

## Mission Statement

New Hampshire Mental Health Peer Alliance empowers peers to educate and advocate for equal rights and a recovery-based mental health system. We enable peers to participate and exercise leadership in regional and statewide forums. We reach out to mental health professionals, legislators, government officials and the general public to realize our goals.

## History

The NH Mental Health Peer Alliance began as the NH Mental Health Consumer Council—as an organization of activism and advocacy. Through the years, we pushed for progressive dialogue around mental-health issues and legislation. We are people who laws are written about and for whom services are provided. It is of the utmost importance that our voices come first: “Nothing about us without us.”

## Terminology

There was a time when “consumer” had powerful meaning. As individuals who often had services enacted on us, it gave us the view that we were in the driver’s seat of our lives—choosing to receive and consume mental-health services voluntarily, without coercion. We now acknowledge that “consumer” no longer suffices to describe our experiences. We are not merely individuals seeking endless care. We are people living our lives—having relationships and families, working towards our goals, creating art and making our dreams a reality.

“Peer” speaks to our diversity of experiences. As people with lived experience, we aim to drive the future development of mental-health services and human rights in New Hampshire. We hope our organization brings increased interest and activity in achieving these goals.

We look forward to the future of this Alliance and to the work we will do together.

## Monthly Meetings

**Due to the coronavirus, we gather remotely.** We invite you to attend our meetings on the third Tuesday of each month from 10 AM—12 PM in the Main Building, Thomas Fox Chapel, 105 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301, USA. You can also participate via teleconference. To learn more, contact Ken Lewis at (603) 809-7884.

Every meeting is an opportunity to learn more about mental-health developments in the State of New Hampshire and beyond. Our regular guests include David LaCroix (Peer Support Specialist at New Hampshire Hospital) and Tom Grinley (Director of the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs).

## Monthly Education

Sign up for our monthly newsletter, which includes activities related to the work of the Peer Alliance:

- Training peers as ambassadors (e.g., elevator speeches);
- Identifying legislation that aligns with Peer Alliance priorities;

- Educating the community about our mission and priorities;
- Working closely with organizations (e.g., PSAs, Office of Consumer & Family Affairs, NAMI NH, CMHCs, CHCs);
- Practicing state-level, regional-level and federal-level advocacy;
- Working with regional and national peer alliances, National Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS), Western Mass Recovery Learning Center;
- Working with legislators and Bureau of Mental Health Services staff to support full participation;
- Working with the staff of the NH Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council to support full participation and
- Tracking news at the local, state and national levels.

## Workgroups

Our Advocacy Workgroup gathers frequently to work on the Action Plan and Strategic Communication Plan.

The **Action Plan** strengthens external community connections by meeting these goals:

- Goal 1:** Increase Visibility in the Community and Communicate Who We Are;
- Goal 2:** Become Powerful and Effective Advocates;
- Goal 3:** Track Bills and Policy Developments and...

## Member Email List

---

Name

---

Email Address

---

Zip Code

---

Phone:  Mobile  Landline

## Projects

- Website
- Brochure
- Newsletter Articles
- Training
- Other?

## Petitions, Emails & Letters

- Accessibility
- Discrimination
- Funding
- Housing & Housing Assistance
- Other?

## Donation

I want to donate: \$\_\_\_\_\_.

## Inactive Membership

- I want to be an inactive member of the NH Mental Health Peer Alliance.

NH Mental Health Peer Alliance  
c/o Connections Peer Support Center  
(Fiscal Agent)  
544 Islington Street  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

...Goal 4: Track News for Mental-Health-Related Issues.

The **Strategic Communication Plan** involves:

- Writing Articles (e.g. newsletters);
- Training Peers as Advocates (e.g. trauma-informed care);
- Building Relationships;
- Making Legislative and Policy Recommendations that Align with Survey Priorities;
- Reframing Mental Health Issues to Address Discrimination and
- Tracking and Reporting on Mental Health in the News.

### **NH Support Warm Lines**

#### **Alternative Life Center, Conway, NH**

Every day, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
1-866-447-1765

#### **Connections Peer Support Center, Portsmouth, NH**

Every day, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
1-800-809-6262

#### **Cornerbridge, Laconia, NH**

Every day, 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
1-800-306-4334

#### **Stepping Stone, Claremont, NH**

Every day, 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
1-888-582-0920

#### **Monadnock Area Peer Support, Keene, NH**

Every day, 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
1-866-352-5093

### **Trauma-Informed Approach**

The NH Mental Health Peer Alliance recognizes that more than 84% of adults have significant histories of trauma (Meuser, K.T., et al., *Schizophrenic Bulletin*, 2004). We want to add trauma-informed care and practices to the agenda. We want people to ask: “What happened to you?”

A trauma-informed approach reflects adherence to six key principles:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and Transparency
3. Peer Support
4. Collaboration and Mutuality
5. Empowerment, Voice and Choice
6. Cultural, Historical and Gender Issues

**Source:** Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Trauma-Informed Approach: Key Assumptions and Principles: NCTIC Trauma Curriculum Instructor’s Guidance.

### **Co-Occurring Disorders**

About 9.2 million adults (3.7%) are living with co-occurring mental health and substance-misuse conditions: 90.4% aren’t receiving substance-use-disorder treatment. We want to add co-occurring-disorders treatment to the agenda. Those with mental illness are more likely to smoke cigarettes; use illicit drugs and marijuana; misuse opioids and binge-drink alcohol—compared with individuals without mental illness. Those who misuse substances are more likely to experience serious mental health conditions.

**Source:** Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).



*Empowering peers to educate and advocate for equal rights and a recovery-based mental health system. We enable peers to participate and exercise leadership in regional and statewide forums.*

**Due to the coronavirus, we gather virtually.**

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of Each Month:  
10 AM—12 PM  
Thomas Fox Chapel  
Main Building  
105 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
USA

**Chair:** Ken Lewis  
**nhmhpa.org**  
**nhmhpa@gmail.com**  
**Phone:** (603) 809-7884  
**FAX:** (603) 882-8700

The preparation of this document was financed by New Futures, with funds provided by the 2020 Enhanced Field Grant Opportunity, to support direct advocacy and lobbying efforts advancing health equity in response to COVID-19.

**NH Mental Health Peer Alliance**

