

WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT?

Peer support has existed in the behavioral health field for decades; however, its rapid growth in recent years is due to the increasing evidence supporting its effectiveness. A Peer Support Specialist is a person who uses his or her lived experience of recovery from mental illness and/or addiction, plus skills learned in formal training, to deliver services in behavioral health settings to promote mind-body recovery and resiliency.

The growing evidence base for the effectiveness of peer support services—both in terms of quality of life, outcomes for individuals and in terms of cost savings to counties and states due to reductions in rates of hospitalization—these efforts have the potential to make significant improvements to the system.

Peer Support Certification has potential to address Human Services Research Institute Behavioral Health System Study recommendations #3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

PEER SUPPORT SERVICES



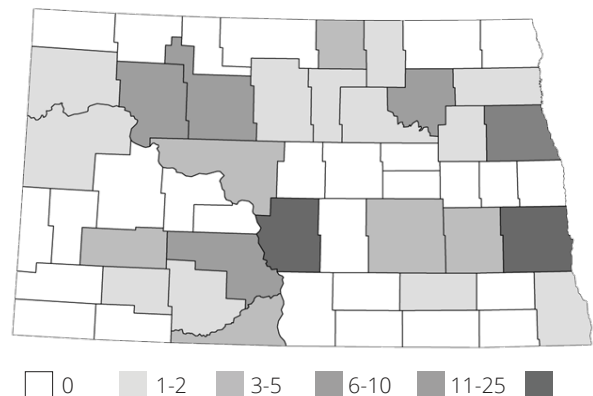
NORTH DAKOTA EFFORTS

In early 2018, North Dakota was selected to participate in the SAMHSA program, 'Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy' (BRSS TACS) to advance effective recovery supports and services for people with behavioral health disorders and their families. One of the goals developed by this team from North Dakota was to develop peer support services in the highest risk/pivotal points (prisons, emergency departments, community outreach, public health, etc.) in the system.

The Division has:

- ⊕ Hosted seven Peer Support Specialist trainings in 2018 and trained **189 individuals**.
- ⊕ Reimburses through the Free Through Recovery and Substance Use Disorder Voucher programs.
- ⊕ Is developing and supporting a statewide rural, faith-based peer support network through collaboration with Lutheran Social Services.
- ⊕ Is posting an RFP to integrate peer support specialist services into high risk/pivotal points for individuals with a behavioral health disorder.

North Dakota 2018 Trained Peer Support Specialist by County



81% of trained peer support specialists are located in a rural community.