



Fund Peer Support Specialist position

Lack of uniformity needs correcting

Peer Support Specialists are employees in HHSC state hospitals who have benefited from the services available from the agency on their path back to wellness. They have a unique perspective on navigating the course from being a recipient of services to one who successfully delivers services in the field of mental health. Their first-hand knowledge of what one needs to be independently successful is invaluable. Their help in guiding others to recovery is helping to reduce recidivism in the hospitals. Furthermore, with the current population of HHSC State Supported Living Centers' admissions being court commitments, the inclusion of this position at SSLCs to provide support for those residents and reduce recidivism.

These workers are peer counselors who help others identify resources that will be useful to them for taking part in their own recovery. They teach them to identify crises resolution if the need arises. Most importantly, they get the patient ready to give input into their own treatment plan.

In 2015, the position was implemented in the state classification system but funding for the position was not provided resulting in not being compensated uniformly by the agency. Many times they are slotted into an open position, whether it be a Rehab. Tech, Admin. Tech., clerk or other unfilled position. The state budget should include funding for Peer Support Specialist and Certified Peer Support Specialist I – III in all state hospitals uniformly. They are a great asset to the facilities and especially to the peers they provide support to. A uniform classification would afford the agency the ability to appropriately define their job duties and compensate them accordingly.