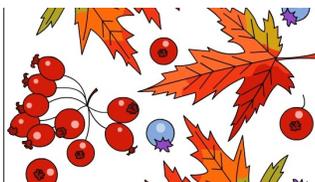




# Wisconsin Peer Specialists

Igniting Recovery 



## NAMI Racine County Announces New Certified Peer Specialists Program...Luann Simpson, CPS

### Special Points of Interest for WI-CPS

- ◆ Updates & News
- ◆ DHS Insert
- ◆ NAMI Racine
- ◆ 2016 Exam Dates

NAMI Racine County announced a new Peer Specialist program at a screening event of Joe Pantoliano’s documentary film, “No Kidding, Me Too” held in May. With approximately 90 community members present for the screening, NAMI Racine County announced the PSMe2 program. The program is being developed as the result of the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Racine County. Racine County’s homeless shelter, H.A.L.O (Homeless Assistance Leadership Organization) has experienced difficulty with meeting the needs of individuals living mental illness and substance use disorders for a significant period of time. HALO has made many efforts to improve, but continues to face multiple challenges. As a result, a number of people needing shelter had been reluctant or unable to enter HALO programming. During the winter months when the temperatures dipped to dangerous levels the community became aware of this situation which had left other organization scrambling to fill the gaps. Thus, the needs of those experiencing homelessness and mental illness/substance use had reached a crisis level for these individuals and families in Racine County.

A temporary solution was attempted when a local organization provided shelter for these individuals to keep them safe for the winter months. This also faced various challenges, and brought up a number of additional concerns. Shortly thereafter, HALO approached NAMI Racine County to partner in an effort to provide Certified Peer Specialists to connect with individuals in need of shelter. Thus the process began; a local business anonymously donated \$10,000 to kick off the program and members of the community supported the program. As we set about securing the funding, we knew we needed a catchy name, one that would speak to the heart of the program. Shame researcher, Dr. Brene Brown has stated, “the two most important words that one human being can say to another are, me too”. This speaks to the essence of peer support and the PS (peer support) Me2 program was born. The first step: to recruit and train 10 peers to become Certified Peer Specialists and to provide the training locally. I am pleased to say that the training was provided by Grassroots Empowerment Project NAPS Trainers, Sam Ahrens and Luann Simpson and concluded on August 28th. Nine individuals successfully completed the training and plan to take the September 23rd certification exam (the largest group to take the exam in Racine County).

Continued...

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## NAMI Racine County Announces New Certified Peer Specialists Program

The ultimate goal of the PSMe2 program is to provide 3 part time Certified Peer Specialists (CPS's) to connect with individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as mental illness and or substance use. The campaign to secure the funding for the program, both through grant writing and fundraising continues. However, the PSMe2 program is expanding before it has fully begun. NAMI Racine County staff will be meeting with Racine County Human Services to negotiate a contract to provide Peer Specialists to the Comprehensive Community Services Program, with a goal of initially hiring 2 part time CPS's in October. Other organizations have expressed an interest in contracting with NAMI Racine County to provide CPS's at their agencies. The Recovery movement, with the support of our community, strengthens in Racine County!

## SAMHSA on Co-occurring Disorders

**Mental and substance use conditions often co-occur.** In other words, individuals with substance use conditions often have a mental health condition at the same time and vice versa.

- Approximately 8.9 million adults have co-occurring disorders; that is they have both a mental and substance use disorder
- Only 7.4 percent of individuals receive treatment for both conditions with 55.8 percent receiving no treatment at all.

### Integrated treatment works

Integrated treatment or treatment that addresses mental and substance use conditions at the same time is associated with lower costs and better outcomes such as:

- Reduced substance use
- Improved psychiatric symptoms and functioning
- Decreased hospitalization
- Increased housing stability
- Fewer arrests
- Improved quality of life

SAMHSA's supports integrated treatment for co-occurring disorders. Through SAMHSA grants, publications, technical assistance and support, SAMHSA has promoted integration at the State, community and agency levels. [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)



*We would like to encourage you to send us your stories about working as a Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist (WI-CPS). If you have an employer you would like to see highlighted, please send us an article about them, as well. Currently, there are over 300 WI-CPS in our state. They are employed in a wide variety of areas including in and out-patient care, Drop-in Centers, homeless shelters, state hospitals and county facilities, Independent Living Centers (ILC's) and Veteran's hospitals.*

*Your stories are important. Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists Ignite Recovery!*

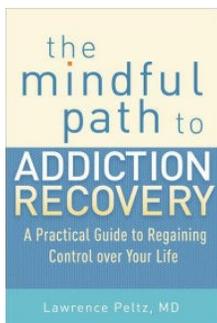
## A Note from The Wellness Shack...

During the fall of 2014, The Wellness Shack, Inc. in Eau Claire applied for a grant through the United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley to increase our peer support, programs and continuing education. The United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley generously granted our request! This grant has enabled The Wellness Shack to hire two Peer Support Specialists and a Peer Specialist Supervisor to see peers one-on-one Monday through Thursday starting in late September. Because of this grant, we have also formed collaborations with Lutheran Social Services to provide a weekly support group at Positive Avenues in Eau Claire, as well as Mayo Clinic and Disability Rights Wisconsin for educational presentations. This grant will also allow our new Peer Specialists to be trained in the SMART Recovery program, which will be resuming at The Wellness Shack next year. It is our hope that more organizations, such as the United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley, will recognize the benefits of the evidence based practice of peer support! Bonnie Perrenoud, Office Manager, The Wellness Shack, Inc. 515 S. Barstow St. Suite 110 Eau Claire, WI 54701

NOTE: The Wellness Shack, Inc. is a consumer-run, non-profit organization serving as Eau Claire's Center for Adults in Mental Health Recovery. It is run by the very members who comprise it, offering the chance for recovery, solace, and peace of mind by supporting, encouraging, and working with others who share similar conditions. We offer peer support; we are not professional counselors.

## Recommended Readings...

### The Mindful Path to Addiction Recovery: A Practical Guide to Regaining Control over Your Life by Lawrence Peltz



Mindfulness, the quality of attention that combines full awareness with acceptance of each moment, just as it is, is gaining broad acceptance among mental health professionals as an adjunct to treatment. Because at the heart of addiction is the fear of painful emotional states, addicts compulsively seek drugs and alcohol to avoid or escape emotional pain. Mindfulness, on the other hand, helps us develop greater acceptance and ease with life's challenges, as well as greater self-compassion.

"A very gentle, compassionate, sensible, believable, readable, encouraging, and incredibly helpful book about overcoming a very powerful affliction. It is, in its broad thoroughness, a wise support for facing any major challenge."— Sylvia Boorstein, author of *Happiness Is an Inside Job*

ISBN-13:9781590309186

Publisher: Shambhala Publications, Inc.

Review provided by barnesandnoble.com



### Autumn Quotes...

*"I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."*  
— L.M. Montgomery,  
*Anne of Green Gables*

*"I would rather sit on a pumpkin, and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion."*  
— Henry David  
Thoreau



## Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Expansion Initiative 2015

The Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (DMHSAS), launched the Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative for individuals with lived experience with mental illness in January 2010.

Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) are individuals who have not only lived experience, but also formal training in the peer specialist model of mental health supports. They use their unique set of recovery experiences in combination with skills training to provide peer support. Peer specialists actively incorporate peer support into their work while working within an agency's recovery team structure. CPSs work in many different settings in mental health programs and crisis services across the state. While this initiative gives individuals with lived experience a career path, it also gives programs that employ CPS and the Wisconsin mental health and substance abuse system a sustained emphasis on recovery. Over the last five years, DMHSAS, along with partners Access To Independence and the Peer Specialist Committee of the Recovery Implementation Task Force, has certified 429 CPSs, with 70% employed in the field.

In 2014, DHS recognized the positive impact of CPS within mental health services system and prioritized the expansion of the CPS certification in two ways:

Creation of a Parent Peer Specialist (PPS) certification that will provide parent peer support to other parents/caregivers of children and youth with serious emotional disturbance and substance use disorders

Modification to the current certification to encompass lived experience with substance use disorder and the provision of peer support to individuals with substance use issues, mental health issues, or both

As a result, Wisconsin will be one of only a handful of states that will have integrated (mental health and substance use disorder), adult, and parent peer specialist certifications.

DHS will use a number of venues to communicate CPS expansion progress.

- This newsletter
- The Wisconsin CPS website (<http://www.wicps.org/>)
- The Recovery Implementation Task Force, Peer Specialist Committee
- A workshop and listening session at the Mental Health Substance Use Recovery Training October 21-22

Stakeholder questions and input are critical to the success of the CPS expansion. To provide input, Contact Alice Pauser (Adult Peer Specialist Coordinator) [alicep@accesstoind.org](mailto:alicep@accesstoind.org) or Robert Fredericks (Parent Peer Specialist Coordinator) [bobf@accesstoind.org](mailto:bobf@accesstoind.org) at 608-242-8484.

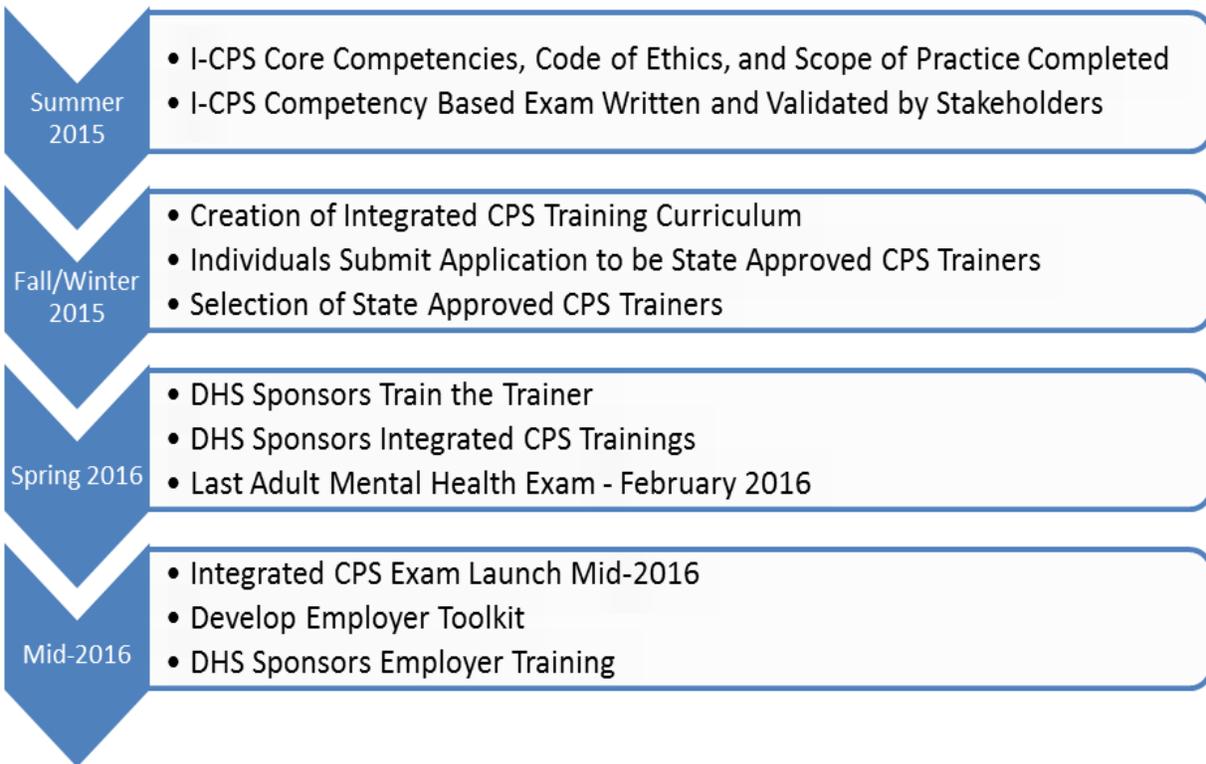
Join in the discussion at the upcoming conference.

Participate in scheduled listening sessions and surveys in early 2016.

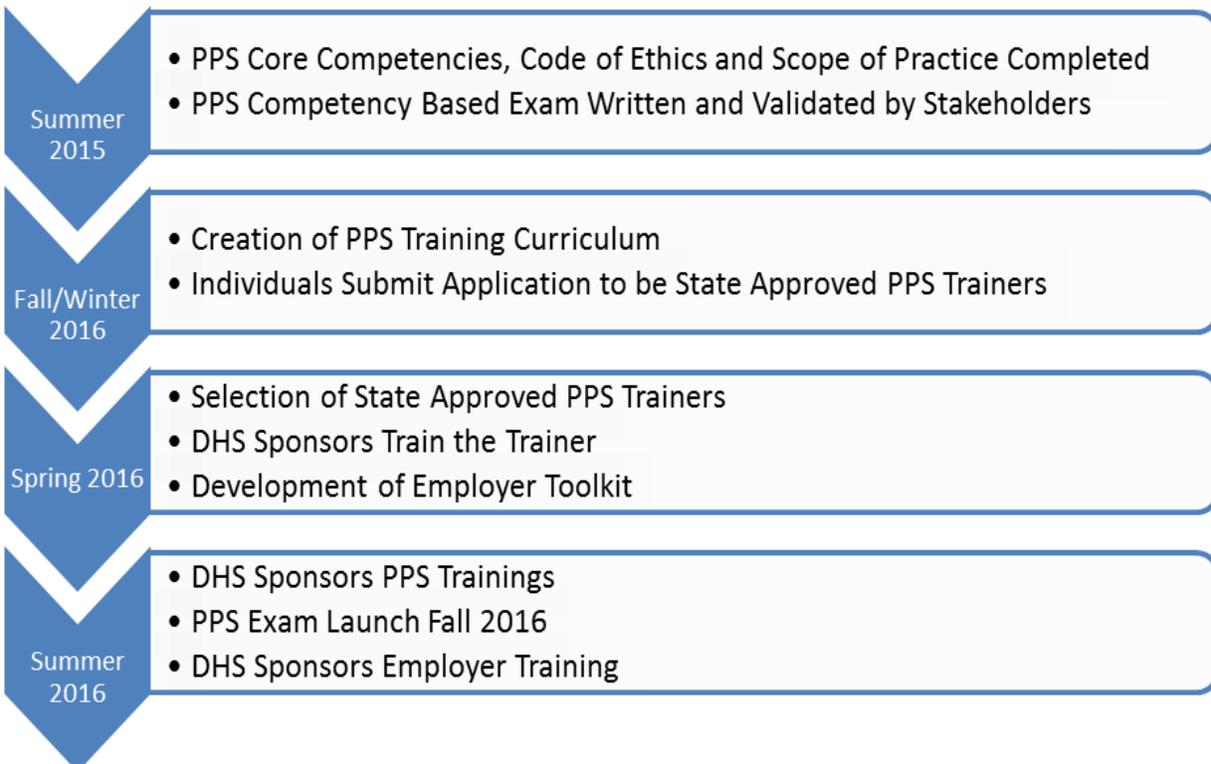
This expansion is a large project for DHS and one that will need continual support and feedback from all stakeholders. Below is a timeline of high level expansion tasks and the target time of completion to assist everyone to track the expansion of CPS.

**Update/Timeline submitted by Kenya Bright, Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS)**

## Integrated Certified Peer Specialist Expansion Timeline



## Parent Peer Specialist Expansion Timeline



## Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist Employment Initiative

Access to Independence, Inc.  
3810 Milwaukee Street  
Madison, WI 53714  
[www.accesstoind.org](http://www.accesstoind.org)

Phone: 608-242-8484 ext. 224  
Fax: 608-242-0383  
TTY: 608-242-8485  
E-mail: [alicep@accesstoind.org](mailto:alicep@accesstoind.org)



### Visit:

[www.wicps.org](http://www.wicps.org)

The newsletter is available in other formats. If you would like to submit an article we would be happy to review it for publication in the newsletter. We can expand the newsletter to fit new pieces and add in flyer announcements from organizations since it goes out by email.

### Announcements...

**Continuing Education Opportunities** are often listed in the weekly WI-CPS email update. If you find a good source for continuing education please let us know so we can share with other WI-CPS. All CPS need to fulfill 20 hours of continuing education for recertification every two years. There are five required categories for continuing education hours. You can download the instructions and form at the website address below.

<http://www.wicps.org/recertification.html>

Please visit the **Certification Page** on [www.wicps.org](http://www.wicps.org) to find out about training schedules.

**Join the WI-CPS Speaker's Bureau:** Contact Alice Pauser for information and application: 608-242-8484 or email [alicep@accesstoind.org](mailto:alicep@accesstoind.org)

Would you like to **Highlight your Employer?** Please contact us if you feel your employer does a great job of staffing and supporting WI-CPS.

### 2016 Peer Specialist Certification Exams

**February 3, 2016**

**July 20, 2016**

**September 28, 2016**

### Application Deadlines are posted on

[www.wicps.org](http://www.wicps.org)

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Exams will again be proctored at the eight Wisconsin Independent Living Centers.

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*Thank you to the ILC's and UW-Milwaukee for their partnership in making the exam process a success!*

## Resources ...

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Web: [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

Wisconsin Bureau of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery

Phone: 608-266-2717

Web: [http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh\\_bcmh/index.htm](http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/mh_bcmh/index.htm)

NAMI Wisconsin

Phone: 608 268-6000 or (800) 236-2988

Web: [www.namiwisconsin.org](http://www.namiwisconsin.org)

Wisconsin United for Mental Health

Web: [www.wimentalhealth.org](http://www.wimentalhealth.org)

Phone: 866-948-6483

Mental Health America-Wisconsin

Web: [www.mhawisconsin.org](http://www.mhawisconsin.org) Phone: (414) 276-3122 or (866) 948-6483 (toll free)