



Department
of Health

AIDS Institute Peer Worker Certification Program

October 23, 2015

“Recognizing the importance of peer workers is not new. The AIDS Institute is twenty years into this story.” Dan O’Connell, Director, AIDS Institute

Ending the Epidemic Blueprint

- **Recommendation # 21:** Establish a mechanism for an HIV peer workforce
- **Recommendation # 30:** Increase access to opportunities for employment and employment /vocational services

Critical Questions and Considerations

- Scope of services appropriate for peer delivery
- Issues around compensation and providing a “living wage”
- Full time versus part time employment
- Issues around earnings and continued access to benefits
- Equal employment issues related to hiring peer workers
- Unique training needs of peer workers
- Readiness of health care facilities and CBOs to hire peers
- Best practices around integrating and supervising peer workers

Primary Goal:

Develop a peer certification process that will truly help us meet our ETE objectives as well as meet the requirements and rigor needed for Medicaid reimbursement

Steering Committee

Composition	Provide guidance around:	Timeline
Statewide representation	Code of Ethics	<p>Began meeting in June; three meetings to date.</p> <p>Subcommittees: Code of Ethics; HCV; Harm Reduction; Assessment: Compensation and Benefits</p> <p>Work on schedule for completion by end of December, 2015</p>
Health Care Facilities	Core Competencies	
CBOs	Compensation Issues	
Peer Workers	Access to Benefits	
Consumers	Supervision and Support	
Harm Reduction focus	Training programs	
Hepatitis C focus	Knowledge assessment	

“Shared Lived Experience”

- Power of peer workers is based on “shared lived experience”
- Unique ability to: establish rapport, reassure, share strategies to promote health
- Peer workers are critical for our most vulnerable patients, many of whom have a history of substance use, mental health issues, incarceration

AIDS Institute Peer Worker Certification

Three tracks:

1. HIV Peer Worker
2. HCV Peer Worker
3. Harm Reduction Peer Worker

- Individuals can pursue more than one track
- No fees for certification
- No fees for training

Self Management

Patient Navigation

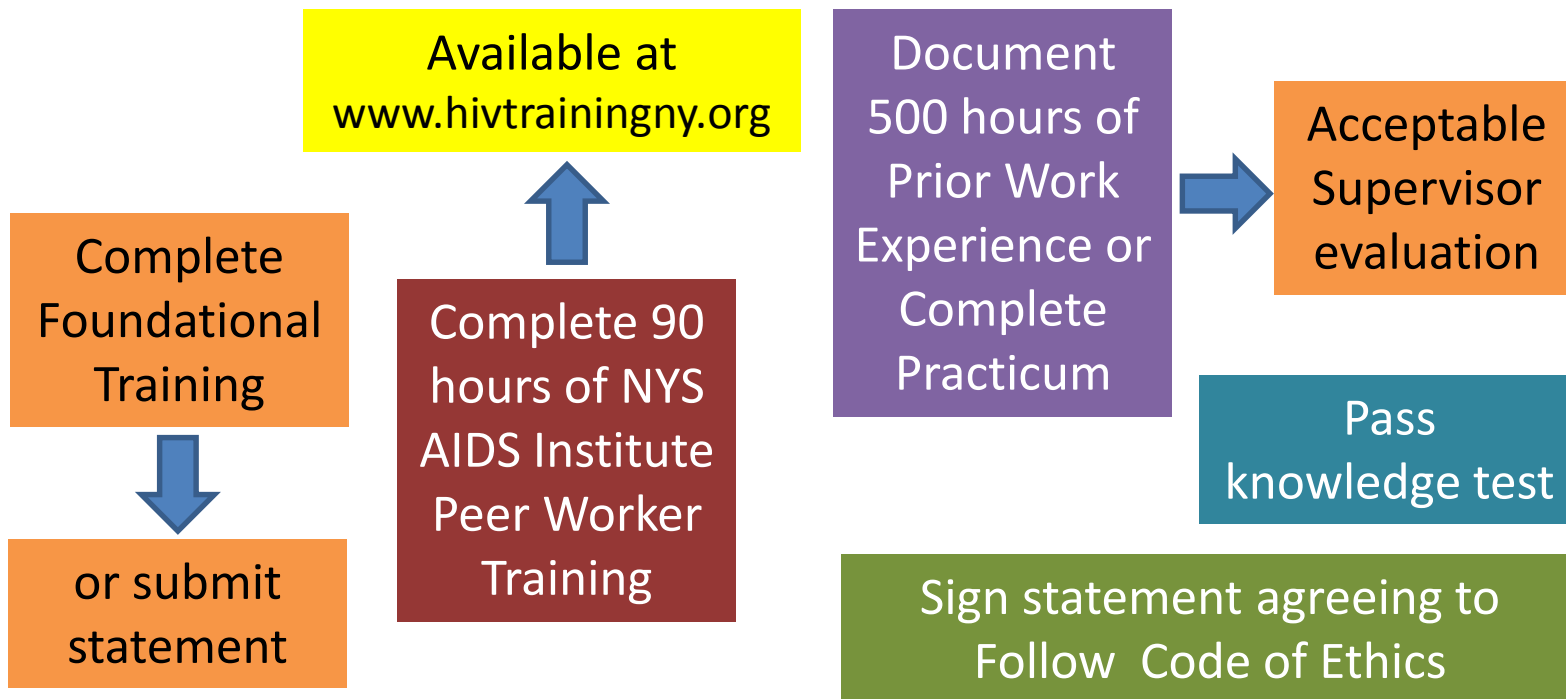
Outreach and Linkage

Harm Reduction

Quality Improvement

Areas for Peer Work

Process to Achieve Certification



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Collaboration with Other State Peer Certification Efforts

- Actively collaborating with and learning from OASAS and OMH representatives
- Steering Committee has been fully briefed on OASAS and OMH peer certification practices and lessons learned
- AIDS Institute Peer Worker Certification will complement and collaborate with these parallel peer certification programs

Clarifying Issues Related to Employment, Wages, Benefits and Entitlements

- Subcommittee of Steering Committee focusing on these issues
 - Representation from HASA, consultation with OTDA
- Legal Action Center and Empire Justice Center charged with developing and delivering training on this topic
- AIDS Institute staff available to provide basic information to Peer Workers and agencies with navigating these issues

Peer Certification: Phase One

- Focus first on certifying peer workers who are currently employed or receiving stipends to do the work
- Allow Peer Workers to get credit for trainings attended via www.hivtrainingny.org back through 1/1/2012
- Introduce a new NYS Peer Worker Pre-Certification Training that all peers will have to complete
- Get training now – application can be completed when it is available later this fall/ early winter
- Certify initial cadre of Peer Workers by Spring, 2016

Currently working as a Peer Worker?

- For those with “Lived experience”
- Evidence of current employment/ supervisor
- If you have been doing the work, waive requirement for foundational training
- Work experience credited toward practicum requirement
- To Register for AIDS Institute Peer Worker Pre-Certification Training this fall or winter contact Rachel.Newport@health.ny.gov

Peer Worker Course Catalogue

- Outlines core courses and specialized courses for each track (HIV, HCV, HR)
- List > 25 distinct courses
- Register via www.hivtrainingny.org
- Student portal maintains your training record
 - no need to submit proof of training

Phase Two: Spring/ Summer 2016

Health care agencies and CBOs must have a position, select a prospective peer worker for practicum and put him or her forward for certification

Agency Capacity Building Series

- Help agencies assess readiness to implement peer worker services
- Components for Executive Leadership, Program Managers and Peer Worker Supervisors
- Consider all aspects of implementing peer-delivered services
 - Financial; Integration of peer workers; Specific role of peer workers; Supervision; Other key issues

AIDS Institute Peer Certification Contacts

HIV Education and Training Programs

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