

Who are peer support workers?

Peer support workers are people who have experienced mental health issues and are now living well. They are highly skilled and trained to work together with you and your treating team. They are here to support, encourage and empower you to explore your own path to wellbeing.

Receiving mental health care can bring about a range of emotions. It may help to chat with someone who has “been there” and “gets it.” They can share their insights with you and you can share yours with them.

What to expect when engaging with a peer support worker:

- ▶ be treated as an equal
- ▶ have your rights respected
- ▶ not be judged or criticised
- ▶ have regular contact with your peer support worker
- ▶ Be able to stop seeing your peer support worker at your discretion.



Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness.

Desmond Tutu

Where are peer support workers located?

Peer support workers are currently employed in the following areas:

Hospitals:

Graylands Hospital	6159 6600
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital	6383 1000
Mental Health Unit	

Community Mental Health Clinics:

Waneroo	9406 7100
Lower West	9489 7200
Mirrabooka	9344 5400
Osborne Park	6457 8350

Hospital in the Home:

Youth HiTH	6159 6436
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Who to contact in an emergency:

If you are experiencing mental health difficulties, contact your mental health service, or if needed, the following:

Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL)	1300 555 788
Lifeline Crisis Support	131 114
Police	131 444

Do you need an interpreter or this form in an alternative format?



Please ask a staff member and they will be able to assist you.



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Peer support workers

Exploring life's possibilities together



Healthcare excellence
for our patients, population and community

What can peer support workers offer?

Peer support workers are primarily guided by you and what you would like to do.

Some examples of how peer support workers can work with you include:

- ▶ supporting you to build upon your existing strengths and work towards your goals
- ▶ building your confidence (e.g. to help you to ask for what you need)
- ▶ vocational planning (e.g. work, volunteering, study)
- ▶ living, working or becoming involved in activities in your community i.e. volunteering
- ▶ sharing information about how mental health services work
- ▶ letting you know about other services, networks and resources
- ▶ supporting you during meetings and appointments
- ▶ sharing their lived experience of:
 - managing stress
 - coping strategies
 - dealing with stigma
 - creating personal wellbeing
 - building relationships
 - holding hope
 - overcoming barriers to recovery.



How long will a peer support worker work with you?

Depending on your circumstances and needs, the length of time you engage with a peer support worker may vary from:

- ▶ once off meetings/support
- ▶ short term (up to six weeks)
- ▶ medium term (up to six months)
- ▶ long term (up to a year)
- ▶ inpatient stays (variable)
- ▶ group work (variable).

What does “recovery” mean?

Recovery means different things to different people. For peer support workers, it is about feeling comfortable with their lives and having meaning and connections. It supports a profound belief that despite life’s challenges – they will be okay.

Together with your mental health team, peer support workers can support you towards your mental health wellbeing and recovery.

How can you meet a peer support worker?

- ▶ ask your doctor, case manager or anyone in your team to refer you
- ▶ ask the receptionist to arrange for a peer support worker to contact you at a time convenient to you
- ▶ introduce yourself to the peer support worker when/if you see them.

Testimonials

“I didn’t know what recovery meant until I met [peer support worker].”

“Meeting the peer support worker was a turning point in my recovery.”

“I found it really helpful to be able to discuss issues with someone who has been there and is not clinical.”

“The peer worker accepted me in a way I never felt before. That made it really comfortable for me to see her.”

“Peer support is help from someone who knows what it’s like to hear voices. Someone with the right kind of experience.”