



# Peer Support Work Plan 2023 - 2028





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**Priority One:** Developing the peer support network

**Priority Two:** Enhancing service user care

**Priority Three:** Sustaining peer support work

**Priority Four:** Strengthening peer work across the Integrated Care System (ICS)

# Peer Support Work

We are really excited to be developing a Peer Support Work (PSW) plan within SHSC. This plan will aim to ensure that all people who use services have the opportunity to access peer support and that PSW is developed in a supportive and sustainable way.

Sheffield Health and Social Care has a vision to improve the mental, physical and social wellbeing of the people in our communities and the aim to be 'the best we can be'. Evidence suggests that the delivery of a Peer Support Work plan will contribute to the achievement of this aim and demonstrates a clear commitment to an inclusive workforce that delivers outstanding care.

Our strategic vision for Peer Support Work (PSW) supports the clinical and social care strategy aims of delivering care that is person-centred, trauma-informed, evidence-led and strengths-based. Our aim is for everybody using SHSC services to be able to access peer support. Employing Peer Support Workers in all services will not only improve 'patient' outcomes but demonstrates inclusivity and contributes to a culture where everyone feels valued.

The PSW plan complements SHSC enabling strategies, in particular the people strategy in developing new ways of working to meet service needs both now and in the future. PSW's will play an integral part in SHSC's journey to delivering outstanding care in Sheffield and across the Integrated Care System (ICS).



## Our Trust Values underpin everything we do in SHSC:



**Working together for service users**



**Respect and kindness**



**Everyone counts**



**Commitment to quality**



**Improving lives**



# What is Peer Support?



A peer worker is unique; my lived experience isn't the same as that of other peer workers. A peer worker is a specialist, an expert in the field that their lived experience relates to.

Therefore, I am an expert in borderline personality disorder. I have lived and breathed it, I have studied it and still live and breathe it – it is more than just lived experience.

**Trevor**  
Peer Recovery Worker

## Why Peer Support?

Increasingly research is demonstrating the benefits of peer support. For those receiving peer support it increases hope, self-confidence and community engagement; it reduces crises and length of inpatient stays. For the peer support workers themselves, being a PSW provides social contact, routine, the financial benefits of employment and it enhances their own Recovery. For organisations, PSWs drive recovery focused practice, language and culture. Slade et al (2017) claim that there is more evidence supporting the value of peer support than exists for any other professional group.

The role of PSW complements the work of the wider team as they are adding skills in community inclusion and problem solving and looking at ideas and concepts differently. Service user engagement with peers is different from that of other professionals and has been identified as aligning with hope and recovery (Mirbaheddin & Cherim; 2022). It is therefore of great benefit to teams to have at least one PSW within their multi-disciplinary team (MDT).

Peer Support is key to the delivery of the NHS mental health implementation plan 2019/2020-2023/2024 which makes a commitment to recruit an additional 4,730 PSWs over this period (HEE, 2020) [www.longtermplan.nhs.uk](http://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk). This highlights the increased visibility and value of this role in the NHS.

Health Education England developed a competence framework for Peer Support Workers which supports this expansion (HEE,2020). This framework details the number of ways in which PSW increases and adds value to the competency and framework of teams.

[The Competence Framework for MH PSWs - Part 2 - Full listing of the competences.pdf](https://www.hee.nhs.uk) (hee.nhs.uk)



# Peer Support in Sheffield

Peer support has evolved over many years in SHSC, with the role evolving from service user representatives and involvement workers to their current nationally recognised role as peer support workers. We recognise the huge commitment and drive of the many people who have been instrumental in this change.

Over the last twelve months SHSC has committed to supporting further expansion of PSW in line with Health Education England guidance, the NHS long term plan and the growing national evidence base in the efficacy and effectiveness of PSW.

The PSW plan aims to grow the SHSC PSW network and develop the infrastructure to support PSWs to offer safe and effective support that retains fidelity to the peer role and supports PSWs to progress in their careers. This will ensure that more people using SHSC services will have the opportunity to receive peer support and experience the benefits that this brings to their self-belief, self-efficacy, self-confidence, and in achieving their life goals.

PSW's embody the values of SHSC and have a huge impact on the lives of those we work with. The role of peer support workers is unique from that of any other as they are trained to use their lived experience to support others, and this skill is developed through careful peer to peer supervision.



Peer workers have the ability to see things from multiple perspectives and challenge views/assumptions.

The peer workers are highly dedicated, motivated and skilled individuals who have been integral in ensuring holistic decision making is made as part of the wider team considerations.

Service Manager Community Recovery Team

## Our Clinical and Social Care Strategy - 2021/22 - 2025/26

- ▶ **Our vision**  
To improve the mental, physical and social wellbeing of the people in our communities
- ▶ **Strategic aims**  
Deliver outstanding care    Create a great place to work    Effective use of resources    Ensure our services are inclusive



### We will give care that is

- ▶ Person-Centred and Strengths-Based
- ▶ Trauma-Informed
- ▶ Evidence-Led
- ▶ Coproduced

### We will work with

- ▶ Primary Care
- ▶ The City
- ▶ The Wider System

### What are we going to do?

- ▶ Develop Care Models that promote recovery

### How will we do it?

- ▶ Design services to meet people's needs
- ▶ Develop Team SHSC

**NHS**  
Sheffield Health and Social Care  
NHS Foundation Trust



SHSC is committed to improving the mental, physical and social wellbeing of people in our communities.

## What are our current peer support workers telling us?



For me it is rewarding to see other people embark on their own journey, who then go on to flourish as their true selves. Knowing in some small way, I have been able to help in that person's journey.

**Helen**  
Peer Support Worker, Gender Identity Clinic.



One of the greatest things for me on a personal level is that I no longer feel I have to try to hide my diagnosis or mental health difficulties as I have done in the past in a workplace. Ultimately, I want to be part of breaking down stigma and misconceptions about mental health, and offer insight from my own experiences.

I feel that this role has come to me at the right time in my life and I instinctively feel that I am in the right place, with the right people and I can make a difference! I also feel that my own recovery discovery can only be enhanced through what I am doing!

**Laura**  
Peer Recovery Worker.



Peer Support in the Gender services gives a much-needed voice to the diversity and needs of the people accessing it.

**Sam**  
Peer Support Worker, Gender Identity Services.

## What are our services and service users telling us?



The PSW role has contributed significantly to service development and engagement with the community has also improved. The PSW role is an invaluable support mechanism for people struggling with lengthy and distressing waits. They have provided guidance and support and enabled individuals to move forward in their own journey.

**Business Manager Gender Identity Clinic**



"Having a peer support worker has made a big difference to me, they are different to other people that I work with because they get it."

**Service User, Community Mental Health Services**

"The team have benefitted immensely from interventions with service users provided by PSW's. Service users give good feedback about their interventions and ask for more peer work."

**Clinical Psychologist**



# Developing our Peer Support Work Plan

To start creating a strategy, a development afternoon was held with all current PSW's. Key priorities were discussed about what needs to be included in a PSW plan. Enabling strategies workshops were also attended to ensure the strategy aligns with SHSC strategies and vision.

There has been ongoing consultation with our peer support work development group and Service Users. Discussion has also been had with groups such as our lived experience and co-production assurance group (LECAG), SUN:RISE and Sheffield Flourish about how roles are more accessible.

**From discussion in the group, we have been able to consolidate key themes and priorities for the plan.**

Consultation and discussion with current PSW's, service managers and people who use services have supported our understanding of where we are currently and where we need to be. A PSW steering group has been created by the peer support lead and the Director of ImROC (Implementing Recovery through Organisational Change); an organisation which leads on developing peer work on an international level (<https://imroc.org/>). This steering group involves key stakeholders (e.g., workforce development, people directorate, service managers, heads of nursing and psws) working collaboratively to agree what we want and need from a PSW plan to meet our aims and goals.

From discussion in the group, we have been able to consolidate key themes and priorities for the plan.

**To achieve its aims, the strategy focuses on four key priorities:**

**Developing the peer support network** - We will increase opportunities for people to access peer support work and training. We will work across teams to ensure we get the right people in the right place and support teams to fully understand and support the role.

**Enhancing service user care** - Peer support offers people using services a distinct experience-based approach which complements existing support available in the Trust. We will recruit a peer workforce that reflects the socio-demographic profile of local communities – offering mutual support based on shared experiences and empowering individuals to own their recovery journey.

**Sustaining peer support work** - We will create clear development pathways into peer support and on towards leadership roles with clear structure, training opportunities and governance. We will nurture PSWs and ensure their voice and collective views are recognised at all levels of the organisation through clear relationships with the Trust coproduction and lived experience leads.

**Strengthening peer work across the ICS** - We will continue to play a key role in the development of an integrated PSW offer across South Yorkshire and contribute to ICS initiatives in developing new roles. We will work with local communities, HEE and third sector services to share and improve learning.

# Strategy on a Page

**SHSC VISION:** to improve the mental, physical, and social wellbeing of the people in our communities.

**STRATEGIC AIMS:** deliver outstanding care, create a great place to work, make effective use of resources, ensure our services are inclusive.

**VALUES:** working together for service users, respect and kindness, everyone counts, commitment to quality, improving lives.

**PSW STRATEGIC VISION:** For everybody using our services to have access to a peer support worker.

## Priority Themes

### Developing the peer support network -

We will increase opportunities for people to access peer support work and training. We will work across teams to ensure we get the right people in the right place and support teams to fully understand and support the role.

### Enhancing service user care -

We will recruit a peer workforce that reflects the socio-demographic profile of local communities – offering mutual support based on shared experiences and empowering individuals to own their recovery journey.

### Sustaining peer support work -

We will create clear development pathways into peer support and on towards leadership roles with clear structure, training opportunities and governance. We will value and nurture PSW'S ensuring their voice and views are recognised at all levels of the organisation.

### Strengthening peer work across the ICS -

We will continue to play a key role in the development of an integrated PSW offer across South Yorkshire and contribute to ICS initiatives in developing new roles. We will work with local communities, HEE and third sector services to share and improve learning.

# Strategic Plan : Priority One

## Developing the peer support network.

**Aim:** We will increase opportunities for people to access peer support work and training. We will work across teams to ensure we get the right people in the right place and support teams to fully understand and support the role.

Themes into Action	Theme Owner
Engagement with local communities at an individual, service and organisational level including outreach work by PSW's.	Peer Support Workers Peer Support Lead
Have an equitable and accessible recruitment process which encourages application from various backgrounds and communities eg innovative non-traditional recruitment.	Human Resources Peer Support Lead Equality, Diversity And Inclusion Team
Continue to grow and offer training for people interested in accessing peer support to increase opportunities including apprenticeships.	Education Training And Development Apprenticeship Lead
Continue to raise profile and awareness of the PSW role within SHSC through regular events and communication.	Peer Support Lead Peer Support Workers Communications Team
Offer preparation/training to teams to support with the development of PSW roles in all services.	Peer Support Lead
Ongoing peer specific support and supervision and embedded supervision structures to support this.	Peer Support Lead Human Resources AHP Leads

# Strategic Plan : Priority Two

## Enhancing service user care.

**Aim:** Peer support offers people using services a distinct experience-based approach which complements existing support available in SHSC. We will recruit a peer workforce that reflects the socio-demographic profile of local communities – offering mutual support based on shared experiences and empowering individuals to own their recovery journey.

Themes into Action	Theme Owner
Identify the socio-demographic for clinical services and directorates we are recruiting to.	Peer Support Lead Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead AHP Leads
Employ peer support workers across all clinical services and directorates.	Heads Of Service Peer Support Lead
Active engagement with local community groups to recruit Peer Support workers who reflect the population of Sheffield and understand the lives of people using services.	Human Resources Peer Support Lead In Collaboration With Third Sector Services Professional Leads
Work across SHSC to advocate for the value of new ways of working.	Organisational Development Peer Support Lead
Consistently seek feedback from service users, carers and family regarding PSW and acting on feedback.	Peer Support Lead Peer Support Workers Collaboration With Engagement And Experience Team
Improving how we ask people what they would like from PSW and ensure their voices are represented.	Peer Support Lead Quality Improvement Team Peer Support Workers

# Strategic Plan : Priority Three

## Sustaining peer support work.

**Aim:** We will create clear development pathways into peer support and on towards leadership roles with clear structure, training opportunities and governance. We will nurture PSWs and ensure their voice and collective views are recognised at all levels of the organisation through clear relationships with the Trust coproduction and lived experience leads.

Themes into Action	Theme Owner
<p>Creating development and training opportunities for peer support workers aligning with the national PSW competency framework. Looking at more novel ways of training from a PSW ethos and values lens.</p>	<p>Education, Training And Development Team Peer Support Lead</p>
<p>Developing a PSW infrastructure to offer management, supervision, and support for PSWs. Bridging of the gap between PSW and PSW lead to offer lived experience leadership at team level.</p>	<p>AHP Leads Peer Support Lead Workforce Development Team</p>
<p>Develop career pathways and opportunities for peer support workers as part of PSW infrastructure, including apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Peer Support Lead Apprenticeship Lead Head Education, Training And Development</p>
<p>Ensuring the voice of peer support is represented in decision making at every level of the organisation in the same of way as other professional groups.</p>	<p>Exec Director Of People Deputy AHP Lead</p>
<p>Clear PSW implementation plan for employment and funding of peer support which aligns with our enabling strategies and ensure inclusion in directorate and service business plans.</p>	<p>Heads Of Service Directorate Leadership Teams Peer Support Lead</p>

# Strategic Plan : Priority Four

## Strengthening peer work across the ICS.

**Aim:** We will continue to play a key role in the development of an integrated PSW offer across South Yorkshire and contribute to ICS initiatives in developing new roles. We will work with local communities, HEE and third sector services to share and improve learning.

Themes into Action	Theme Owner
<p>Work in collaboration with third sector organisations in Sheffield to develop the PSW network across the city.</p>	<p>South Yorkshire Workforce Planning Lead Rethink And Primary Care Peer Leads</p>
<p>Working together as part of South Yorkshire ICS remaining a part of our community of practice and ensuring peer support remains on the workforce agenda at ICS level. Ensuring that the PSW voice and agenda is represented at wider ICS workstreams.</p>	<p>South Yorkshire Workforce Planning Lead Peer Support Lead</p>
<p>Keeping up to date with latest evidence-based research in the field of peer support.</p> <p>Collaborating in relevant research and development projects including leading on research initiatives.</p>	<p>Peer Support Lead Research And Development Team Quality Improvement Team</p>
<p>Identifying and working in collaboration with racialised and underrepresented communities that represent the wider ICS.</p>	<p>South Yorkshire Workforce Planning Lead Peer Leads Across the ICS</p>
<p>Joint events and promotion of PSW across the ICS.</p>	<p>South Yorkshire Workforce Planning Lead Peer Support Lead</p>
<p>Commissioning of PSW posts from the most appropriate organisations where diverse communities, experience and expertise can be recruited and supported</p>	<p>Peer Support Lead South Yorkshire Workforce Planning Lead</p>





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