



# PEER RECOVERY SPECIALISTS FOR EQUITABLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AMONG HISPANIC AND LATINOS

## INTRODUCTION

This snapshot of information is intended to provide resources to individuals, parents, professionals, and providers regarding the peer recovery specialists' impact on behavioral health among Latinos in the United States.

### WHAT ARE PEER RECOVERY SPECIALISTS?

A peer recovery specialist is someone who has recovered from a substance use disorder (SUD) and serves as a resource by sharing their lived experience to help individuals with SUD achieve and maintain long-term recovery. Their relationship offers acceptance, understanding, validation, and guidance on setting goals and self-determination strategies to live fulfilling self-determined lives.<sup>3, 4</sup>

### PREVALENCE OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN HISPANIC AND LATINO POPULATIONS

There is an increase in the prevalence of mental illness in Hispanic and Latino communities, particularly among children and adolescents.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, only 10% of Hispanic and Latino individuals with a mental health disorder received mental healthcare from a general provider; only 5% of Latino individuals with a mental health disorder received care from a mental health specialist.<sup>1</sup>



### DISPARITIES AMONG HISPANIC AND LATINO POPULATIONS

In 2018, 56.8% of young adults (ages 18–25) and 39.6% of adults (ages 26–49) received inadequate mental health treatment. That same year, 90% of the Hispanic and Latino populations with substance use disorders did not receive care.<sup>2</sup>

Hispanic and Latino populations may experience disparities in care due to a lack of insurance, a lack of culturally competent and/or bilingual behavioral healthcare providers, and a lack of mental health awareness.<sup>2</sup>

# Peer Recovery Specialist and their Impact on Hispanic and Latino Communities



Peer recovery specialists play a unique role in addressing disparities in mental health and substance use for Hispanic and Latino populations.

They support a client's ongoing treatment and healing process, such as providing assistance in navigating mental healthcare systems, providing referrals to community supports, and expanding a client's network of treatment.<sup>4</sup>

As members of local communities and families, peer support specialists can play a valuable role in providing culturally responsive support for Hispanic and Latino individuals.

Further, peer specialists can often connect with people staff might have had difficulty engaging with as they have a greater understanding of the struggles on the pathway to recovery.<sup>5</sup>

## Importance of Peer Support



An increase in:

- Self-worth and confidence
- Sense of responsiveness and inclusiveness in treatment
- Sense of control and the ability to bring about positive changes<sup>3</sup>



## Power of Peer Support



A decrease in:

- Substance use and depression
- Psychotic symptoms
- Hospital admission rates<sup>3</sup>



The Peer Recovery Center of Excellence provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) greatly supports enhancing peer recovery services. It offers training, events, and technical assistance for communities wanting to strengthen or begin peer support services.<sup>6</sup>

The Peer Recovery Center of Excellence now offers explainer videos on foundational topics essential to the recovery community, such as Recovery Community Organizations, Peer Support, Recovery Capital, and Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care.<sup>6</sup>

Scan the QR code on the right to watch the explainer videos.<sup>7</sup>



## References

1. [Mental Health Disparities: Hispanics and Latinos](#)
2. [Latinx/Hispanic Communities and Mental Health](#)
3. [Value of Peers Infographics: General Peer Support](#)
4. [Peer Support Workers for those in Recovery](#)
5. [Recommendations for Engaging People from Hispanic and Latino Communities](#)
6. [Peer Recovery Center of Excellence](#)
7. [Peer Recovery Center of Excellence - Introducing our Explainer Videos](#)

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