Office of Consumer Activities

The Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) Office of Consumer Activities works to ensure that people who have mental health and addiction histories have a strong voice within the state behavioral health system. We believe peers are the experts on their own lives and the services that most benefit them. For this reason, the office is dedicated to serving as a conduit for peers to help shape behavioral health policy and service delivery.

The office promotes recovery

Recovery is not a dream; it is wholly attainable and is the expected outcome of a system that fully responds to the needs and directives of those it serves. Self-determination is a core element of recovery. When people direct their treatment, they direct a critical part of their lives.

The Office of Consumer Activities holds that:

- People are able to attain a full and meaningful life of their own choosing;
- Behavioral health services provide valuable recovery tools under the direction of the person seeking recovery; and
- Each person defines their own recovery.

A chief goal of the office is to be a cornerstone for systemic change in reshaping policies and service delivery toward a recovery-oriented system of care. We strive for services to be more welcoming and to more fully honor each individual’s dignity.

Primary office initiatives

- Build a statewide network of peer-run programs to facilitate the sharing of promising ideas, policies, practices and procedures;
- Provide technical assistance to peer-run programs;
- Help AMH to increase peer involvement in evaluating the state’s policies, planning, and programs;
- Increase representation of consumers, survivors, and former patients, including ethnic and racial groups, in local and state mental health planning activities;
- Begin a stigma and discrimination reduction initiative;
- Reduce racial and ethnic groups’ barriers to mental health and addiction services by promoting culturally competent services for peers in these groups;
- Ensure that peers have a strong voice in state mental health and addiction treatment policy development, planning and practice; and
- Coordinate an annual statewide peer conference.
Future direction and long-term focus of the office
Honoring the voice of consumers and survivors in mental health and addictions policy is what will give them equal footing in service delivery. The long-term goal of the Office of Consumer Activities is to promote policies and services that:

- Support mental health and addiction recovery;
- Respect individuals’ choices and acknowledge their self-determination;
- More fully honor individuals’ dignity and ability to experience recovery;
- Promote higher levels of community inclusion, employment and education; and
- Encourage traditional providers to partner with peers and adopt practices that help people heal and recover their lives to the fullest, as they define for themselves.

Where to go for more information
To learn more about the Office of Consumer Activities, visit the office’s website at [www.oregon.gov/oha/amh/Pages/oca.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/oha/amh/Pages/oca.aspx).

Contact the Office of Consumer Activities
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