



RECOVERY-ORIENTED COMMUNITY INITIATIVE TOOLKIT

*The Peer Support Coalition of Florida’s “**Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative**” is a state-wide program which aims to spread the hope of recovery for Floridians one community at a time.*

*This toolkit is designed for use by grassroots advocates and aims to introduce a vehicle for everyday citizens to become involved in transforming Florida’s system of care to a “**Recovery-Oriented System of Care**”.*

Additional Information

For information on Florida’s transformational efforts go to:
<https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/CreatingaRecovery-OrientedSystemofCareinFlorida-2017.pdf>

For additional information or to download an electronic version of this tool kit go to:
www.peersupportfl.org

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Introduction

The Peer Support Coalition of Florida’s “**Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative**” is a state-wide program which aims to spread the hope of recovery for Floridians, one community at a time.

Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) is a system transformation initiative being led by Florida’s Department of Children and Families (DCF) to establish an integrated, values-based, recovery-oriented system of care where recovery is expected and achieved through meaningful partnerships and shared decision making with individuals, communities and systems. The transformation to a ROSC in Florida is grounded in the peer specialist movement.

What is Recovery?

Recovery from Mental Disorders and/or Substance Use Disorders is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

(SAMHSA’s working Definition, 2012)

The community’s role in recovery?

Through the Recovery Support Strategic Initiative, federal department of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has delineated community as one of the four major dimensions that support a life in recovery. **Community**: relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope (SAMHSA’s definition).

Recovery is supported through relationship and social networks: An important factor in the recovery process is the presence and involvement of people who believe in the person’s ability to recover; who offer hope, support, and encouragement; and who also suggest strategies and resources for change. Family members, peers, providers, faith groups, community members, and other allies form vital support networks. Through these relationships, people leave unhealthy and/or unfulfilling life roles behind and engage in new roles (e.g., partner, caregiver, friend, student, employee) that lead to a greater sense of belonging, personhood, empowerment, autonomy, social inclusion, and community participation. (SAMHSA)

Recovery is based on respect: Community, systems, and societal acceptance and appreciation for people affected by mental health and substance use problems – including protecting their rights and eliminating discrimination – are crucial in achieving recovery. There is a need to acknowledge that taking steps towards recovery may require great courage. Self-acceptance, developing a positive and meaningful sense of identity, and regaining belief in one’s self are particularly important. (SAMHSA)

Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative

The aim of a Recovery-Oriented Community is to inspire public interest in whole health and open dialogues about how communities play an integral role in the recovery of its residents. The concept of Recovery-Oriented Communities is not new. There are working examples of communities that have taken on the challenge.

Understanding the need for a community approach:

Recovery is not simply about personal health, but the health and well-being of the entire community. **What can the community do?**

- Recognize that you and your community do have resources and strengths
- Look for opportunities to build relationships and partner
- Share resources and information
- Influence legislators
- Combat stigma and discrimination
- What skills, talents, information can you share?
- Support the development of peer-run organizations
- Start an annual recovery walk

What can family and friends do?

- Remember that there is hope for recovery and recovery is real
- Provide support and hold hope for/with other families that are going through a tough time
- Share your story!
- Get involved with advocacy
- Volunteer at peer run organizations and treatment facilities to provide support to family members
- Help to identify local community resources that can help others initiate and sustain their recovery and help to build a network of allies
- Address Not in my Back Yard (NIMBY) barriers to community integration

What can individuals in Recovery do?

- Tell your Story!!! Use it to fight stigma and discrimination.
- Join an advocacy organization to stay informed e.g. Peer Support Coalition of Florida
- Engage in training to become a recovery coach or peer specialist
- Reach out to the media
- Support other people in early recovery
- Join or start a recovery rally
- Seek ways to give back to your community
- Start or support a recovery community organization in your area

Who is involved in a Recovery-Oriented Community?

Absolutely everyone is involved!

How to start a Recovery-Oriented Community?

The following pages represent a Recovery-Oriented Community toolkit that can be used by anyone interested in improving the recovery capital in their community.

Sample Recovery-Oriented Community Resolution

WHEREAS, the [Named Florida Community], supports the designation of **Recovery-Oriented Community** and;

WHEREAS, at their [date of adoption, meeting] the [Sample Florida Community's Board], has unanimously passed a resolution supporting the designation of [Named Florida Community] as a **Recovery-Oriented Community**, and;

WHEREAS, [Named Florida Community] recognizes that one in four Americans has experienced mental illness, including substance use disorders, in a given year according to the National Institute of Mental Health, and;

WHEREAS, [Named Florida Community] recognizes that [give Florida statistics] residents experienced mental illness, including substance use disorders, and;

WHEREAS, mental health problems are more common than cancer and heart disease combined, affecting children and adults, including a large percentage of veterans, and;

WHEREAS, given the serious nature of Florida's current mental health and substance use problems we must continue to reach the millions who need help, and;

WHEREAS, the stigma associated with the disease of mental illness and substance use is identified as the primary reason individuals fail to seek the help they need to recover, and;

WHEREAS, **Recovery-Oriented Communities** aim to inspire public interest and open dialogues about recovery, raise awareness of the need for recovery supports in our communities, and create a culture wherein all residents feel supported by their community and neighbors and feel free to seek treatment without fear of stigma and;

WHEREAS, promoting awareness that there can be no discourse on "health" without consideration of "whole health" and encouraging residents of all ages to be mindful of their whole health and ask for help when needed, and;

WHEREAS, local resources are available to promote hope and recovery within the community so no one resident needs to suffer alone or feel hopeless, and;

WHEREAS, establishing **Recovery-Oriented Communities** will raise awareness of resources and encourage residents to engage in care as soon as the need is identified so recovery can begin, hope is inspired, and tragedies are avoided, and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that [Named Florida Community] recognizes the community needs and supports the efforts of the [Named Florida Community] as a **Recovery-Community**.

Forming a Recovery-Oriented Task Force

How to identify Recovery-Oriented Ambassadors

A Recovery-Oriented Ambassador is a resident who embraces the Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative and will help bring your Recovery-Oriented Communities to life.

Recovery-Oriented ambassadors are involved community members who are connected to the community and understand the specific strengths and opportunities of your community.

Ambassadors do not have to be professional advocates, they can be individuals who are passionate, interested, energetic and committed to Florida's recovery transformation. Any proactive community member can become a Recovery-Oriented Ambassador. For example, an ambassador could be a peer specialist, a teacher, board of education member, a nonprofit leader, a church leader or simply your neighbor next door. Often people become ambassadors because they have been affected by an issue either directly or through a loved one.

How to form a Recovery-Oriented task force

Gather a team of dedicated residents who can help enhance the culture of caring and hope in your community. It would be ideal to include as many sectors as possible, for example, schools, service providers, community leaders, church leaders, law enforcements, courts, etc.

Host a town-hall information meeting to introduce residents to the Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative, educate and promote awareness, and gather public interest. Invite broadly in support of Recovery-Oriented Communities:

- Local governments and business leaders
 - City Council leaders, Mayors
 - Board of Education and Board of Health leaders
 - Superintendent of Schools, School leaders, Early Learning Coalitions
 - Police, fire, jail, and other law enforcement leaders
 - Providers of Behavioral Services and other local Business Owners
- Local community service groups and nonprofits
 - Local organizations such as, Mental Health Association, National Alliance of Mental Health, Federations of Families, Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance, Narcotics Anonymous, Alcohol Anonymous, etc.
 - Faith communities at local houses of worship
 - Local clubs such as Rotary and Lions clubs
- Local youth organizations
 - Engage students in the Recovery-Oriented movement at the appropriate levels
 - Consider giving the youth a voice with a youth task force

Recovery-Oriented Action Plan

Below are some ideas to bring your local Recovery-Oriented Community to life. Feel free to follow these suggestions and plans and add your own that you think will benefit your local municipality. Remember this initiative is a community effort so play to the strengths and opportunities within your target community.

- ❖ Run a town-hall styled meeting about your local Recovery-Oriented resolution and efforts.
- ❖ Hold a public Recovery-Oriented forum to discuss your community's Recovery-Oriented goals and gather input for community events.
- ❖ Promote whole health goals within the community.
- ❖ Host a Recovery Walk.
- ❖ Set up a Recovery-Oriented booth at community events and community days.
- ❖ Host a "Looks of Recovery" poster contest with schools.
- ❖ Have educational events for pre-school and elementary students.
- ❖ Develop a website or Facebook page or extension of your current linking to local resources. Update Peer Support Coalition with new resources.
- ❖ Encourage student Recovery-Oriented afterschool clubs.
- ❖ Collaborate with local community service groups and your local leaders to host a community wide Recovery-Oriented celebration.
- ❖ Distribute Recovery-Oriented promotional materials to community members to place on their private lawns and vehicles.
- ❖ Host a Recovery-Oriented awareness community concert.
- ❖ Collaborate with other recovery focused groups to provide community education and awareness events as well as recreational events.
- ❖ Develop a media campaign and put out press releases for your Recovery-Oriented efforts.
- ❖ Promote personal stories of wellness and recovery.

Sample Press Materials

Sample Press Release:

[Named Florida Community] Declares a Recovery-Oriented Zone

One in four adults experience a diagnosable mental illness every year and many of these individuals do not seek help because of fear of shame or judgement from friends, family, and coworkers. On [DATE] [TOWN] made the first steps towards creating a Recovery-Oriented Community. In a Recovery-Oriented Community, residents will be able to receive the resources the need without judgment.

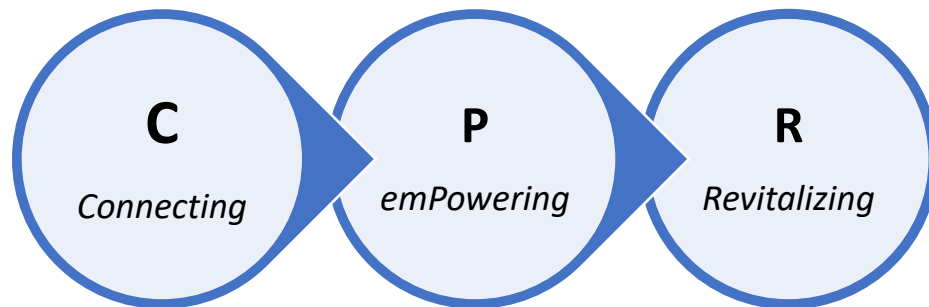
[Named Florida Community] representatives passed a resolution designating the [Named Florida Community] a Recovery-Oriented Community in order to create an environment in which residents will feel free to seek the supports that they need to attain and maintain wellness. [Named Florida Community] joins with other progressive communities in declaring a Recovery-Oriented Zone.

[Named Florida Community] hopes to raise awareness that recovery is attainable, and that recovery is achieved in communities that encourage those who are affected to seek services and feel supported. The establishment of this Recovery-Oriented Community will raise awareness of locally available resources so no one resident needs to feel hopeless or alone. The elimination of stigma will enable residents to ask for help when needed so that recovery can begin, hope is inspired, and tragedies are avoided.

[Named Florida Community] urges anyone who would like more information on the Recovery-Oriented Community Initiative to contact Peer Support Coalition of Florida and to help use to eliminate stigma and promote wellness amongst all [Named Florida Community] residents.

Emotional CPR (eCPR)

Emotional CPR (eCPR) is a community education program that teaches people to assist someone experiencing an emotional crisis through three simple phases:



eCPR is a hope-based approach to building strong, resilient, cooperative communities. The training will help prepare you to participate fully in your community and to provide support to others – friends, family, or people you haven’t met – who may be experiencing emotional crisis. eCPR skills can be practiced both by people trained in counseling, assessment, or other mental health skills and also by those with no mental health training. It is also valuable at deepening day-to-day communication.

Just as CPR, otherwise known as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, has helped save many lives of people whose physical heart has stopped beating, eCPR can save lives by lessening emotional despair and preventing self-harm. eCPR is emotional resuscitation.

Levels of eCPR

eCPR was first developed for one person assisting another through an emotional crisis.

“**meCPR**” is the process of creating eCPR internally with oneself.

“**weCPR**” is where the intentions of eCPR are applied in a group setting.

“**communityCPR**” is where the intentions of eCPR are applied to community sized groups.

We have now learned that it is valuable to show how the intentions of eCPR apply from the individual up through whole communities. Our goal is to spread eCPR to every community through its application at all these levels, thereby shifting the culture of whole communities from fear and isolation to compassion and mutual respect.

The goal of Peer Support Coalition of Florida is to promote recovery with our communities as envisioned by the Federal Recovery Support Strategic Initiative and now through Florida's Recovery-Oriented System of Care transformational initiative.

You and your community can be the help that someone needs.

Training available in English and Spanish.

Get trained today!

If you are interested in attending a training, hosting a training or would like more information on eCPR:

Contact: cheryl@peersupportfl.org