

Medicaid & Peer Support | Talking Points

- Medicaid is critical to helping people with mental health conditions, and roughly [40 percent](#) of people on Medicaid have a mental health or substance use condition.
- Medicaid pays for vital services that people with mental health conditions rely on, such as medications, psychotherapy, intensive and inpatient treatment, peer support, and crisis care.
- Peer support services are [effective](#) and cost-efficient. Medicaid provides an important option for states to support and sustainably finance peer support services.
 - In 2007, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a [State Medicaid Director Letter](#) (SMDL) providing guidance to states interested in peer support services under the Medicaid program.
 - To [qualify](#) for Medicaid reimbursement, peer support workers must fulfill a number of requirements, including completing training and certification as determined by the state.
 - Given the variability among state Medicaid programs, peer support services [vary significantly](#) across Medicaid programs in terms of certification requirements, reimbursement rates, and supervision requirements. Most state Medicaid programs [reimburse](#) peer support in 15-minute service intervals.
- As of 2023, [48 states](#) reimburse for peer support services for mental health and substance use disorders and have developed peer support certification to meet Medicaid standards for qualifications and training.
- Changes in Medicaid financing structure could result in people with mental health conditions losing their coverage or access to some services and benefits that are [optional](#) for states to cover, such as peer support services.

Helpful Resources:

1. [CMS: Letter from CMS Director Dennis Smith to the State Medicaid Directors with Guidance on the Development of Peer Support Services Under Medicaid. August 15, 2007.](#)
2. [SAMHSA: Supporting and Financing Peer Services](#)
3. [SAMHSA: Expanding Peer Support and Supporting the Peer Workforce in Mental Health](#)
4. [NASHP: States' Use of Peers in the Mental Health Crisis Continuum](#)
5. [Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health: Gaps in Peer Support Reimbursement and Certification in the United States](#)