



CONNECTING TO RECOVERY ORIENTED SERVICES

The Role of the Certified Recovery Peer Advocate

1. Recovery

- a) **Defining recovery:** “A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.” (SAMHSA, 2011)
- b) **Exploring the elements of recovery:** Peer recovery focuses on supporting the change process (Prochaska & Di Clemente) from an individual’s vision of how his/her recovery life might be through building recovery capital around daily living needs to building a sustainable life in recovery throughout the five stages of recovery from 0-11+ years (O’Connell & Valentine)

2. Peer Recovery

- a) **Recognizing the value:** Peer recovery engagement is understood to offer significant value, including the following documented outcomes (National Council for Behavioral Health, 2018):
 - ♥ Reduced re-admission rates
 - ♥ Rapid turnaround following re-admission
 - ♥ Decreased hospitalizations
 - ♥ Reduced hospital stay
 - ♥ Decreased homelessness
 - ♥ Increased recovery capital
 - ♥ Community & civic engagement
 - ♥ Achieving recovery milestones/goals
 - ♥ Identifying unrealized potential
- b) **Identifying role purpose:** The purpose of the peer recovery engagement is to establish a non-clinical relationship whereby these professionals:
 - ♥ **Share** a personal message of recovery across a lifetime (vision)
 - ♥ **Support** individuals developing their own sustainable lives in recovery (capital)
- c) **Understanding peer recovery as a profession:** Peer recovery shares three core characteristics of a profession: practice-specific **Education**; profession-specific **Ethics**; role-specific **Certification**.
Peer recovery professionals: (i) complete approved competence-building training in the role knowledge/skills/abilities, posted at <http://www.asapnys.org/ny-certification-board/> and confirmed by exam; (ii) attest to the NYCB Code of Ethical Conduct & Disciplinary Procedures, available at the ASAP-NYCB website; (iii) fulfill the requirements of their certification per this website - Certified Addiction Recovery Coach (CARC); Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA)

3. Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA)

- a) **Defining the CRPA Role:** The peer recovery professional bridges the gap between clinical prevention-treatment providers and relevant multi-dimensional resources in the community. This connection is achieved through purposeful conversations using role modeling, motivating, problem solving, resourcing, etc. (White). The CRPA offers this service in Medicaid-reimbursable settings.
- b) **Examining practitioner qualifications:** Peer recovery professionals leverage the unique authority of personal **Experience** and the **Expertise** derived from it (Borkman, 1976): i.e., direct experience of (i) substance use disorder, self or others; (ii) the process of change; and (iii) a sustainable life in recovery (Riddick, 2017) is leveraged via expert communication skills (Valentine et al, 2008).
- c) **Recognizing certification:** An independent Board (ASAP-NYCB) offers the following value:
 - ♥ **Promotes** the profession by describing the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the professional role competently; establishing the necessary minimum experiential and educational standards for role competence; recognizing professionals who meet these standards; and publishing these role competencies and certification standards widely; and
 - ♥ **Protects** the public by providing transparency in role description, certification standards, and oversight procedures ensuring ethical practice through the mandatory Code of Professional Conduct; by delivering accountability through the accompanying Disciplinary Procedures for ethical offenses.