



### **About Peer2Peer Digital Peer Support**

The time following discharge from inpatient or emergency psychiatric care can be challenging for many people. There are often high rates of emergency department visits, re-admission to inpatient psychiatric care, and suicide. Providing support in the community is critical after discharge from inpatient care to help the person continue on their recovery journey, and there is growing research and data that indicates that engagement with peer support during this time can be incredibly important and effective.

Mental Health Minnesota's Peer2Peer program provides innovative peer support to help people stay well at home and in their communities and avoid emergency department visits and inpatient psychiatric care. We provide this support during a 12-week program that provides peer support through an app and telehealth via Zoom, all free of charge.

### **How the Program Works**

The Peer2Peer digital peer support program includes frequent meetings with our peer support staff who understand the challenges following psychiatric emergency and/or inpatient care, and who can provide a listening ear and guidance toward a future that includes wellness and recovery.

Individuals are eligible to participate in this program if they are residents of Dakota, Hennepin or Ramsey counties and have been provided with inpatient care or emergency services in the past 90 days. Because the program is delivered through an app and Zoom, you must have access to a smartphone or tablet to participate.

Peer2Peer provides easy access in one location to peer support, resources, and goal setting, as well as individualized content and tools. Mental Health Minnesota staff uses the PeerTech app to support people for twelve weeks after they leave inpatient or emergency psychiatric care through weekly video calls and online chats, easy access to the Minnesota Warmline peer support service and 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, reminders about upcoming appointments to help the person stay connected to ongoing care, safety planning and wellness planning tools, weekly modules that support mental health recovery, and tools/resources to manage mental health symptoms.

### **How to Refer Individuals to the Peer2Peer Program**

- Individuals can be referred to Mental Health Minnesota's Peer2Peer program by providers or can enroll themselves in the program.
  - Providers/clinicians can present Mental Health Minnesota's Peer2Peer Digital Peer Support as a possible referral as an individual prepares for discharge from inpatient or emergency psychiatric care.
  - Providers/counties/case managers can refer an individual to the program if they have been discharged from inpatient or psychiatric care in the last 90 days.
  - An individual who has been discharged from inpatient or psychiatric care in the last 90 days can enroll themselves in the program.
- If the person is interested in participating in this program, they (and/or a service provider) can complete an online [enrollment form](#) for the program. Mental Health Minnesota will then work to match the individual to a peer support staff member. We will do our best to respond to all referrals within 24 hours (Monday through Friday, 9AM to 5PM).
- Assuming the person is enrolled, Mental Health Minnesota will provide additional information to the individual and/or provider, allowing them to download the PeerTech and Zoom apps onto a device and sign into the app for the first time.
- If possible (assuming the person is still in inpatient/emergency psychiatric care), Mental Health Minnesota staff will work with the provider to set up a brief first meeting with the person prior to discharge to introduce themselves so they are already connected to the peer supporter upon discharge from the hospital.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How long has this program been available?

Mental Health Minnesota's Peer2Peer digital peer support program is currently a pilot program, funded through a Minnesota Department of Human Services Innovations Grant. However, Mental Health Minnesota has long been a trusted provider of peer support services through its [Minnesota Warmline](#) program, which provides peer support 12 hours a day, seven days a week through phone, text and online chat.

## Is there any cost for a patient/client to participate?

No, this service is delivered to the patient free of charge, and the patient's insurance will not be notified or billed.

## How many patients/clients can I refer to this program?

We encourage referrals to this program! Because it's a pilot program, we will have limited capacity. However, we will be happy to provide information about our Warmline peer service to all referrals, regardless of whether we're able to welcome their participation in Peer2Peer digital peer support.

## How can I share information about this program with my patient/client?

We've created a downloadable information sheet that you can use to share information about the program with your patient/client.

## How long after referral will I find out whether a patient/client is able to enroll?

We will do our best to respond to you within 24 hours but encourage you to work with the patient to complete an enrollment form as soon as they express interest!

## Do we need to provide medical records for the patients/clients we refer to this program?

No, Mental Health Minnesota does not need medical records for patients you refer to this program. We do ask a few questions on the enrollment form about current treatment setting, which will be helpful as we start to work with the person and measure impact of our service over time.

## Is there any risk to a patient's privacy by using this app?

No. The PeerTech app is HIPAA and 508-compliant, and our organizational data is held in an encrypted database.

## What happens after the twelve weeks of the patient working with peer support staff through Peer2Peer is done?

We will work with program participants to connect them to the Minnesota Warmline as a long-term option for ongoing peer support. We will also reach out to them once per month for several months to check in and see how they're doing.

## Is there evidence to support the use of peer support for people being discharged from psychiatric care?

There certainly is! The articles below represent just a few that have been published about the effectiveness of peer support.

- [Effectiveness of Peer Support in Reducing Readmissions of Persons With Multiple Psychiatric Hospitalizations](#)
- [Digital Peer Support Mental Health Interventions for People With a Lived Experience of a Serious Mental Illness: Systematic Review](#)
- [Peer Support: a Human Factor to Enhance Engagement in Digital Health Behavior Change Interventions](#)

## How do I refer someone to this program?

Just complete a short online form by scanning the QR code below or visit [www.mentalhealthmn.org](http://www.mentalhealthmn.org).



## Contact:

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