



# Peer and Clinicians Collaboration — Best Practices

Dr. Ehsan Gharadjedaghi and Orlando Vera  
July 22, 2024 | 12 p.m.–1 p.m.



# Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

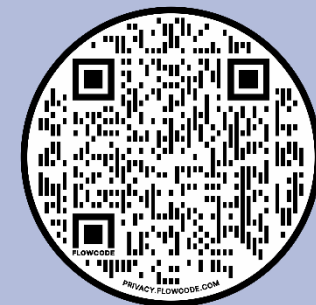
- We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work in territories where indigenous nations and tribal groups are traditional stewards of the land. Our California office resides in Tongva territory.
- Please join us in supporting efforts to affirm tribal sovereignty across what is now known as California and in displaying respect, honor, and gratitude for all indigenous people.

## Whose land are you on?

Option 1: Text your ZIP code to 1-907-312-5085

Option 2: Enter your location at <https://native-land.ca>

Option 3: Access Native Land website via QR Code



# Community Agreements

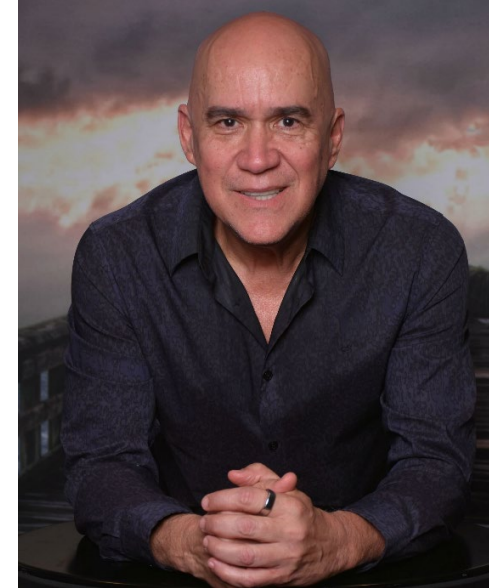
- Be present and be an active listener.
- Remember: One mic, one voice.
- Practice inclusivity.
- Honor pronouns and gender identity.
- Show respect (this may look different for each person).
- Allow conflicting perspectives to exist.
- Assume best intentions.
- Take space, make space.
- Share what you are comfortable sharing.
- Protect individual privacy.
- Practice self-care.
- Encourage growth of self and for others.
- Support resource sharing.



# Meet the Presenters



**Ehsan Gharadjedaghi, Psy.D. (Dr. G.)** received his Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology in 2009 at the American School for Professional Psychology, Orange County. He worked with at-risk youth on probation and high schoolers, HIV-affected populations, substance and sex addiction clients, trauma and domestic violence clients, the elderly, and couples.



**Orlando Vera**, co-founder of Peer Voices of Orange County (PVOC), served as DBSA board member and vice president, certified peer trainer and facilitator, Orange County Regional ambassador, Access California of Cal Voices, and justice intervention advocate in Sacramento. Currently collaborating with Addiction Institute/Norooz, providing improved services for consumers.



# Agenda Slide

1. Background
2. Core Competencies
3. History
4. Roles and Purpose
5. Laws and Regulations
6. Training and Education
7. Value of Experience
8. Current Trends
9. Supervision Challenges
10. Delivery of Services
11. Experiential Learning
12. Additional Training

# Poll Questions

1. How do you identify? Peer or clinician or both?
2. Either as a peer or clinician, have you ever taken a peer and clinician training?

# Waterfall Chat Questions

1. How do you envision peers and clinicians collaborating effectively during a session with a client?
2. What kind of problems do you currently face working with either peer support specialist or clinician?

# Background

## THE PROBLEM:

Evidence shows that lack of understanding and support between peers and clinicians as service providers do injustice to and are a disservice in the field of behavioral and mental health treatment as usually this so-called “gap” between the two camps prevents a whole person approach toward recovery.





# Core Competencies



## Core competencies of psychotherapists:

- Understanding and applying theories of mental health and well-being.
- Assessing and diagnosing mental health conditions.
- Developing and implementing treatment plans.
- Providing therapeutic support.

## Core competencies of peers:

- Sharing personal experience.
- Providing emotional support.
- Helping individuals develop coping skills.
- Providing resources and referrals.

(SAMHSA, n.d., [Core competencies for peer workers](#))

(Gilligan, T., 2017, [Patient-clinician communication: American society of clinical oncology consensus guideline](#))

# History of Peer Support Workers

Who are peer support workers?



1  
Individuals who have personally experienced mental health or substance abuse issues.

2  
The peer support movement began in the 1960s and 1970s with the development of self-help groups for individuals with mental health issues.

3  
SB 803 is a bill that was passed in California in 2020 that established a certification process for peer support workers in the state.

4  
Designed to ensure that peer support workers in California meet certain standards of knowledge and competency.

(SAMHSA, n.d., [Peer support services in crisis care](#))  
(Youth Move National Peer Center, n.d., [A brief history of youth peer support](#))  
(Waldron, M., 2020, [SB 803 peer support specialist certifications act](#))

## History of clinicians and areas of expertise

The history of clinicians, or health care professionals who diagnose and treat patients, dates back many centuries.

Some of the earliest known clinicians were the ancient Greek physicians, who practiced a form of medicine that combined natural remedies with a philosophical approach to illness and healing.

Reliance on scientific and evidence-based practices to diagnose and treat patients.

Utilization of diagnostic tests, medications, and various therapeutic techniques.



## Professional backgrounds of clinicians and areas of specialization

Doctors (such as medical doctors, osteopathic doctors, and paediatricians)

Nurses

Therapists (such as psychologists, social workers, and counsellors)

In recent years, there has been a trend towards interdisciplinary care, with clinicians from different specialties working together as part of a team to provide comprehensive care to patients.

(Kleisaris, C.F., 2014, *Health care practices in ancient greece: the hippocratic ideal*)  
(Summerton, N., 2008, *The medical history as a diagnostic technology*)  
(Smye, S.W., 2021, *Interdisciplinary research: shaping the healthcare of the future*)  
(Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2023, *Quality measures & you: clinicians*)



# **Roles and Purpose for Peers and Clinicians**

# Roles and Purpose for Peers

## Peers

Peer support workers, also known as peer specialists, are individuals who have personally experienced mental health or substance abuse issues and use their lived experience to provide support and guidance to others who are struggling with similar issues. The role of peers in the mental health care system is to offer a unique perspective and understanding of what it is like to live with a mental health or substance abuse condition. Peers can provide hope, encouragement, and a sense of connection to others who have had similar experiences.

According to the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), the purpose of peer support is to:

1. Promote recovery and wellness: Peers can help individuals develop their own recovery goals and work toward achieving them.
2. Enhance self-determination: Peers can help individuals identify their own strengths and resources and advocate for their own needs.
3. Provide hope and support: Peers can offer a sense of hope and understanding to individuals who are struggling and can help them to feel less alone and more connected to others.


# ROLES AND PURPOSE FOR CLINICIANS

Clinicians, or health care professionals, play a vital role in the health care system in California and around the world. They are responsible for diagnosing and treating patients, and for providing a range of medical services to help individuals maintain their health and well-being.

There are many **different types of clinicians**, each with their own specific areas of expertise and responsibilities. Some common types of clinicians include:

1. **Medical doctors:** Medical doctors are trained to diagnose and treat a wide range of medical conditions. They may specialize in a particular area of medicine, such as paediatrics, internal medicine, or surgery.
2. **Nurses:** Nurses provide a range of care and support to patients, including administering medications, performing diagnostic tests, and helping with daily activities such as bathing and dressing.
3. **Therapists:** Therapists, such as psychologists, social workers, and counsellors, are trained to help individuals address mental health issues and cope with life challenges. They may provide individual or group therapy and may also work with families and couples.
4. **Community health workers:** Community health care workers (CHWs) are frontline public health workers who play a crucial role in bridging the gap between communities and health care services. They are typically members of the community they serve, chosen by community members or organizations, and are trained to provide basic health and medical care, health education, and advocacy.

In California and other states, clinicians typically work as part of a team, collaborating with other health care professionals to provide comprehensive care to patients. The overall purpose of clinicians is to promote the health and well-being of the individuals they serve, and to help them to achieve the best possible outcomes.



**Intersection Between Peer  
Support and Clinical  
Practice: Turning Chaos  
Into Harmony**

# INTERSECTION BETWEEN PEER SUPPORT AND CLINICAL PRACTICE: TURNING CHAOS INTO HARMONY

1. Validating diversity in training, education, and experience.
2. Highlight and uplift each specialty.
3. A widening gap.
4. Bridging the gap: Necessity, dangers, opportunities, and methods.





# Laws and Regulations

# LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. **Peers:** In California, DHCS is responsible for overseeing the certification of peer support workers.
2. **Marriage family therapists:** The California Board of Behavioral Services is responsible for licensing and regulating marriage family therapists in the state.
3. **Psychologists:** The California Board of Psychology is responsible for licensing and regulating psychologists in the state.
4. **Social workers:** The California Board of Behavioral Sciences is responsible for licensing and regulating social workers in the state.



# Training and Education

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

1. Therapists and psychologists may also be required to complete continuing education courses on an ongoing basis to maintain their licenses.
2. Clinical and academic courses may cover new developments in the field, as well as help therapists and psychologists stay up-to-date on current best practices in mental health treatment.

# VALUE OF EXPERIENCE

Lived experience and peer support work can be extremely important in the field of mental and behavioral health. Lived experience refers to the personal experience of living with or overcoming mental health or substance abuse issues. Peer support workers are individuals who have personally experienced these issues and use their lived experience to provide support and guidance to others who are struggling with similar issues.

Lived experience can be valuable in several ways. It can provide a unique perspective and understanding of what it is like to live with a mental health or substance abuse condition. It can also provide hope and encouragement, as peer support workers can share their own stories of recovery and resilience with those they are helping. In addition, research has shown that peer support can be an effective component of treatment, leading to improved outcomes and greater satisfaction with care.

Overall, lived experience and peer support work can be an important resource for individuals who are struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues, and can play a vital role in helping them to achieve recovery and improve their overall well-being.



# Current Trends

# CURRENT TRENDS

Trends in the field of mental and behavioral health involving peers and clinicians working together:

1. Increased integration of peer support services into mainstream treatment settings.
2. Emphasis on recovery-oriented care: There is a growing trend towards a recovery-oriented approach to mental health care, which places a strong emphasis on empowering individuals to achieve their own recovery goals.
3. Use of interdisciplinary teams: There is a trend towards interdisciplinary care, with clinicians from different specialties working together as part of a team to provide comprehensive care to patients.
4. Development of peer-led programs: In some cases, peer support workers are leading their own programs and services, providing a range of support and resources to individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues.

# Waterfall Chat Questions

1. **What are your expectations for how peers and clinicians can support each other's learning and development throughout their engagement with clients?**
2. **What specific learning objectives or topics would you like to see addressed during the training program that could benefit both peers and clinicians?**
3. **In what ways do you believe peers and clinicians can leverage their respective strengths and experiences to enhance the training experience for everyone involved?**





# Supervision Challenges

# SUPERVISION CHALLENGES

- 1. Role confusion:** Supervisors must clarify the distinct roles and responsibilities of peer support specialists and clinicians to prevent confusion and conflicts. Peer support specialists bring experiential knowledge, while clinicians provide clinical expertise. Supervisors need to ensure that each role is valued and understood to foster effective collaboration.
- 2. Power dynamics:** Supervisors must navigate power differentials between peers and clinicians. Clinicians may hold more authority due to their professional training, potentially leading to challenges in decision-making and communication. Supervisors should promote a culture of equality and shared decision-making to mitigate power imbalances.
- 3. Communication styles:** Peer support specialists and clinicians often have different communication styles and language preferences. Supervisors need to facilitate effective communication by promoting active listening, empathy, and clarity. Addressing communication barriers can enhance collaboration and understanding between team members.
- 4. Confidentiality and boundaries:** Supervisors must ensure that peer support specialists and clinicians maintain appropriate boundaries and confidentiality in their interactions with clients. Balancing the need for peer support and clinical intervention while upholding ethical standards is essential. Supervisors should provide guidance and supervision to help navigate boundary issues effectively.
- 5. Training and development:** Supervisors face the challenge of providing ongoing training and development opportunities that cater to the unique needs of both peer support specialists and clinicians. Tailoring supervision approaches to accommodate different learning styles and professional backgrounds is crucial for promoting growth and competency in collaborative settings.

# Delivery of Services

# APPLICATION AND DELIVERY OF SERVICES

1. Twelve steps and support groups
2. Therapy groups
3. Case management
4. Supervision
5. Self-care
6. Group care
7. Self-interest (agenda), identity, and role
8. Scope of practice
9. Effective dialogue
10. Connection activities
11. **Specific topics:** De-escalation of clients, increasing motivation for treatment compliance, boundaries, medication compliance, dual relationships, religious practices, countertransference, tolerance/respect/dignity, self-disclosure, agendas and influence, and alliance

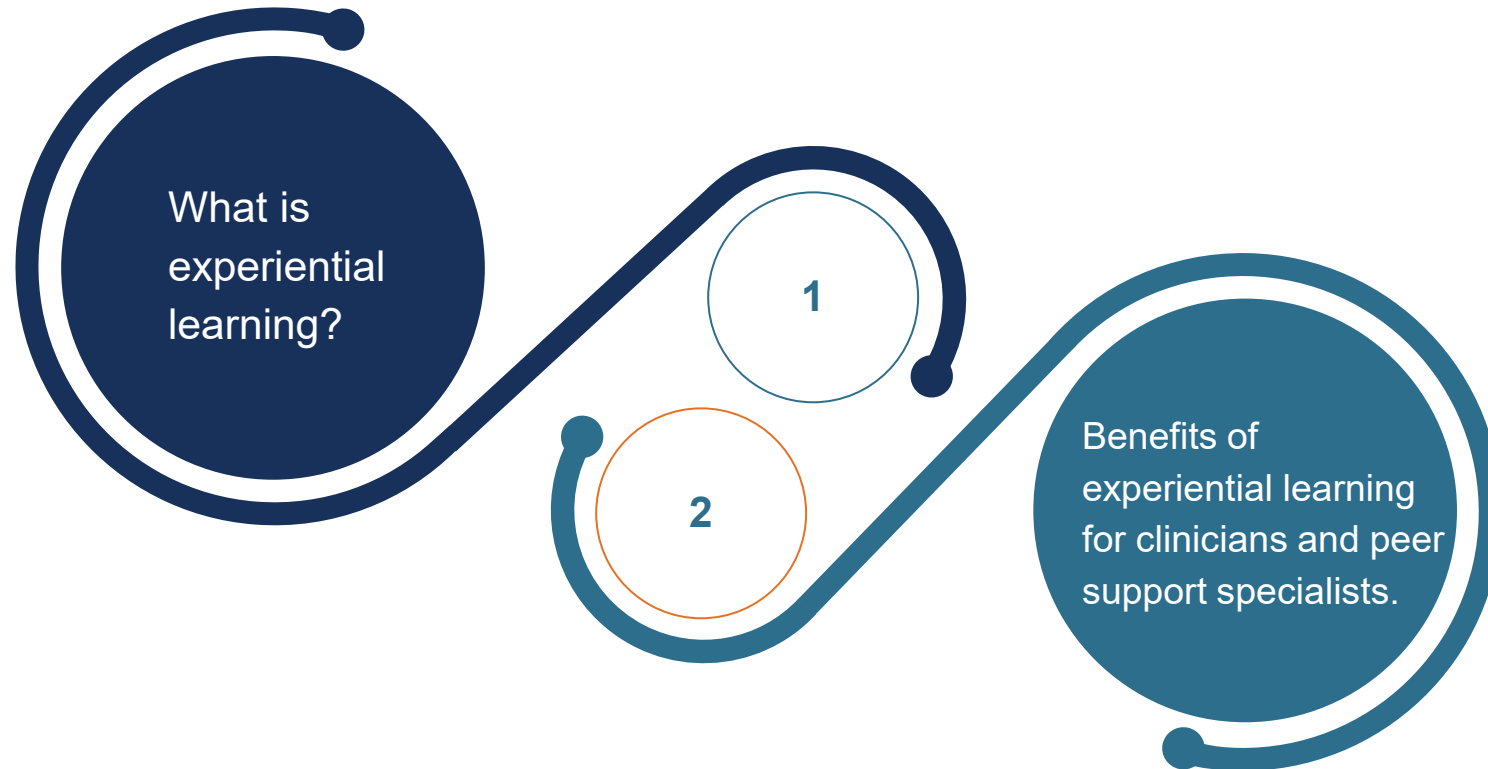
# Waterfall Chat Questions

**How can peers and clinicians proactively work together to foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment during the training program?**



# Experiential Learning

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



# PEERS AND CLINICIANS COLLABORATIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

## WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW of PCC Training Program

### Core Competencies and History

- Crossing/swapping/overlapping roles

## WEEK 2: ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM, CHALLENGES, AND DISCOVERING SOLUTIONS

- Open discussion, brainstorming, “storming” (from group formation perspective)

## WEEK 3: DEEPER UNDERSTANDING: FACTORS LEADING TO BETTER SOLUTIONS

- “Performing” collaboratively on finding options; delve into roles, value of lived experience

## WEEK 4: LAWS AND REGULATIONS (RESTRICTIONS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES)

## WEEK 5: EXPERIENTIAL INTEGRATION

- Collaborative problem-solving — chaos to harmony

## WEEK 6: TRAINING MODELS

## WEEK 7: EXPERIENTIAL INTEGRATION

- Collaborative problem-solving — chaos to harmony

## WEEK 8: NATIONAL TRENDS AND DATA; DELIVERY OF SERVICES

- The overlap between clinicians and peers (consumers)

## WEEK 9: TRAIN THE TRAINER PRACTICE (PEER SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATION)

## WEEK 10: TRAIN THE TRAINER PRACTICE (CLINICAL SUPPORT GROUP FACILITATION)

## WEEK 11: COMBINED, INTEGRATED PEER- AND CLINICIAN-FACILITATED SUPPORT GROUP

## WEEK 12: WRAP-UP: ASSESSMENTS AND EVALUATIONS



# Testimonial



Joe Hill | Peer Support | PCCA – Lived Experience

# Testimonial



Ramesh Y. | Marriage and Family Therapist | PCCA – Building Rapport

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# Q&A



**Please fill out the attendance form and feedback survey in the chat to meet your requirements for today's event.**



# Thank You

Register for the training on our  
website:

<https://www.peersandclinicians.org/>

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