB). This new formal certification will be necessary to provide stand-alone Medicaid Funded Peer Support.

To make this transition as easy as possible for current Pennsylvania Peer Specialists, there will be a time-limited grandparenting process for those who wish to obtain the new full certification during the grandparenting period. **The 18-month grandparenting period will end on August 31, 2019.** The requirements for the grandparenting process must be met, but no additional exam will be required.

The requirements to become grandparented are:
- You must have completed the two-week peer specialist training from one of the recognized training vendors. Those vendors are the Institute for Recovery and Community Integration and RI Consulting. (PSAN is subcontracted by Recovery and Community Integration to conduct the training in the western region of Pennsylvania.)
- Complete the CPS Grandparenting Application and sign and date a Peer-specific code of ethical conduct.
- Signed and notarized release form.

There is no initial cost to peers for obtaining the credential, as the grandparenting fee is being underwritten by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS).

The new CPS certification will be valid for two years. To avoid a lapse in certification, recertification should occur before the end of the two-year certification period. Recertification requires obtaining 36 hours of CEUs every two years and a $50 two-year recertification fee.
This new formal certification through the PCB is designed to help strengthen the profession and give CPSs a stronger voice, while maintaining the essence of peer support in delivering recovery-oriented services. Peer Specialists should complete the process now, during the grandparenting period, to ensure they can continue to do the great work that they do.

**REMEMBER:** This new formal certification will be necessary to provide stand-alone Medicaid Funded Peer Support.

The CPS Grandparenting Application can be found at the following link: [www.pacertboard.org/cps](http://www.pacertboard.org/cps)

Requests for paper applications and/or questions should be addressed to:
Mail: PCB, 298 S. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109
Phone: (717) 540-4455
Email: info@pacertboard.org

The following organizations participated in the development of the new certification process:
- Pennsylvania Peer Specialist Workgroup
- Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS)
- Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers’ Association (PMHCA)
- Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition (PaPSC)
- Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB)