

Vision / Mission

The Office of Client-Peer Relations was established in 2010 by the L.A. County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Program Support Bureau to be a change agent for recovery-focused services and to provide peer support to people with lived experiences of psychiatric disabilities who receive services from or work in the public mental health system of L.A. County. Founded as an advocacy group within DMH, the Office of Client-Peer Relations (CPR) is dedicated to the inclusion of mental health clients as valued members of our community, and of their peers who work in the system as valued members of our work force. As part of the Program Support Bureau, CPR carries the message of hope, wellness and recovery to all clients and staff of the L.A. County Department of Mental Health, and whenever possible to the larger community that we serve.



CPR Staff

Ron Schraiber, M.A. is the Director of CPR and a longtime activist in the civil rights and self-help movement of and by people diagnosed with mental illnesses. In 1998, he initiated the Hope and Recovery Conferences at DMH, has been the recipient of many advocacy awards and is the co-author of the landmark study *“The Well-Being Project: Mental Health Clients Speak for Themselves”* published in 1989.

S. Michael Szczerbaty, M.A. is the assistant to the Director of CPR. Trained as a Peer Advocate, Mike is responsible for the continuing education component, Peer Advocate Development Seminars (PADS), and for implementing projects for improving the welcoming atmosphere of DMH Wellness Centers, and for training people in leadership and advocacy skills.

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Client-Peer Relations

“Through advocacy, mutual support and the establishment of recovery-focused environments, we work to create community, promote self-determination and empower individuals to achieve their fullest potential.”

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Nothing About Us Without Us

Program Support Bureau





Goals

To effectively advocate that client-driven recovery principles and practices be implemented and maintained throughout the Los Angeles County mental health system.

To proactively respond and rectify issues of prejudice and discrimination against people who have been diagnosed and/or identified as having a mental illness both within the mental health system and the community at large.

To assure that the voice, perspectives, concerns, stated needs and priorities of mental health clients are heard and significantly included and integrated into the policies and practices throughout the mental health system.

To develop a variety of formats and media to educate mental health clients, mental health staff, family members and the community at large concerning recovery issues, client culture and perspectives, disability rights, peer leadership skills, and mental health advocacy and related issues.

Values

- Hope and respect have no limits
- Trust is the cornerstone of a healing relationship or partnership
- People recover from even the most serious psychiatric disabilities
- Services are voluntary and client –driven
- Services are strengths-based
- Wellness is not only a goal, but is also an invitation to grow as well
- Maintain healthy attitudes, lifestyles and habits
- Learning is ongoing and part of recovery
- Don't just live for yourself but give something back to others
- Recognition of the inherent human dignity and rights of all people
- Counter stigma and discrimination

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