

# Information for Peer Support Certification Practicum Sites



Peer Support Canada

## What is Peer Support Canada?

Peer Support Canada is a national charitable organization dedicated to the advancement of peer support across Canada.

The focus of Peer Support Canada is on the certification of those providing peer support, certification of peer support mentors, and accreditation of peer support training programs, along with knowledge exchange, research, and knowledge translation.

## What does Peer Support Certification Involve?

Peer Support Canada Certified Peer Supporters have the verified knowledge, values, experience, and competencies that allow for the safe and effective delivery of peer support.

The certification process upholds the national standards of practice for mental health peer supporters. The National Standards of Practice consist of the knowledge, competencies, experience, and code of conduct requirements needed to effectively provide peer support services, with due care and skill, in a variety of settings.

The Standards of Practice grew from the Peer Support Framework developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. This work was led and driven by individuals with lived experience. Almost 600 peer support workers and agencies from across Canada participated in the project. This was followed by a series of in-person, cross-country consultations leading to the development of the framework.

Peer Support Canada's rigorous certification process ensures that quality peer support is delivered effectively, consistently, and safely across Canada.

## Peer Support is rooted in core values

- Hope and recovery
- Self-determination
- Dignity, respect and social inclusion
- Integrity, authenticity and trust
- Health and wellness
- Lifelong learning and personal growth

## How prepared is a Peer Support Certification applicant to provide peer support?

In order to proceed into a practicum, an applicant must have demonstrated adequate knowledge (passed the Knowledge Assessment) and signed the Peer Support Canada Code of Conduct.

It is quite likely that a certification applicant has prior experience providing peer support. Many applicants have also completed general or specific training.

## What does a Practicum involve?

Most practicums are done through a Candidate's current (paid or unpaid) work. The length and focus of the practicum is tailored for each individual and are self-paced. Practicums are usually about 10 hours a week, and can range from 4 to 20 weeks.

Each Candidate is matched with a Certified Peer Support Mentor who provides feedback, discusses challenges, and encourages self reflection while the Candidate is providing peer support. Finally, the Certified Peer Support Mentor completes a final assessment of the Candidate and the Certification Committee reviews the entire package and makes their recommendation.

## The role of Peer Support Canada

- Ensure the Peer Support Certification Candidate has met the requirements for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of certification, including demonstrated experience, competencies and knowledge
- Identify learning goals for the practicum in collaboration with the Candidate
- Peer Support Canada, the Certified Peer Support Mentor and Candidate co-design the practicum, including the number of hours and time period, applicable activities (Such as Community of Practice, community resource research, and related administrative activities)
- The Mentor provides guidance and coaching to the Candidate on a regular basis, as well as tracking hours and troubleshooting
- The Mentor encourage and support the Candidate to practice self-care
- The Mentor complete the final assessment of the Candidate

## The role of the Practicum Site

- Understands and respects the value of peer support
- Offers the peer support certification candidate an opportunity to provide peer support over the course of the practicum
- Provides a person on site who will be responsible for oversight. (The scope of that role can include introducing potential peers to the supporter, confirming hours, and dispute resolution)

**Questions:**  
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