

Peer Support Representative



PEER SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVES

The Board of Directors of Mental Health Support Network South East Ontario has adopted a Board Policy model and practice with regard to connectivity to the consumers of Peer Support services. In keeping with such a model, the Directors have recognized Peer Support Representatives within the boundaries of the South East Region and specifically in the cities, towns, villages and hamlets where MHSNSEO offers Peer Support, either Centre-based or Outreach. This model will ensure that there is a direct connection to the users of the service and the governance structure of the organization. This brief manual is attempting to define the role and responsibilities of the Peer Support Representatives based on our principle of inclusive governorship at the same time articulating the policies and legislation that guides the organization. It is intended to be a living document that responds to changes in the organization's environment and culture.

The Peer Support Representatives will ensure that peer support standards are adhered to at all times and respect the policies and procedures that define the work of the organization and how this work is accomplished. Peer Support Representatives actively demonstrate, promote, encourage the core purpose "to be with people who are living with mental health and/or addiction challenges and to support them in being as well as they can be." Additionally, Peer Support Representatives will actively live out the organizations' core values;

Adaptable

We remain **ADAPTABLE** by:

- Appreciating the need to be flexible in all that we do
- Being inclusive and reaping the benefits of diversity
- Recognizing the inherent worth of each individual and creating an environment in which each one's gifts and experiences are valued and where they may be freely and honestly shared

Connecting

We strive to **CONNECT** by:

- Being non-judgmental
- Encouraging everyone to be just who they are
- Meeting people where they are at

Empowerment

We **EMPOWER** one another by:

- Insisting that support is defined by the individual
- Being models for others in all that we do

- Respecting the right of each individual to choose his/her own path to wellness

Community

We build strong **COMMUNITIES** by:

- Providing Peer Support and Staff Support to each other
- Cultivating a true sense of team and community
- Being compassionate

Peer Support Representative Leadership

The Peer Support Representatives of MHSNSEO operate as Peer Support Leaders within their communities and focus on the overall vision of the organization, always working to enhance Peer Support within their Peer Support Centre and community. There will be a clear distinction between Peer Support Representative Leadership roles and the role of Staff. The Peer Representatives will be representing the collective group of peers who access the Peer Support Centres or Outreach Peer Support rather than their own issues or agenda. The Peer Support Representatives are valued assets to the organization, however they are representatives and hold no official office or legal voting status and communicate as a unified voice for the peers in their Centre or community. Individual statements from Peer Support Representatives have no authority.

The roles and responsibilities of the Peer Support Representatives include;

1. Promoting and demonstrating the purpose and values of Peer Support
2. Be prepared to be a member of the Quality Improvement Team of the Board of Directors. At least one Peer Support Representative must actively contribute as a member of the Quality Improvement Team.
3. Be available for peers in the Centre and/or community
4. Engage in the Long Range Strategic Planning of MHSNSEO

Expectations of Peer Support Representative

1. Attend orientation sessions
2. Commitment to MHSNSEO's purpose and values
3. Attend meetings and actively participate
4. Maintain confidentiality
5. Participate in training events
6. Respect and support decisions of the network
7. Understand and adhere to the organizational recovery model, principles, policies and practices.

Code of Ethics

Peer Support Representatives commit themselves and network of peers to ethical, professional and lawful conduct. This expectation includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum in group and individual behaviour when acting as a Peer Support Representative.

The Code of Ethics is intended to set basic guidelines for Peer Support Representatives in order to maintain the network's integrity and the confidence of its stakeholders and the community-at-large.

Peer Support Representatives must represent un-conflicted loyalty to the interests of the organization. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as advocacy or specific interest groups and the personal interest of any Peer Support Representative.

Peer Representative Composition

Peer Support Representatives will be selected from the various communities across the South East of Ontario from each of our Centres. Each Centre will have at least one individual per Centre up to a maximum of 4 individuals per Centre.

Term

The Peer Support Representatives shall be elected by members of the Support Centre for a period of 2 years at which time they may be re-nominated for election.

The election shall be made by a show of hands unless a ballot process is preferred and agreed upon by all members of the Centre. A notice of nomination with all names must be posted/circulated 30 days prior to the formal election process.

Peer Support Representatives should attend the Centre on a regular daily basis to maintain their role. If necessary a leave of absence may be requested. The Support Centre Coordinator may approve a leave of absence if there is extenuating circumstances. If a Peer Support Representative remains absent from the Centre their position will be deemed vacant and another Peer will be elected.

Vacancies

Vacancies, however caused, may be filled by appointment, by the members of the Centre until the formal nomination and election process can be engaged and completed.

Community Relations

The Peer Support Representatives will ensure that MHSNSEO is integrated with and responsive to the various initiatives of the Board of Directors and/or the South East Local Health Integration Network, Provincial Consumer Survivor LHIN Leads Network, etc.

It is important to remember that the communication link to any initiatives is thoroughly understood and no one representative or group of representatives may intersect lines of communication that have been identified and understood.

Quality Improvement Plan

The Board of Directors of MHSNSEO will ensure that an annual operational plan is established that addresses program priorities and is consistent with the strategic plan for MHSNSEO. The Board will ensure that Peer Support Representatives are actively engaged in the on-going development and delivery of the quality improvement plan. Peer Support Representatives' role is to act as a liaison with the members in their respective Centre or community to ensure that the areas of improvement are holistic to the network of Peer Support.

Recruitment/Nomination

Peer Support Representatives will be required to formally complete an application once they have been nominated or if self-interested.

The application and nomination form will be an agenda item at the monthly Centre meeting of members. There is a 30 day notice of nomination to allow all members from the network to be able to vote.

Key Highlights of the Peer Support Representative's Role & Responsibilities

The Peer Support Representative is one volunteer or a group of volunteers that are elected by their peers at their Support Centre.

- The Peer Support Representative will meet with a member of the Quality Improvement Lead of the Board of Directors of MHSNSEO at least once a year to provide, from a consumers perspective, how everything is going at the Centre. The Peer Support Representative is the one direct link that joins the folks accessing the Support Centres directly to the Governance (legal entity), the Board of Directors.
- The Peer Support Representative will be the individual(s) in the Support Centre for other consumers to talk with about ideas, ways and means of enhancing the Support Centres and be a member of the Quality Improvement Team.
- The intent of creating Peer Support Representatives is a positive and proactive one. They will bring Centre specific and network wide ideas, solutions, suggestions, comments and challenges.
- The intent is not asking consumers to bypass the Peer Support/Team Lead staff, Support Centre Coordinators, Network Lead Coordinator or Executive Director. The intent is to create a trusting open communication system in order that peer support is happening as well as it can within the funding that we receive from the SE LHIN.

Tips to help you in your Peer Support Representative Role

1. Get onto the monthly Support Centre Meeting Agenda
2. Establish a Communication Book within the Centre so that people accessing the Centre can post comments
3. Exchange email addresses with other Peer Support Representatives in other Centres so that you can have on-going communication with them.
4. Do not engage in complaints but rather redirect the person(s) to the Concerns, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Practices. Copies are available in every Centre.
5. Assist with the promotion of Wellness Recovery Action Planning and/or become a Certified WRAP Facilitator
6. Generate a Quality Improvement list from those at your Centre that itemizes the suggested changes that you are proposing.
7. Participate as an active member of the Quality Improvement Team. This committee is part of the legislation called “the Excellent Care for all Act”.
8. Share your story and your recovery journey with others
9. Be the change you want to see in your Centre!



New Beginnings - Trenton Support Centre

Monday-Friday 10am-3pm
76 Dundas Street West
Trenton, ON K8V 6S3
(613)-394-3449

3 Doors Down – Picton Support Centre

Monday - Wednesday, Friday 9:30am-2:30pm, Thursday 2:00pm - 7:00pm
333 Main Street
Picton, ON K0K 2T0
(613)-471-1347

Belleville Freedom Support Centre

Monday-Friday 10am-3pm, Saturday 9am-2pm
C-3 350 Front Street
Belleville ON K8N 5M5
(613)-969-1772

Peer 17 - Napanee Support Centre

Monday-Friday 10am-3pm
58 Dundas St E
Napanee, ON K7R 1H9
(613)-354-1690

P.O.R.T.- Kingston Support Centre

Monday-Saturday 10am-3pm
60 Queen Street
Kingston, ON, K7K 1A4
613-549-4964

Life House—Bancroft Support Centre

Monday, Wednesday-Friday 10am-3pm
23 Bridge Street
Bancroft, ON, K0L 1C0
(613)-332-4056

Madoc Support Centre

Monday-Thursday 9:30am-2:30pm,
Friday 9:30am-2:30pm
B-56 Russell Street
Madoc, ON K0K 2K0
(613)-473-4111

Prescott Outreach Peer Support

613-403-4863 or, 613-349-6243

*“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot,
together we can do great things.”*
Mother Theresa