

[Webinar] Providing Peer Support in a Rural Environment

Emily Skehill, Mental Health America

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Providing Peer Support in a Rural Environment

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Description:

People living in rural communities often have limited access to mental health care services. The behavioral health peer support movement has helped fill some of these service gaps, but there are still challenges in providing peer support in rural or frontier areas. This webinar will take a look at rural Montana and give an overview of the current status of certified peer support in the state. It will also cover the challenges of a large state with a low population, such as distance, workforce development, outreach, and stigma/culture, as well as strategies to overcome these difficulties.

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Presenter:

Jim Hajny has served as Montana's Peer Network's Executive Director since its inception in June 2011. He has taken the organization from a fledgling grassroots startup to a statewide recovery network with more than 1,200 members statewide. He is an advocate for recovery oriented behavioral health services and a driving force behind the peer support workforce development and training across Montana. Mr. Hajny is a trained Peer Support Specialist, a recovery trainer, a past chair of the Montana Peer Support Task Force and was appointed by Governor Steve Bullock to the Mental Disability Board of Visitors.

He is also a consultant to behavioral health agencies on peer services and recovery programming both statewide and nationally. On social media, he hosts *5 Good Minutes* and a recovery podcast *Recovery Talks*. He is a member of the Behavioral Health Advisory Council, a past board member of the Park County Local Advisory Council on Mental Health and the Central Service Area Authority. He has been in recovery from a mental health and substance abuse diagnosis for over 25 years.

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