



Douglas County Peer Fellows Program

CONNECT • BUILD TRUST • THRIVE

The Douglas County Peer Fellows program will build peer support capacity in our community, develop our peer workforce and shape a culture of recovery wherever Douglas County residents live, learn, work and play. The program will connect trained individuals, sharing insight and wisdom gained through lived experience, to community members who struggle with mental illness and addiction. These peer specialists will provide emotional and social supports along with resources that can lead to better health outcomes.

THE BIG IDEA

12
peer fellows

working
20
hours each week

impacting
3,000+
community members
each year



TIMELINE
2019

First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
• County Commission work session • Develop application, training expectations, selection process and recruiting	• Interviews and selection • Training begins • Outreach for additional funding	• Begin to recruit new work sites • 6 peer specialists working in community	• 6 more peer specialists hired and working in community, bringing total to 12 • Evaluation and planning for 2020



*Building an integrated system of care that moves
from crisis and illness as a norm to recovery and prevention as a practice*



More info: www.douglascountyks.org/bh

People with a common experience are able to share knowledge and insight gained through common struggles and success. Peer specialists draw upon their shared experience living with mental illness, addiction and recovery. Peer support complements and enhances other health services by creating the emotional, social and practical assistance necessary for managing their illness and staying healthy. Peer support is frequent, ongoing, accessible and flexible. It can take many forms: phone calls, text messaging, group meetings, home visits, going on walks together and even grocery shopping.

The Douglas County Peer Fellows program will mirror programs such as Teach for America, AmeriCorps and college intern programs. The goal is to build a team of peer specialists and deploy a peer workforce throughout our community.

As a starting point for this partnership, we will identify and recruit six peer specialists to work as part of the team at the LMH Health Emergency Department. Each peer specialist will work up to 20 hours a week, with 16 of these hours at the ED and four hours dedicated to Fellows activities.

Four times per month, the peer specialists will meet along with LMH Behavioral Health Crisis Clinicians and faculty of the Fellows program. This time will be dedicated to group coaching and professional development as well as to the ongoing work of co-creating the strategies necessary to make our system-wide efforts successful. Specific trainings under consideration include LEAP (Listen, Empathize, Agree, and Partner), trauma-informed care, Mental Health First Aid, and deep explorations of topics introduced in the Kansas Certified Peer Specialists training curriculum.

Initial efforts for this project will focus on successful implementation at LMH. Potential expansion sites include Douglas County Correctional Facility, Heartland Regional Alcohol & Drug Assessment Center, DCCCA, Lawrence Public Library, local faith congregations, the Lawrence Community Shelter, and Aetna Better Health of Kansas.

