

Office of Community Voices and Empowerment (OCVE)

Background

The Office of Community Voices and Empowerment (OCVE) is part of the original Mental Health Offices of Consumer Affairs (OCA) established nationally by the State Mental Health Authorities, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1995, the Center for Mental Health Services within the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), established an Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) to promote and facilitate meaningful peer participation in all aspects of federal programs.

In 1993 with the assistance of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), directors of OCAs founded The National Association of Consumer/Survivor Mental Health Administrators (NAC/SMHA).

In 2019, members of the NAC/SMHA reorganized to become NASMHPD Division of Recovery Support Services (DRSS). NASMHPD's need for expertise and guidance from those with lived experience remains the same. Through this new division, NASMHPD will be able to enhance and continue its long history of ensuring that the voices of those with lived experience are promoted, heard, and considered in policy, planning and practice development. Many individual state's work has shifted significantly to focus primarily on Peer Support and Recovery Services.

Washington state's Health Care Authority established the Office of Community Voices and Empowerment (OCVE). This office works closely with members of the community who have lived and living experience with behavioral health challenges and provides a platform for these voices to drive innovation and change, with guiding principles of hope and resilience.

Washington State's office remains dedicated to a broader representation of behavioral health lived and living experience communities.

Source: [Washington State Health Care Authority-Office of Community Voices and Empowerment](#)

Advocacy

The Office of Community Voices and Empowerment supports the following advocacy opportunities:

- Office of Behavioral Health and Advocacy (OBHA)
- Advocacy and Civic Engagement Trainings, Events and Resources
- Connecting Community Gatherings
- Traveling Mini Conferences

Leadership

The Office of Community Voices and Empowerment supports the following leadership opportunities:

- Office of Community Voices and Empowerment Statewide Advisory Committee
- OCVE Western and Eastern Washington Community Leadership Summits
- Transformational leadership Trainings
- Coach Approach leadership Trainings

Programs, training, and support

The Office of Community Voices and Empowerment supports the following programs, training and support:

- Substance Use Disorder (SUD)/Mental Health (MH)/Co Occurring (COD) Integration and Accessibility
- Community Based Nonprofit and Small Business Management Academy
- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
- Unlocking Your Potential Trainings

Agency focused

The Office of Community Voices and Empowerment supports the following agency activities:

- Joint Legislative Executive Committee on Behavioral Health (JLEC-BH)
- Medicaid Advisory Committee/Beneficiary Advisory Council (MAC/BAC)
- Crisis Response Improvement Strategy (CRIS)
- Mental Health Advance Directive (MHAD)
- Behavioral Health Workforce Development
- Behavioral Health Stigma Campaigns
- Say It Out Loud (SIOL) Conference Chair
- Recovery SynERGY Employee Resource Group (ERG)
- Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging
- Community Engagement
- Health Equity Think Tank
- Health Equity Liaison
- IMPACT (Previously known as PEAR- Pro Equity Anti Racism)