



# Peer Support



## What is Peer Support?

Peer support is when people with lived experience provide support to their peers. A peer support relationship is based on mutuality, empathy, and support from someone who understands. These relationships provides practical and emotional support to enhance quality of life and to assist people in reaching their goals. Peer support can offer real hope and understanding for some of the challenges people may be trying to deal with day to day.

## Who is a Peer Support Worker?

Peer Support Workers (PSWs) are individuals with lived/living experience with mental health and/or substance use challenges (peers) who have graduated from a specialized PSW Training Program. PSWs provide support with achieving personal goals, learning new skills, and connecting with community resources. The peer support relationship typically lasts until the established goals of the relationship are achieved. This can vary from weeks to months.

## How do I access Peer Support?

Accessing Peer Support is through referral from a staff member on the Mental Health and Substance Use team or unit where you receive services. To request a Peer Support Worker, please speak with your health care provider (usually your case manager, occupational therapist, or recreation therapist).

## How do I become a Peer Support Worker?

Peer Support Worker Training is provided through us and other organizations such as Coast Mental Health. Peer Support Workers receive classroom and practical training.

Training updates will be posted on [www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com](http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com)

Contact the VCH Peer Support Program:  
604-708-5276 or [VanPeerSupport@vch.ca](mailto:VanPeerSupport@vch.ca)

