



Improving mental health

Mental Health Peer Support

Andrea Lyons

Community Services Manager

Philippa Girling

Asset-based Trainer

- is a Manchester-based mental health charity which provides support, services and opportunities, across the North West of England, for people living with common mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, phobias and panic, and suicidal distress.
- believes that those who have personal experience of living with a mental health difficulty are often best placed to deliver services that help others - and in doing so, 'helping people to help themselves'.

We believe

- People should be able to choose the support that's right for them
- No one should experience stigma through living with a common mental health problem
- People are the experts in their own mental health and wellbeing

What is peer support?

Peer support is the help and support that people with lived experience of mental health challenges are able to provide to one another. It can be emotional and practical support that is mutually offered and reciprocal.

“Peer support is a system of giving and receiving help founded on key principles of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful. It is about understanding another's situation empathetically through the shared experience of emotional and psychological pain”
Shery Mead (2003)

“Key elements of Peer Support in mental health include that it is built on shared personal experience and empathy, it focuses on an individual's strengths not weaknesses, and works towards the individual's wellbeing and recovery” *Kate Jolley (2016)*

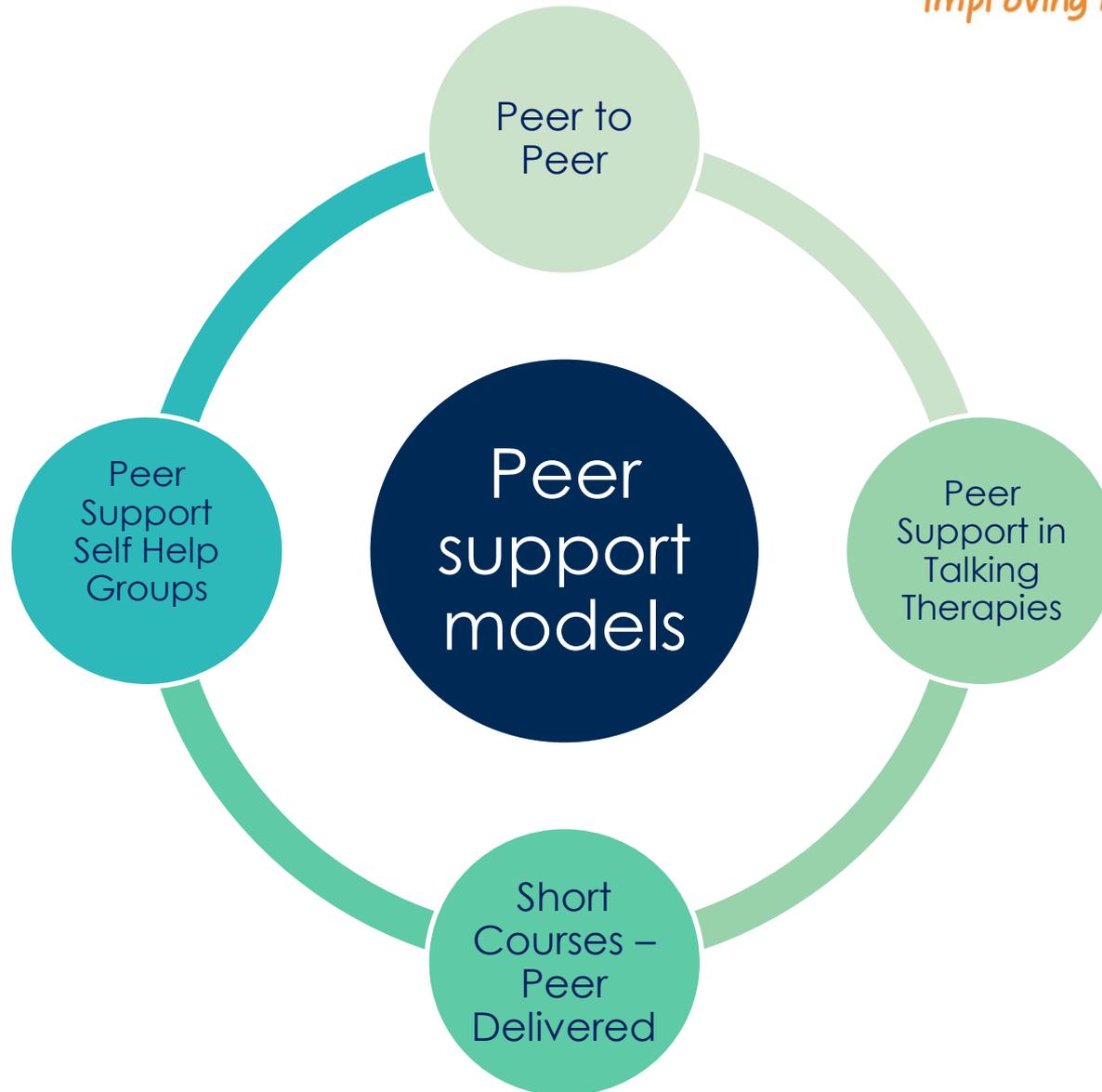
Our take on peer support

- Peer support has occurred naturally throughout human history. It takes place spontaneously in daily social interactions; however, the core principles of peer support define a type of “intentional support” that involves a specific set of skills, practices and values utilised to help people who are experiencing difficulties to achieve better wellbeing.
- NHS England has recognised that “Peer support sits at a boundary between formal, statutory health and care support and community-based support. As such, there is a question of whether it should be driven formally, from within the system, or supported to grow in a more organic, informal way from within the community.” (Community Capacity and Peer Support, NHS England 2017)
- We believe there is room for many different kinds of peer support; we deliver and support a number of models across Self Help.

The Value of Lived Experience and being a 'Peer'

“I think we need to remind ourselves in the mental health community that the word “peer” can never be used to describe an individual. It is not just a replacement word for “client,” “consumer,” etc... it is impossible to be a peer in isolation; you have to be a peer in relationship to others in your community that share similar life experiences. In fact, this is where there is potential power in using this term as well - as mental health recovery rarely happens in isolation and peer support has played such a valuable role for so many of us.”

Oryx Cohen, National Empowerment Centre, Massachusetts, USA



<p>Peer Connect</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) First reach out for support 2) Support after step 2 talking therapy (what next) 3) Support whilst waiting for step 3+ therapies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Rapid relationship/ trust building - 'you're not alone'. o Collaborative planning: o Short term aims within support period and aspirations after o Connecting with community activity
<p>Peer Mentoring</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) More informal peer support 2) Medium- long term 3) Buddying/cheerleading role 4) Helps identify and work towards changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Role modelling o Social support o Emotional support o Skill and interest sharing o Accompanying on activities
<p>Rough Guide to Being Well</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) More structured group setting 2) Social support 3) Space to explore own wellbeing and get different perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Participatory, peer based discussion. o Flexible format to be led by group interests o Wellbeing subjects used to begin (innovative, unusual, out of the box – and developed/included by peers) o Gives participants a wide range of unique tools, skills, experiences and assets in their recovery journey which go beyond standard “off the shelf” traditional models.

<p>1-1 peer support within IAPT</p>	<p>1) Extra support to access talking therapies</p> <p>3) Help with working through barriers to engagement, before and during therapy</p> <p>2) Help connecting with community activity alongside therapy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationship building Trust in services & instilling hope ○ Connecting to own Interests, strengths and community activity ○ Explaining and supporting people to go through a course of therapy ○ Support with 'homework' ○ Being a sounding board and encouraging someone to find their own motivation helping with problem solving ○ Supporting people to talk to other professionals involved in their care.
<p>Peer support drop-in groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Open access criteria 2) 'Safety net' function 3) Social support & maintaining wellbeing 4) Space to explore own wellbeing and get different perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistent and reliable safe space ○ Building social support networks ○ Space for members to offload and share problems – support and shared problem-solving ○ Peers share self-care techniques and ideas

Peer to Peer



Together
we're
better

What is Peer Support?

Peer Support is about people with lived experience of mental health difficulties supporting each other through shared experiences and understanding.

At Self Help, our Peer Support team understand what you are feeling. They can offer a range of support to help improve your life and make you feel better.

Courses

Our free courses offer a relaxed, non-clinical space for you to meet others with similar experiences and to learn and share ideas on how to feel better.

Rough Guide to Being Well

Make the journey from stuck, to recovering, to thriving!

On this course, our Peer Support team will give you a complete overview of the steps needed to feel better and how to remain feeling that way

If you're feeling depressed or anxious, the course lets you share and discover new ideas to improve how you feel in a supportive environment.

Boost

In just six enjoyable two-hour sessions, our Boost course offers skills and tips for coping with problems, sorting out your feelings when you feel fed-up or stressed, improving your confidence and making plans to do more things that make you feel good. You'll meet new people, make new friends and have a laugh along the way!

Groups

Our drop-in groups offer a sympathetic and non-judgmental space where you can meet others who are dealing similar emotional difficulties. Our groups care about your experiences and really understand. They offer help, information and a place for you to learn and share ideas in a supportive environment.

Peer Mentors

Want to speak to someone who really understands what you're going through? We provide one-to-one sessions with our Peer Mentors, who provide emotional and practical advice based on what's helped them. You can access this support over the phone or face-to-face across Manchester, at a time and place to suit you.

Peer Connect

Peer Connect is designed for people who are new to Self Help and who are making initial enquiries into our services.

Our Peer Support workers can arrange to visit you at your home, or at a nearby community location, to discuss the support available to you at Self Help and in the local community.

If you need a helping hand, our team are available to help you complete referral forms and accompany you to your first appointment at a service or drop-in group.

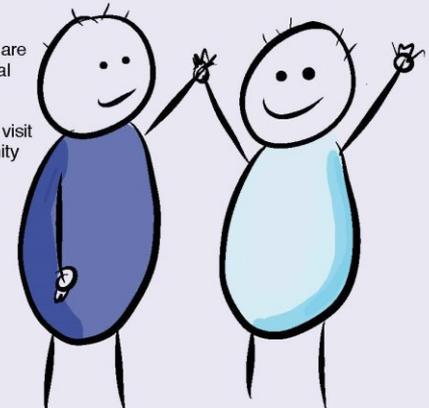
Involvement

As a user-led organisation, we are passionate about your thoughts and opinions, and how we can use these to help improve our services. At times, we are also able to provide opportunities to work with a variety of external agencies to ensure that your voice is heard when it comes mental health.

DONUTS

To help improve our Peer Support services, we invite you and other users along to DONUTS (Design of New Unique Therapeutic Services) groups to gather feedback on our services.

At these groups, we ask you what you think we can do to improve our services and make real efforts to implement these changes to improve the support we offer.



The model

- **Peer mentoring** for up to four months, providing 1-1 support, and targeted personal wellbeing development.
- **'Connect' service**; providing a mini mentoring experience, 'first steps' support into services, and connecting people to community activities that would promote mental wellbeing & recovery.
- Peer-delivered 12 week programme of **Rough Guide to Being Well** workshops
- A robust and flexible **training programme** for peer supporters, offering progression opportunities and building confidence and skills.

Coproduction

- DONUTS (Design of New Unique Therapeutic Services)
- Involved in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of services
- Members are project beneficiaries, volunteers, staff, external stakeholders and interested parties
- ‘You say, we did’ component
- Regular focus groups around different aspects of the project

Training

THE PEER SESSIONS

SelfHelp
Peer Support

ARTIST: PEER TO PEER **RECORDED AT: OAKLAND HOUSE**

1. Peer Support Principles
2. Types of Peer Support
3. Active Listening
4. Story Sharing
5. Strength Spotting
6. Motivating Others
7. Social Context
8. Recovery Language
9. Wellbeing Plans
10. Triggers and Early Warning Signs

Co-Producer:
Self Help and the Institute of Mental Health

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Mutual benefit

“The best part is being involved in some body's recovery, by sharing your own personal experiences; helping them discover life after diagnosis. Sometimes just being there for that person in times of sadness or distress can make all the difference to that person's day. I personally feel that I have grown as a person into somebody who is not ashamed of their illness but who is proud to have had all these experiences in life and now I can use this in a positive way in helping others.”

For more information

Andrea Lyons, Community Services Manager

andrea.lyons@selfhelpservices.org.uk

www.selfhelpservices.org.uk