

PRESS RELEASE



For Release: Immediate

Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State (ASAP) Applauds Recovery Peer Work Force Initiative

The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) announced a new initiative that will provide \$250,000 to boost the Peer Recovery workforce. This morning, at a gathering of close to one thousand people in recovery from addiction, Commissioner Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez announced that funds will be made available to support the re-certification of Certified Recovery Peer Advocates, the certification of new Peers, and training and internships that are required for certification. The ultimate goal of the new funding is to build the Peer workforce, specifically Certified Recovery Peer Advocates, so that they can be deployed for important, life-saving work in treatment and recovery support settings.

Peers are an increasingly important part of the workforce needed to combat the epidemic of addiction and overdose deaths associated with prescription opioids and heroin. There are currently about 300 Certified Recovery Peer Advocates in communities across New York State. “With the funds announced today by OASAS, people who want to become certified will receive the support they need,” said John Coppola, Executive Director of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State (ASAP). “ASAP created the New York Certification Board approximately five years ago and is approved to certify Recovery Peer Advocates. The support announced today by Commissioner Gonzalez-Sanchez will help to attract new certification candidates and make it possible to double the number of peers in the workforce within a year,” according to Coppola.

As Director of Certification and Workforce Development for ASAP, Gayle Farman heads the New York Certification Board. According to Ms. Farman, “The New York Certification Board anticipates that this new initiative will rapidly accelerate the pipeline of professional recovery peer advocates at a time of great need. We appreciate that Governor Cuomo and OASAS recognize that certification, testing, and training fees can be a barrier to certifying more peers.”

“As President of the New York Certification Board, I am optimistic that this Peer initiative will result in more people getting certified. As a community-based service provider, I look forward to employing more peers in our Recovery Center and other programs,” commented Roy Kears who works for Samaritan-Daytop Village in New York City.

The New York Certification Board’s mission, to strengthen health and human services outcomes by enhancing the recovery-oriented skills and capacity of the workforce, will be achieved through the provision of high quality credentialing, testing, technical assistance, and training/education services. Additional information is available at: www.nycertboard.org.

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