

Virtual Peer Support Network at Sturdy Memorial Hospital

November 11, 2022



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for Patient Safety

Virtual Peer Support Network

BACKGROUND

- Partnering with the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety to bring an external peer support service called the Virtual Peer Support Network
 - For people in the medical community
 - Statewide network of peer supporters who work in hospitals and other health care settings
- Driven by our commitment to helping our workforce during a challenging time
- Free, easy, confidential

What is peer support?

- Peer support is an interaction between two colleagues who share knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help.
- Peer support can take several different forms including peer mentoring, validation, reflective listening, normalizing feelings and, in some cases, referrals to additional services.



Why peer support?

- Many people in the medical community are feeling stressed, sad, and exhausted and are unsure where to turn for help
- Challenges stem from the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing shortages, acutely ill patients, and increasing workforce safety issues and are best understood by someone in a similar role
- Peer support is a proven tool for helping individuals cope with a variety of stressors

Hallmarks of a successful peer support program

- Training peers to be credible sources of information
- Help is available quickly
- Use of a peer support program is voluntary
- All interactions between peers are confidential
- Offering emotional “first aid” (not therapy!)
- Facilitated access to additional help when needed

What a peer supporter ...

DOES:	DOES NOT:
Normalize feelings	Participate in quality assurance, root cause analyses
Validates	Offer disclosure coaching
Assess need for professional resources	Address job performance issues
Direct to other resources as appropriate	Provide substance use disorder or violence prevention coaching
“Check in” in the short- and long-term	Advise on malpractice risk

Virtual Peer Support Network

HOW IT WORKS

- Individuals who need support are matched to a trained peer supporter
- Based on organization-based peer support models with proven track record



How to reach out

- Three ways to start
 - Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
 - Website: BetsyLehmanCenterMA.gov/VirtualPeerSupport
 - Email: peer.support@BetsyLehmanCenterMA.gov
- Connection to a peer supporter made within 2-3 days



THANK YOU!

Please reach out to

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with any questions



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