

The Role of Peer Support Services in Delivering Collaborative Care to Treat Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

The National Academies of Sciences Engineering and Medicine
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance



Using Certified Para-Professionals as an Adjunct in Primary Care

Peer Support Specialist

Person with "lived experience" who has been trained to support those who struggle with mental health, psychological trauma, or substance use.

Recovery Coach

Person providing strength-based support for persons with addictions or in recovery from alcohol, other drugs, codependency, or other addictive behaviors

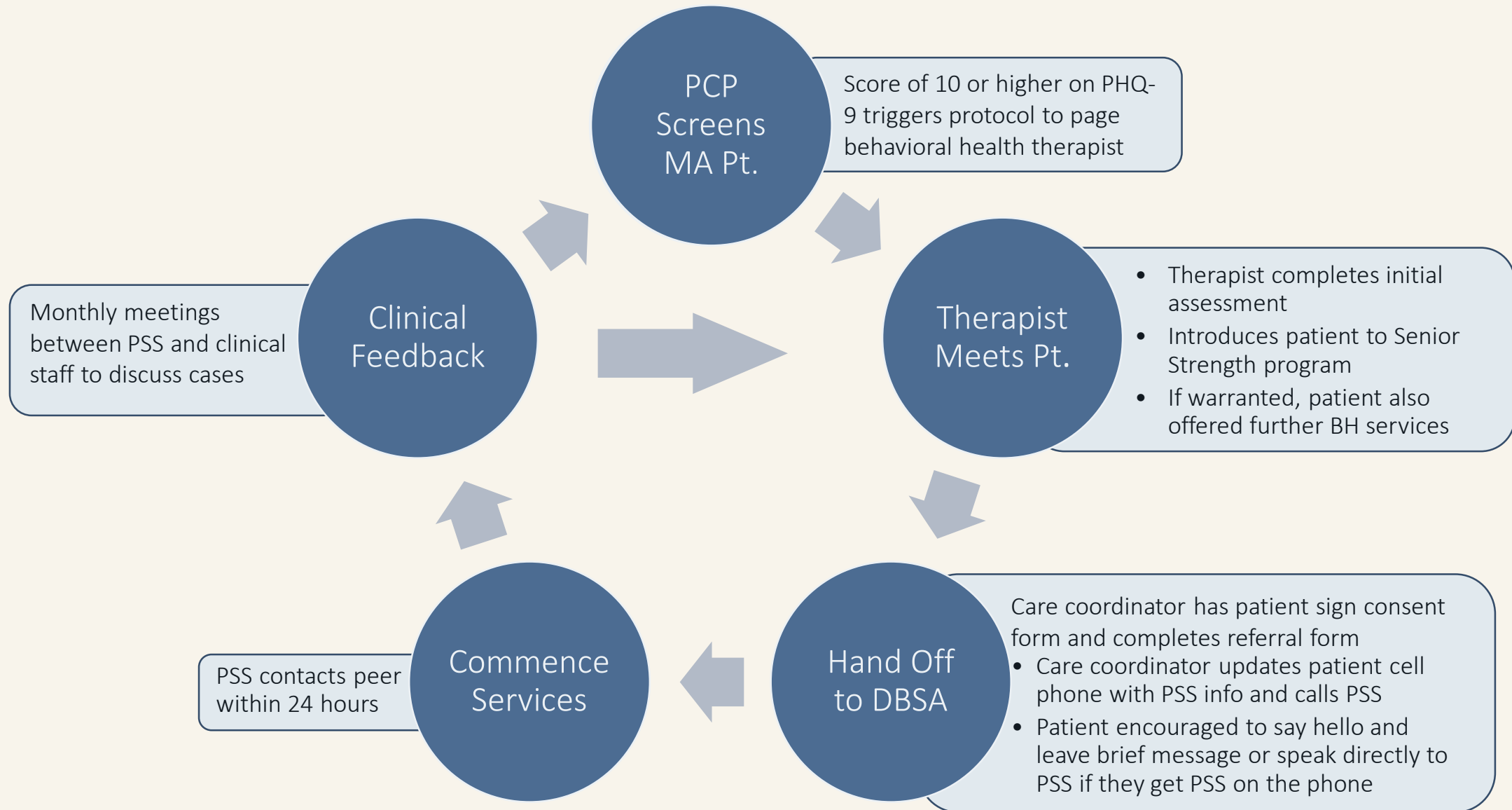
- Peer support encompasses a range of activities and interactions between people who share similar experiences of being diagnosed with ***mental health conditions substance use disorders, or both***. This mutuality—often called “peerness”—between a peer support worker and person in or seeking recovery promotes connection and inspires hope. Peer support offers a level of acceptance, understanding, and validation not found in many other professional relationships.
- By sharing their own lived experience and practical guidance, peer support workers: ***help people to develop their own goals, create strategies for self--empowerment, and take concrete steps towards building fulfilling, self--determined lives for themselves grounded in whole health.***

DBSA Senior Strength Demonstration Project

*Collaborative Care Model in Partnership with Facey Medical Group: Mission Hills CA and
AIMS Center: University of Washington*

GOAL	Improve overall health outcomes of seniors at risk for depression who are being seen by primary care physicians (PCPs)
Strategies	Integrate peer support services to increase patient engagement with PCP and care teams' whole health plan for the patient
Measurements	• Improved PHQ-9 score • Continued engagement with PCP and care team • Identification of peer-defined wellness goals • Progress towards peer-identified wellness goals

Care Coordination and Peer Enrollment Pandemic Adjustments



Clearly Defined Roles & Responsibilities Supports Success

DBSA	• Provide project lead • Recruit, contract and supervise peer support specialists • Develop and supervise implementation of peer support program • Supervise implementation of (PSP) • Track progress towards wellness goals
Facey Medical Center	• Identify site champion and project lead • Identify participating PCPs • Work with DBSA to create care coordination processes • Provide ongoing support to ensure project success including integration of PSS into care team
AIMS	• Provide access and training to AIMS CTMS • Conduct bi-monthly coaching calls
Preliminary Outcomes	• 57% decrease in PHQ-9 of those completing program (average of 9 visits)

Certified and Credentialed Para-Professionals

Myriad of state requirements present workforce development challenges

Every state has different credentialing and certification requirements.

48 states and the Department of Veterans Affairs have credentialing requirements for peer support specialists

- State approved course: 40 – 80 hours
- Supervised apprenticeship: up to 2,000 hours
- State administered test once requirements have been met
- Continuing education requirements