

Dear NHS...



PEER SUPPORT

"Peer support was my lifeline." – Alice, 17

Peer support is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of ways in which people share their experiences and support others in similar circumstances. Utilising these approaches can lead to many benefits including better self-management, reduced reliance on formal healthcare interventions and decreased social isolation. We believe Peer Support should be an essential part of every person's personal care plan.

The NHS Youth Forum have come up with questions that they think are important for everyone to ask and keep asking healthcare professionals and decision makers about how they can both direct their service-users to peer support and help develop stronger networks of peer support in their local area.



@NHSYouthForum



NHSEnglandYF



@nhsyouthforum

Questions to ask:

- Do you understand the benefits of peer support to your service users and to yourself as a health care professional?
- Do you have resources to advertise + promote peer support?
- Is peer support embedded in your management plans? If not, why not?
- Have you thought about the range of networks that are available to service users that you could signpost to?
- Could you connect with your local voluntary organisations within your speciality to build and strengthen your peer support network?
- Have you considered monitoring, evaluating and auditing the impact that peer support has in your service user groups?
- Do you take a flexible approach to peer support? One size does not fit all.
- Do you routinely ask young people if they'd be interested in supporting other young people?
- Do you have mechanism to keep a pool of peer supporters?
- Do you offer any support or guidance to peer supporters?

Watch our video on how peer support can benefit young people here



#DearNHS