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Fact Sheet on Promoting Peer Support Services: the SBHA Role¹

As part of pursuing a recovery-based system, SBHAs have supported the coverage of peer support as a specific type of service and/or provider in the Medicaid program. Peer support – services from staff who have experienced a serious behavioral health disorder and who relate to participants based on their experience in the recovery process – can play an important role in recovery. Peer providers teach social and coping skills essential to increasing resiliency and provide a model of recovery.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has declared peer support an “evidence-based mental health model of care” and has specified requirements for Medicaid-funded peer support.

SBHAs provide networking opportunities for peer-specialists and use those opportunities to continue and refine:

- definitions of peer support,
- how peer support differs from mutual support,
- training, certification, and accreditation,
- whether to bill Medicaid, and
- resources on how to manage and promote a peer support system.

SBHAs promote peer support and recovery work as cost-effective with good outcomes. SBHAs spread the word about peer support via journal articles and workshops as well as continue the development of evaluation instruments, competency assessments, and provider recovery skills.

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¹ SBHAs are state substance abuse and mental health authorities, and the term *behavioral health* refers to substance abuse and mental health.

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