

Supporting Recovery in Community

What is recovery?

Recovery is a *process* of change, based on hope, through which people improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential. The four major dimensions that support recovery are health, home, purpose, and community. Every person's recovery is unique and there is no wrong path to recovery. Recovery Support Services (RSS), including peers/recovery coaches, remove barriers to recovery and support the recovery process.

Access to Recovery

Access to Recovery (ATR) was a federal grant funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT). ATR initiated recovery supports that are client-directed, offer choice, and measure outcomes such as criminal involvement, education and employment, stability in housing, social connectedness, and substance use. During the 14 years ATR was funded, more than 30,000 individuals were supported in their recovery.

Seattle Recovery Café has been, and continues to be, a strong advocate for supporting each person in his or her recovery journey. David Coffey, the executive director of the Seattle Recovery Café has this to say about ATR: "The ATR program has been an outstanding vehicle for creating Recovery Capital, leveraging resources, inspiring action and transforming thousands of lives. I have seen the power of this funding to move the needle in creating positive change for those impacted by substance use disorders."

Recovery leaders in Washington State are passionate about supporting all individuals in recovery. Says Joshua Wallace, Chief Executive Officer and President of Peer Washington (Peer Seattle, Peer Spokane, Peer Kent, and Peer Olympia): "Stigma, isolation, and access to basic resources have always been a barrier to successful recovery. Funding for community-based peer recovery support services addresses these issues directly with remarkable success by leveraging

peers who are experientially credentialed to provide a unique level of understanding and engagement with individuals overcoming mental health and substance use challenges."

State Opioid Response

SAMHSA's State Opioid Response II (SOR II) grant is addressing the opioid crisis by increasing medication-assisted-treatment, reducing opiate overdose related deaths through prevention, treatment and recovery activities for opioid use disorder (OUD) and stimulant misuse. In September 2020, Washington received a \$27,173,792 award to respond to the opioid crisis in our state.

To support the full continuum of care in Washington State, \$3,531,212 of the awarded grant funds will support recovery for individuals with OUD or stimulant misuse. Grant funds are contracted with seven community-based organizations, Peer Washington, Everett Recovery Café, Clark County, Comprehensive Healthcare, Spokane Recovery Café, Catholic Community Services in Skagit County, and Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare. Organizations employ Recovery Care Managers who assist individuals in recovery planning and removing recovery barriers.

All community partners provide and connect every SOR II recovery participant to a support group specific to individuals with an OUD and/or stimulant misuse. A mutual support group is made up of individuals with similar challenges and history. The group is affirming and provides a community where members can connect to others, resources, discuss challenges, and support each other regardless of their recovery path.

Each community organization provides, or partners with other organizations to provide, the recovery support services available in their community. Individuals direct their own recovery path, with assistance from their Recovery Care Manager. Some of the supports funded through SOR II include Oxford housing, recovery residences, peer support, mutual support groups, transportation, basic needs,



education and employment services, emotional support, information and referral, and mentoring.

Recovery in Community

With the support of the Legislature, Washington is removing the gap in recovery support services using block grant funding. When ATR ended, recovery support services were limited to individuals with an opiate use disorder or history of opiate overdose. With the addition of block grant funding, recovery support is now available to individuals recovering from any substance use issue. Community recovery support partners have expanded services from only opiate use disorder to any substance use disorder.

The community partners provide the recovery support services available in their recovery community organization and many will also provide services provided by other agencies. Individuals direct their own recovery path. Services funded include Oxford Housing, peer support, mutual support groups, recovery residences, transportation, basic needs, accountability groups, education and employment services, emotional support, information, referral, and mentoring.

Partners

More than 4,300 providers collaborate(d) with Washington State to support recovery. Integral to the success of the recovery support program, and more importantly the individuals supported with recovery support funding, are the commitment and support of community partners. Supporting individuals in community reduces isolation, encourages attachment, decreases homelessness, increases rate of employment, and provides stability.

A short list of recovery support community partners includes Catholic Community Services, Clark County, Comprehensive Healthcare, Everett Recovery Café, Recovery Café Orting Valley, Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare, Oxford House, Peer Washington (Peer Seattle, Peer Spokane, Peer Kent, and Peer Olympia), Seattle Recovery Café, Catholic Community Services in Skagit County, Spokane Recovery Café, Tacoma Recovery Center, Recovery Café Clark County, Recovery Café Jefferson County, Recovery Café

Network, Washington Alliance for Quality Recovery Residences, and the Washington Recovery Alliance.

Support for community-based recovery


Every person is important and an individual. Every individual has a story and recovery path that must be valued and validated. Community-based recovery organizations are currently supporting substance use disorder individuals from all recovery paths. Continuing to support individuals recovering from substance use disorder in community is an essential part of a recovery-oriented system of care. As Washington endeavors to support people, and their loved ones, who are struggling with substance use disorders, it is critical that we use a comprehensive, compassionate and effective approach.

Success!

"I was addicted to opioids and heroin but thought I had it under control. Then, I got pregnant. Knowing that the drugs would hurt my baby, I tried to quit on my own but, soon realized that I needed help. I found my way to a local treatment center, then tried going to a 12-step program for ongoing support. I really wanted it to work, but the program just didn't resonate with me and I was struggling in my recovery.

It was then that someone told me about a new community organization in town that offered peer services. Because of my baby, I was willing to give it a try. I connected with the welcoming, supportive people and culture at the community organization. I decided to register as a member and requested to be matched with a peer coach and become a part of the State Opioid Response program (SOR). I started attending a SOR support group. I had finally found a place where I fit.

I met with my coach weekly for a few months, then as I grew in my recovery, I decided to step-up as a volunteer. I also connected with the supported employment services. Today, I am busy. I am working at a local thrift store and living in safe, supportive housing. I also just completed the peer coach training program and look forward to being matched with someone I can support in their recovery. Most importantly, I am solidly on my recovery pathway."



Names were changed to protect anonymity.

More Information

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