



NHSGGC Peer Support Network

Level 2 Peer Supporter

Information Pack

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1. Introduction to the Peer Support Network

A Peer Support Framework for all health and social care staff working in the NHS GGC Board area is described in the document *NHS GGC Peer Support Framework (revised March 2020)*. This was approved by the Board Strategic Executive Group and on the basis of the principles, conceptual framework, structure and governance arrangements outlined in the framework, the development of a Peer Support Network (PSN) was commissioned. The aims of the PSN are described below.

2. Aims of the Peer Support Network:

- To develop a Board-wide peer support service with clear pathways between the various levels of staff support interventions, fully embedded in a wider governance structure.
- To implement a model of peer support available to every member of health and social care staff, in line with NHS GGC's wider staff support strategy, drivers and policies.
- To embed within services dedicated peer support trainers to cascade knowledge and skills throughout services through establishing and supporting Wellbeing Champions in all teams.
- To ensure that recognition of the benefits of peer support is at the heart of all health and social care operations.

3. Peer Support Network: What does it look like?

Staff peer support is one aspect of the more general staff mental health and wellbeing agenda in the organisation.

The peer support model contains a range of interventions and the intensity of the intervention determines the role and required level of training, beyond the foundation level for all staff to access (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Overview of Peer Support Network- level of intensity of role



The 'Psychological First Aid' (PFA) model forms the conceptual basis and foundation for the Peer Support Network. PFA is concerned with reinforcing basic coping strategies by: providing care for immediate needs; providing social support; providing information on coping, and; connecting to other more intensive supports when indicated.

This approach can be utilised by any member of staff to provide support for their colleagues through a range of interventions. As the complexity of the intervention increases, so does the requirement for enhanced knowledge and skills to ensure that staff are properly equipped to carry out the necessary support role (Appendix 2).

4. Peer Support Network Levels of Training, Knowledge and Skills Level 1 - 3

4.1 Level 1

- Support for all staff in Health and Social Care.
- This is an online module and is available via identified digital platforms.

4.2 Level 2

- Training for colleagues identified as a Peer Supporter for their service.
- Identified team members will have the prerequisite skills (see Appendix 2) and be provided with additional training and support to be a Peer Supporter within their defined team.
- Training is designed and delivered by the NHSGGC Psychology Therapies Service and provides the acquisition of competencies for the role of Peer Supporter and underpinned by the values and principles of peer support.
- It is essential that staff being considered for Peer Supporter roles are supported by their immediate line manager and the senior manager for their service to ensure they have allocated time to provide this support.
- Potential Peer Supporters will have enough experience to meet the needs of their team/peers, and that the role is appropriate to their grading and level of seniority within a team.
- In certain teams it would be desirable to have more than one Peer Supporter to ensure an appropriate mix of peer support available.
- This role connects to the wider mental health and wellbeing interventions across NHSGGC

4.3 Level 3

- Provision for train the trainer development to enable a sustainable pool of trainers to support the PSN in NHSGGC.
- The Peer Support Trainer role would be reserved for more experienced and senior staff given the requirement for knowledge and experience in supervising and training others.

5. Level 2 Peer Supporter Role and Support

5.1 Role

A Peer Supporter will:

- demonstrate the values and prerequisite skills identified for a Peer Supporter in NHSGGC

- complete the online Level 1 module and Level 2 Peer Supporter training delivered by the NHSGGC Psychological Services team
- have the support of their immediate line manager and senior manager for their service to provide a Peer Supporter role to a specified area
- to provide a caring space to listen to and support colleagues, while adhering to the principles of PFA contained in the NHSGGC Peer Support Framework
- provide information and guidance to their colleagues on the available resources for mental health and wellbeing and peer support
- develop and implement a local action plan for peer support that is appropriate to their team/ service
- once trained, join the Peer Support Network to enable communication between each other; access to governance arrangements and sharing of experience.
- access support from within the Network and keep updated with annual top-up training as required including participation in a minimum number of supervision and support sessions with the NHSGGC Psychological Services team
- take the appropriate course of action and/ or seek guidance where they identify a duty of care for a colleague who may show distress or a risk to themselves or others
- not provide a counselling service

5.2 Support

5.2.1 Training

Level 2 Peer Supporter training (1 day) is delivered by the NHSGGC Psychological Therapies Service and provides colleagues with tools and techniques on:

- What is staff support, the benefits of supporting staff, and how to deliver it
- Psychological First Aid
- Resilience
- Burnout/ Compassion Fatigue/Vicarious Trauma
- Mental Health Difficulties - Depression; Anxiety; Trauma
- Skills: Therapeutic Conversations
- Matching modality of staff support to team / service
- Planning and implementing a peer support process
- Take care of ourselves
- Understanding the Peer Support Network and how to navigate it
- Governance and Duty of Care processes

Peer Supporters will be provided with a Handbook covering all training content for future reference.

5.2.2 Supervision and Support

In addition to the training session, Peer Supporters will be provided with a minimum number of supervision and support sessions which will be delivered as short online sessions to provide a supported space for discussion on progress with peer support and explore additional support that they or their team/service may need.

5.2.3 Contact

The NHSGGC Psychological Therapies Service will also be available to discuss any ideas or concerns that a Peer Supporter may have through the course of their local discussions.

Appendix 1 – Values and Principles of Staff Peer Support

Values of staff peer support

Inclusivity

- Making sure that peer support is available to all staff in NHSGGC, including acute, community and social care settings.
- Working with people to help them identify, connect and support their peers.

Respect

- Being interested in each other as individuals.
- Building accepting, compassionate and respectful relationships/teams/organisation.
- Respecting each person's background, culture or membership of a particular community.
- Not making judgements or assumptions about the person's experiences or beliefs.

Reciprocity

- People benefit from sharing their experience and can learn from each other as equals.
- Everyone learns and everyone's contribution is of equal value.

Mutuality

- Understanding the person's experience from their perspective.
- Feeling a sense of solidarity with each other.

Principles of staff peer support

As a foundation, consistent with Psychological First Aid (PFA)

- A humane, supportive and flexible response to a fellow human being who is suffering during or after crises or emergencies.
- It assumes most people will respond to events with great resilience.
- It is for use during and following situations of extreme stress.
- It involves:
 - Providing practical care and support where necessary
 - Helping people address basic needs and concerns
 - Helping people connect to information, services and social supports
 - Comforting people and helping them to feel calm
 - Reducing distress and fostering adaptive coping.
 - Protecting people from further harm.

Non-directive

- Taking a relational approach; not giving advice or direction as the purpose of the support, but listening, exploring, and suggesting explanations and solutions without imposing them. Aiming to help people find their own solutions that work for them.

- Acknowledging that each person is the expert regarding their own experience and has responsibility for their own life.

Safe

- Providing staff with a safe, confidential, non-judgemental environment in which they can share their experiences.
- Responding compassionately when colleagues share difficult or emotional life experiences.
- Understanding duty of care/when/how to raise concerns

Supporting coping and resilience

- Helping people make sense of their experiences in the context of their own lives, values, beliefs and culture.
- Creating hope and building independence, empowering the person to define and lead their coping, and to identify and work towards their own goals.
- Focusing on a person's strengths, helping them develop their ability to make use of the resources available to them.

Trauma-informed

- Peer support utilises a strength-based framework that emphasises physical, psychological, and emotional safety.
- It aims to create opportunities for staff to establish a sense of control and empowerment.

** It is of note that participation in peer support is always contingent on peer choice

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Appendix 2 - NHSGGC Staff Peer Support Competence Framework

1. Understanding the values of staff peer support and the principles that underpin them Level 1			
2. Knowledge for all staff to be aware of to offer a level of peer support - Informal Peer Supporters (IPS) Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of PFA principles and how it applies to your own wellbeing and your own role as a colleague in the organisation • Knowledge of trauma informed practice (level 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of peer support champions and ability to access staff support links • Knowing when to seek support of peer champions within own team to access additional advice where required (i.e. supporting within level of competence) 	
3. Knowledge for Peer Support Champions (PSC) Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of and experience in application of PFA • Additional knowledge on mental health and associated difficulties (e.g. stress, burnout, compassion fatigue, trauma reactions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of trauma-informed practice (level 2) • Knowledge of local services and sources of mental health care • Knowledge of, and ability to work with, issues of confidentiality, consent and information sharing/governance processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of self-harm and suicide prevention, and procedures for maintaining safety • Knowledge of Civility Saves Lives principles
4. Core Interpersonal skills (PSC) Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of person-centred approaches • Ability to build and maintain a good alliance with peers, and to grasp their perspective and 'world view' • Able to draw on and share own work experience • Knowledge of models of behaviour change and strategies to achieve it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to use active listening and communication skills in a peer relationship • Able to work with difference (i.e. valuing diversity, equality and inclusion) • Able to support peers capacity for self-management, coping and problem-solving skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to support the peers capacity for adjustment • Able to collaboratively discuss care and support options • Able to facilitate access to care and sources of support • Able to work as part of a team and communicate effectively regarding staff peer support role, developments, and support options
5. Self-care and support (PSC) Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability for peer champion to reflect on their role • Able to make effective use of training network/ supervision / coaching sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability for the peer supporter to judge when they are experiencing unhelpful levels of stress and to prioritise taking appropriate steps to relieve this 	

<p>6. Metacompetences for Peer Support Trainers (PST) Level 2 and 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability for peer support Trainer to be aware of their own values, and to reflect on the ways that these values might affect (positively and negatively) the people they work with • An ability to judge when it is best to refocus on topics/goals that are seen as personally relevant or manageable/ achievable by the person they are supporting, rather than continuing to explore other issues, which could lead to disengagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability to judge when social and cultural barriers to engagement may be relevant and need to be taken into consideration • An ability to judge when to continue supporting a peer with difficulties and when to step back, based on the level of engagement with a person • An ability to identify and respond to implicit or explicit indicators that a person is at risk of disengaging from the interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ability to judge when to offer self-disclosure and to decide what would be helpful to disclose and what should be held back An ability to judge when to offer support to the person or when to foster independence and their ability to self-manage • An ability for the peer supporter to judge when they have reached the limits of their responsibility and competence and when to seek advice, management or supervisory support, or assistance from others
<p>7. Optional skills: Using psychological approaches to support colleagues coping and resilience (PSCs) where peer supporter has these skills already i.e. trained mental health professional Level 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to help people to make use of psychological approaches to support their coping / recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work with people in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to support people’s use of digital interventions
<p>8. Competences for organisations supporting the role of staff peer support Level 3 and above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all staff are informed of staff wellbeing resources and access PFA as part of initial induction • That all staff are asked to renew their knowledge of wellbeing and PFA on a 2-3 yearly basis via mandatory training opportunities and time is protected to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to ensure appropriate recruitment and protection of time for peer support champions and trainers roles as part of job planning • Providing training for peer champions and trainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing ongoing coaching and supervision for champions and trainers to ensure appropriate implementation and fidelity of the peer support model and PFA