

## Exploring the Role of Peer Support Supervisors: Focus Group Study



Thank you for your interest in participating in a focus group on supervision. I am writing this letter on behalf of the research team of the Academy of Peer Services, which is managed by the Rutgers University Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions. We are facilitating these focus groups to better understand peer support supervision in a variety of behavioral health services and settings.

The title of this research study is: “**Exploring the Role of Peer Support Supervisors: Focus Group Study**”. To help achieve our objective, we are asking supervisors to attend one of a series of a focus groups, and, if interested, in agreeing to be contacted in the future to further discuss experiences as a supervisor of peer support providers.

Participation in this study is voluntary and will end once you complete the focus group. If you agree to be contacted in the future, a member of the research team will follow up with you about opportunities. You can choose not to participate in any opportunities beyond the focus group.

The focus group you have agreed to participate in will be held on:

**Monday, March 26, 2018**

12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.

Herkimer County Dept. of Mental Health

301 N. Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room (rear section)

Herkimer, New York 13350

You will be one of several people answering questions based on your experience. Participation in the actual focus group will take approximately 60 minutes. Lunch will be provided before the focus group and an optional opportunity to stay and network with others who have participated will be available after the focus group is complete.

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The [Academy of Peer Services](#) (APS) is a joint project between the New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services (NYAPRS) and Rutgers University, funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) to provide online training and testing for the state certification for Peer Specialists. IRB Protocol Number: Pro20170001454, PI Name: Dr. Amy Spagnolo, Protocol Title: Exploring the Role of Peer Support Supervisors: Focus Group Study



During the focus group you may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. You will be one of up to 12 supervisors asked to participate. Any information you share will be kept private and no identifying information about you will be shared with anyone beyond the research staff. Individual answers will not be linked to participants but rather analyzed as a group for themes.

The focus group will be audio recorded, and the recording will be transcribed. Once the transcription is complete, the audio recording will be destroyed. We will ensure that your information is kept confidential by only using a number code on the transcriptions of the audio recording. If you speak with a researcher during a follow up interview, only the study investigators will be able to link your code to your name and this information will only be kept until analysis is complete.

In addition to key members of the research team, the following people (or groups) will be allowed to review parts of your research records related to this study:

- The Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies)
- Officials of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- The Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) (a regulatory agency that oversees human subject research)

A benefit to you by participating in this study is the knowledge you are contributing to a greater understanding of the role of supervisors of peer support workers, which can lead to further research into education and innovations designed specifically for supervisors of this emerging workforce.

You may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions and always have the right not to answer. If you experience any emotional distress, resulting from your participation in this study, you can contact me, the principal investigator, Dr. Amy B. Spagnolo. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, please call the Chair of the Institutional Review Board or the IRB Director at (973) 972-3608.

If you agree to participate in a focus group, please sign up using the Eventbrite registration. If you are one of the first 12 to sign up, you will receive a confirmation. If you are not one of the first 12, you will be placed on a waiting list. If you are confirmed and later find that you cannot attend, please let us know as soon as possible so we can let someone on the waiting list attend.

Thank you for your interest!

Dr. Amy Spagnolo, APS Project Manager and Principle Investigator,  
[amy.spagnolo@shp.rutgers.edu](mailto:amy.spagnolo@shp.rutgers.edu) or 908-889-2544

