

Jody Silver, Director  
Office of Consumer Affairs  
93 Worth Street, Room 1205  
New York, NY 10013

April 26, 2010

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

After the initial success and enthusiasm of the Mind Your Health Peer Coaching Project, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is pleased to offer a second training series. **The Mind Your Health Peer Coaching Program** will train peer specialists to integrate health and wellness initiatives into their work with consumers, supporting them in improving their overall health.

As you know from the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) 2006 report, individuals with psychiatric disabilities die, on average, 25 years younger than the general population. Increased morbidity and mortality are largely due to lifestyle factors such as smoking, obesity, substance abuse, and inadequate access to medical care. **The Mind Your Health Peer Coaching Program** will train peer specialists to help consumers set and achieve health and wellness goals, encourage health promotion activities, and empower consumers to develop and maintain self-management skills and play a more active role in managing their own care.

This exciting program is for peer specialists currently employed in mental health programs in New York City. It will consist of six workshops, to be held in Manhattan from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm from July, to October, 2010. Twenty-five applicants will be selected for this unique opportunity to enhance their overall effectiveness and ability to support the health promotion activities of the people they serve. The ideal candidate will be committed to being a change agent and advocate for healthy lifestyles in their workplace and in their community. With the guidance of their supervisors, the peer specialists will learn to incorporate health and wellness programming into their existing work in mental health service settings. Please share this information with peer specialists in your agency as well as with colleagues at other agencies or programs who may be interested.

Additional information about the program, including guidelines for application, is attached. Applications will be accepted through Friday, June 4, 2010. We look forward to hearing from you.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact the Office of Consumer Affairs at [SNiederm@health.nyc.gov](mailto:SNiederm@health.nyc.gov) or (212) 219-5393.

Sincerely,

Jody Silver  
Director, Office of Consumer Affairs

cc: Trish Marsik  
Robert Goldblatt  
Marlene Reil

## **Mind Your Health Peer Coaching Program: Promoting Health and Wellness for Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities**

### **Training and Curriculum**

The NYC DOHMH will select and train twenty-five peer specialists to expand their knowledge in the area of health and wellness from a recovery-oriented, self-management perspective. The workshops will focus on topics such as smoking cessation, metabolic syndrome, nutrition, exercise, medication side effects, and promoting communication and self-advocacy. Throughout the training, peer specialists will learn coaching techniques and skills that will help to effect behavioral change in the people they serve. There will be a total of six workshops, which will take place from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm on the following dates:

Workshop #1:	07/13/10
Workshop #2:	08/03/10
Workshop #3:	08/24/10
Workshop #4:	09/14/10
Workshop #5:	10/05/10
Workshop #6:	10/26/10

In addition to the six workshops, there will be a preparatory conference call for supervisors and participants prior to the first workshop, time to be announced. There will also be conference calls and group meetings that will give participants the opportunity to engage in peer support throughout the program.

\*Participants are required to attend all workshops.

\*Location of workshops to be announced.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

In order to qualify for this program, the peer specialist must:

- Commit to improving the health and wellness of the people they serve
- Be currently employed as a peer specialist in a mental health service setting in New York City where they have worked for at least six months
- Successfully complete the application process
- Intend to incorporate the role of health coach into their current work
- Commit to participation in program evaluation activities such as follow-up surveys
- Have access to an email account
- Be willing to participate in a group interview

The agency agrees to:

- Ensure that the peer specialist's work schedule accommodates the trainings and training-related activities (e.g., time away from work for workshops, practice assignments, and scheduled activities between workshops)
- Support and supervise the peer specialist to incorporate new skills and knowledge gained from workshops into their work setting
- Designate a supervisor to participate in two conference calls, attend the afternoon presentations at the final workshop with the peer specialist, and partner with them to develop health promotion activities within the agency
- Participate in brief program evaluation activities

**Application Process**

The Peer Specialist must:

- Complete and submit all application forms
- Write a Personal Statement
- Request a Recommendation Letter from current supervisor

The agency must:

- Sign Supervisor's Agreement form
- Complete a Recommendation Letter on behalf of candidate, including a brief description of how the agency/program will promote the role of the health coach within the proposed site

\*While there are no limits on the number of applications per agency, a maximum of two peer specialists can be selected per agency.

**Application Submission**

Due on or before: Friday, June 4, 2010.

**Please submit completed applications by mail or in-person to:**

Office of Consumer Affairs  
The City of New York  
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
93 Worth Street, Room 1205  
New York, NY 10013