



 **PEERSTAR**

2025 **Annual** **Report**



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A MESSAGE From the CEO

As Peerstar enters its next chapter, I am honored to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer and to build on the strong foundation that has been established. Our focus is continuity, discipline, and long-term value—for the individuals we serve and for the partners who rely on us.

Peerstar is many things to many people. We are a training ground for Certified Peer Specialists, an advocate within complex care systems, and a daily source of support for thousands of individuals working toward recovery. We are clinical and personal, structured and human.

But across every facet, everything we do is grounded in one commitment: delivering effective peer support rooted in lived experience, dignity, and trust. We've been doing this work since 2008, and that commitment continues to inform how we design services, engage partners, and measure

success across all 35 counties we serve.

Over the past year, Peerstar has expanded its reach, strengthened clinical and operational partnerships, and supported thousands of individuals across the behavioral health continuum—part of the 750K+ peer-led engagements we've delivered to date. This work is made possible by our peer support specialists, whose professionalism and credibility are central to delivering consistent, high-quality services within complex care environments.

We're also growing by making connections with new communities, bringing new Certified Peer Specialists into the work and learning from each of their journeys. And we shape our future direction the same way we serve—through outreach to every employee and by collecting the feedback that guides our development and our next meaningful steps toward reaching more people.

Looking ahead, our priorities are focused and execution-oriented:

Strengthening quality and consistency through standardized training, supervision, and performance oversight

Expanding access responsibly, with particular focus on underserved and high-need populations

Enhancing operational reliability, including coordination, reporting, and responsiveness

Investing in infrastructure and technology to support scale, compliance, and transparency

Delivering measurable outcomes that align with partner expectations and system-wide goals

We are committed to being a dependable, collaborative partner—one that operates with accountability, clarity, and respect for the broader systems in which we work. Growth will be thoughtful and aligned with our ability to deliver consistent value.

To our partners, payers, and community stakeholders: thank you for your trust in Peerstar. We value these relationships and take seriously the responsibility that comes with them.

Together, we will continue to strengthen recovery, reduce barriers to care, and expand access to peer support in a way that is effective, sustainable, and meaningful.

Sincerely,
Jay Gittleson
Jay Gittleson
Chief Executive Officer
Peerstar

Vision and Guiding Principles

Our Vision

Each individual or family member affected by mental illness has a unique history that can affect their treatment outcomes. Each has the opportunity to be supported by a system of recovery that integrates the provider systems with community or other natural supports in an effort towards independence and individual healing.

Our Guiding Principles

Peerstar’s Peer Support Specialists, Peer Support Specialist Supervisors, and Administrative Staff follow the “10 fundamental elements and guiding principles of mental health recovery that serve well as guideposts for recovery-oriented services.”

01. Self-Direction

02. Individualized and Person Centered

03. Empowerment

04. Holistic

05. Non-Linear

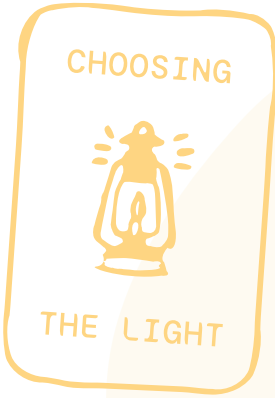
06. Strength-based

07. Peer Support

08. Respect

09. Responsibility

10. Hope



2025 Highlights

A Year of Transition

2025 was a year of great transition for Peerstar. Leadership of the company changed, but the focus on being the leader in peer support services remained the same. A key focus of 2025 was to strengthen the organization and infrastructure to meet the ever-changing demands of a growing behavioral health service. Peerstar expanded its leadership structure through the creation of director, supervisory, and specialist roles, ultimately impacting consistency and accountability between staff, supervisors, and external partners. In the field, CPS and CPS Supervisors had the opportunity to move into roles based on their strengths, and administrative staff experienced opportunities in newly developed departments within admissions, care management, and billing/authorizations.

In addition to department and position expansion, Peerstar implemented new technology and software to improve efficiency and consistency in the overall operations of the company.

Peerstar also identified new ways to increase engagement, recognition, and wellness activities for staff at all levels. From picnics to Peerstar-branded gear, staff were provided new opportunities to connect to the team that Peerstar continues to build.

Standards of Care

In 2025, Peerstar's Compliance Department made significant strides in strengthening quality assurance, member engagement, and service delivery standards across the organization.

Early in the year, the department implemented initial QA surveys designed to engage peer specialists from the outset of services, establishing a foundation of quality-focused practice from day one. These efforts were met with enthusiasm, as peer satisfaction surveys returned numerous positive responses reflecting members' meaningful experiences with Peerstar's services.

The department was proud to receive commendations from both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and contracted Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) in recognition of Peerstar's documentation integrity and the quality of services provided to members — a testament to the dedication of our staff and the systems built to support them.

In response to member needs and evolving service delivery trends, Peerstar lifted its internal limitations on telehealth services, expanding access for members across all service regions. Additionally, the department introduced a structured review process for progress notes documenting three to four hours of service, ensuring that extended service sessions receive the appropriate level of documentation oversight and clinical accuracy.

Looking ahead, the Compliance Department has identified several key initiatives for the coming year. Plans are underway to implement automated auditing tools for progress note review, which will reduce documentation errors and improve operational efficiency across the organization. The department also intends to separate the encounter form from the progress note, creating a cleaner workflow that supports both documentation quality and more efficient billing practices. Finally, Peerstar is preparing to launch a comprehensive records audit program to further elevate our standards of accountability and compliance.

The Compliance Department remains committed to continuous quality improvement and looks forward to building on the momentum of a strong and productive year.

Expanding our Reach

Peerstar gained ground in two new counties as well as new correctional institutions. Peerstar began seeing community peers in both Berks and Allegheny Counties in 2025 while also serving the forensic population through a contract with the Department of Corrections in Harrisburg, Scranton, and Pittsburgh Community Corrections Centers. Growth was also seen in the expansion of services to older adults throughout Pennsylvania, which was supported by the creation of program manager positions to oversee the delivery of these specialized services.

Service-delivery processes were evaluated and changes implemented to address identified barriers. One barrier identified and addressed involved wait times to complete Individual Recovery Plans, which can delay starting services or interfere with continuing services. Another barrier impacting starting or continuing services was found in the matching of CPS staff to peers. Often a CPS would be assigned to a peer before the IRP was completed, however, upon completion of the IRP, it was found that the peer and CPS did not have compatible schedules or compatible personalities and interests. To address these concerns, the IRP

Specialist position was created and filled for each Region. The IRP Specialist position provides a specialized approach to conducting strength and needs assessment and goal creation support, while also identifying factors to support a more effective and efficient CPS matching process. With the creation of this position, Individualized Recovery Plans can be completed in a more timely manner, and CPS-peer matching can be individualized to the peers' experiences, goals, and availability.

Another service-delivery process change made involved the peer discharge process. Discharge related tasks were reorganized from administrative staff to recovery-support staff, specifically to Peerstar's Mental Health Professionals (MHP's). Peers that are submitted for discharge now receive additional support from Peerstar's MHP's to ensure that discharge is both desired and appropriate for each peer. This process also provides peers with a neutral individual to problem solve any barriers they experienced in their services. At times this process has validated the appropriateness of a peer discharge while also identifying peers that wanted a change of CPS rather than a discharge from services.



Recovery in Action

In an effort to continue to build recovery-oriented support to our peers and staff, Peerstar’s Advisory Board Chairperson was promoted to the role of Director of Outreach, improving Peerstar’s overall recovery-outreach initiatives. One of the director’s primary responsibilities is revamping Peerstar’s current Advisory Board, a project that started in 2025 and is continuing throughout 2026. The Advisory Board will soon consist of peer support ambassadors who will act as company advocates for staff and mentors for new hires.

Networking Events continued in each region, offering staff opportunities to network with co-workers, learn new skills from each other, and learn about external recovery resources.

Community Outreach continued to be a passion and priority of Peerstar’s with Regional Directors, CPS Supervisors, and CPS staff participating in recovery conferences, wellness fairs, prevention events, and trainings across the state. Peerstar continues to partner with community and recovery organizations to advocate for recovery and provide education and outreach. Peerstar provided suicide prevention trainings, health and wellness seminars, and mental health education to other mental health providers, law enforcement officers, and public officials and policy makers.

Specialty Services continue to grow in the field, but also received extra attention behind the scenes in 2025:



In addition to the physical growth of expanding into three new correctional facility programs, **Peerstar’s Forensic Peer Support program** also experienced a re-organization with its current program director stepping away from community peer support responsibilities to focus solely on the forensic program as the State Director of Forensics. In addition, the program welcomed the creation of the Regional Director of Forensics position. Peerstar is also continuing its relationship with Yale University, participating in a proposal for an ongoing forensic peer support research study. The proposal is expected to begin in June of 2026.



Dual Diagnosis Peer Support served a total of 289 peers in 2025, with 105 individuals being new peers. Behind the scenes the dual diagnosis specialty training developed by Peerstar began to be revamped and updated to meet the continued needs of staff working with the dual diagnosis population. The updated training is expected to be rolled out in the second quarter of 2026 and will continue to be monitored and updated as needed.



Empowered Aging Peer Support experienced growth in its infrastructure with the creation of new roles and in its reach, expanding into new areas, including nursing facilities. The program will continue to build the tools and resources needed to support peers and staff in 2026.



Youth and Young Adult services began to see a steady growth in interest from community members and mental health partners, although has not experienced the same growth as other peer support populations. The Youth and Young Adult training will experience an overhaul in 2026 and will be a focus-area of growth in the months to come.

Continuous Quality Improvement Annual Review 2025

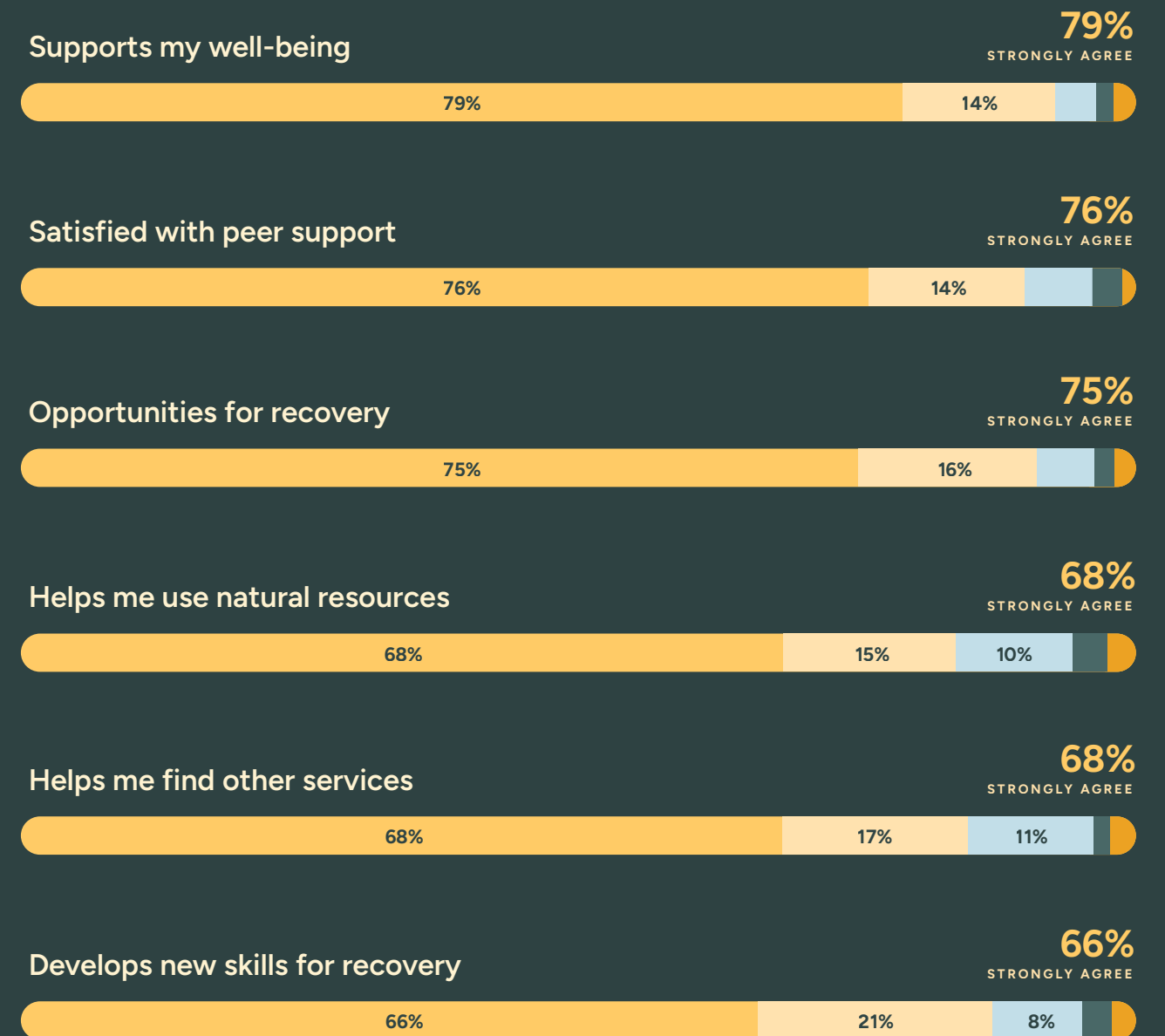
During January 2026, the Director of Compliance reviewed the CQI plan and presented the findings of the annual review to Peer Support Recipients, Certified Peer Specialists and CPS Supervisors. The Peerstar Annual Report will include an analysis of the findings of this review and identify action steps taken to address the annual review findings. The following is a summary of the findings

Satisfaction and Outcomes

There were 691 peer surveys completed in 2024. No significant deficiency trends were found in quality or satisfaction. Peerstar of PA utilizes data in the Credible electronic health record to gather more specific and objective outcome data related to overall outcomes and individual outcomes utilizing ANSA scores and daily rating of progress.

Peer Satisfaction

Based on 457 peer survey results



LEGEND

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Individual Record Reviews

In 2025, Compliance Department staff reviewed approximately 1,010 individual peer charts with no significant trends noted. The review included the timeliness and appropriateness of service by reviewing medical necessity of service provision. Record reviews verified all services began timely, within one year of LPHA recommendation, as per OMHSAS policy, and as per the individual recovery plan. Benefits are verified upon referral and through bi-monthly EVS checks. Also, outcomes of individual peers are provided on the home page of the individual's medical chart.

Licensing Inspection Results

Peerstar maintained a strong record across all licensing inspections conducted in 2025. In the course of the program year, Peerstar received one recommendation during a licensing inspection, citing the need to add text to the written recommendation script to allow prescribers to designate a specific area of functional impairment. This recommendation was promptly addressed and corrective action was taken to update the script accordingly. No deficiencies or citations were issued in any Peerstar, PSC, or PAA license inspection for the program year, reflecting the organization's ongoing commitment to regulatory excellence and continuous quality improvement.

Certified Peer Specialist Program

As Peerstar continues to grow as a leading provider of peer support services, the organization has established a forward-looking set of strategic priorities for 2026 that reflect its commitment to documentation excellence, enhanced peer engagement, and purposeful geographic expansion. To advance documentation quality and consistency, Peerstar will implement a series of documentation workshops available to all staff on a recurring basis. These workshops will reinforce best practices in progress note writing, medical necessity justification, and compliance with state and managed care standards. In parallel, Peerstar will launch a restructured onboarding and orientation program designed to ensure that all newly hired employees receive comprehensive, high-quality training from their first day — equipping them with the tools, knowledge, and organizational support they need to thrive. In alignment with its mission to expand access to transformative peer support services, Peerstar is actively pursuing expansion into new Pennsylvania counties and additional states, beginning with California. This strategic growth reflects the organization's confidence in its operational model and its commitment to bringing evidence-informed, recovery-oriented peer support to underserved communities across the nation.

Employee Surveys

An employee satisfaction survey was distributed to staff, to which 112 employees responded. 88% of respondents identified that Peerstar provides a safe and caring environment for peers and 86% identified that Peerstar is committed to providing high level of support to peers. In addition, 87% of survey respondents identified being satisfied with their job.



Employee Sentiment

Based on 112 employee survey responses



Peerstar provides a safe and caring environment for peers



Peerstar is committed to providing a high level of support to peers



I feel proud to tell people that I work for Peerstar



I would recommend Peerstar for employment



2025 Outcomes Report



TOTAL PEERS SERVED
ACROSS 3 PROGRAMS

1,849



1,548

General
Community
Peer Support



289

Dual
Diagnosis
Peer Support



12

Certified
Recovery
Services

Our Peers

A demographic profile of the peers Peerstar supported in 2025

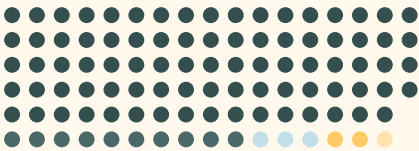
GENDER



Female 59% Male 40%

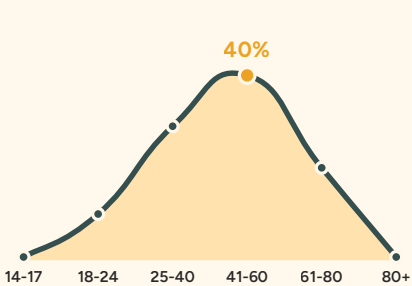
<1% prefer not to answer

RACE & ETHNICITY

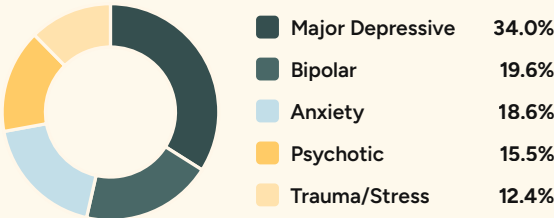


White/Caucasian 84% African American 10% Multi-race 2% Unknown 1% Other 3%

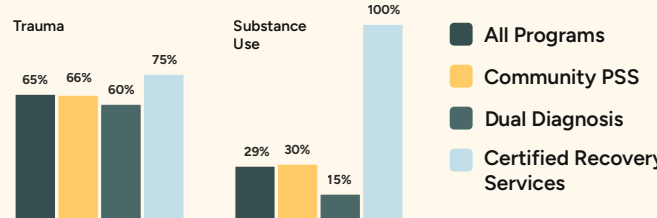
AGE GROUPS



PRIMARY DIAGNOSES



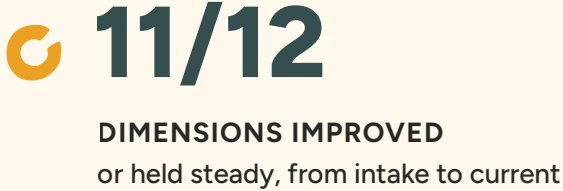
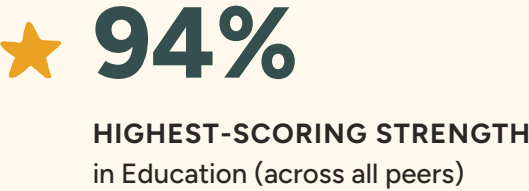
TRAUMA & SUBSTANCE USE HISTORY



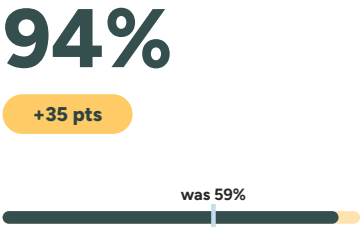
ANSA OUTCOMES • STRENGTHS

Stronger than
when they began.

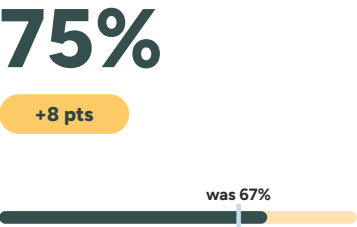
The Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment measures twelve dimensions of personal capacity. After time in peer support, peers report growth on nearly every one.



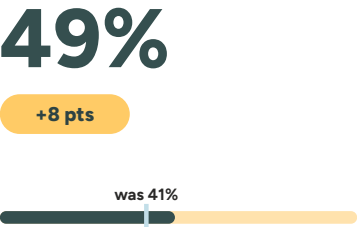
Family Strengths



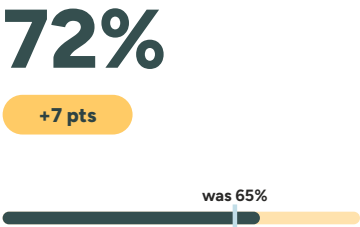
Optimism



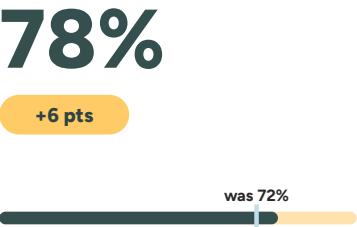
Community Connection



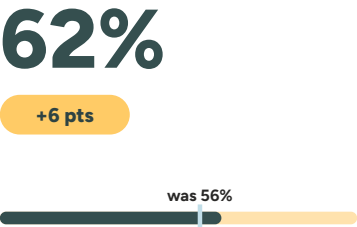
Natural Supports



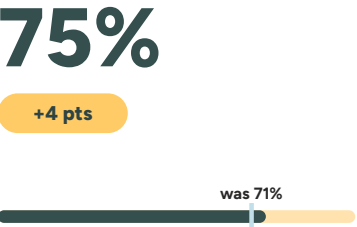
Resiliency



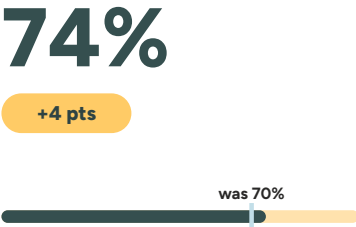
Social Connectedness



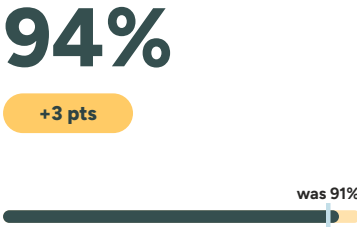
Talents/Interests



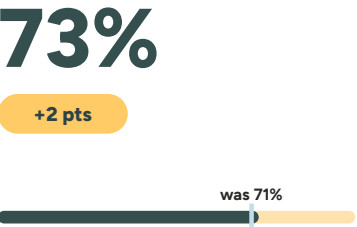
Resourcefulness



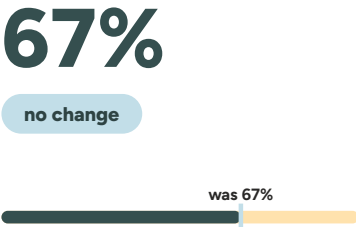
Education



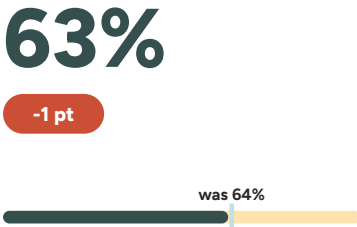
Spiritual



Volunteering



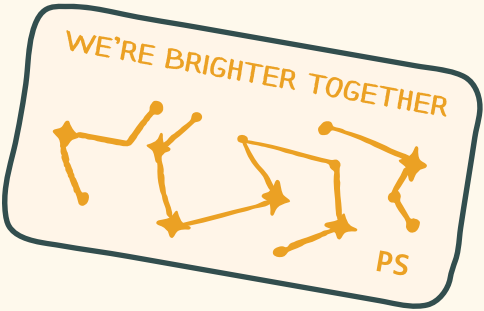
Job History



ANSA OUTCOMES • NEEDS

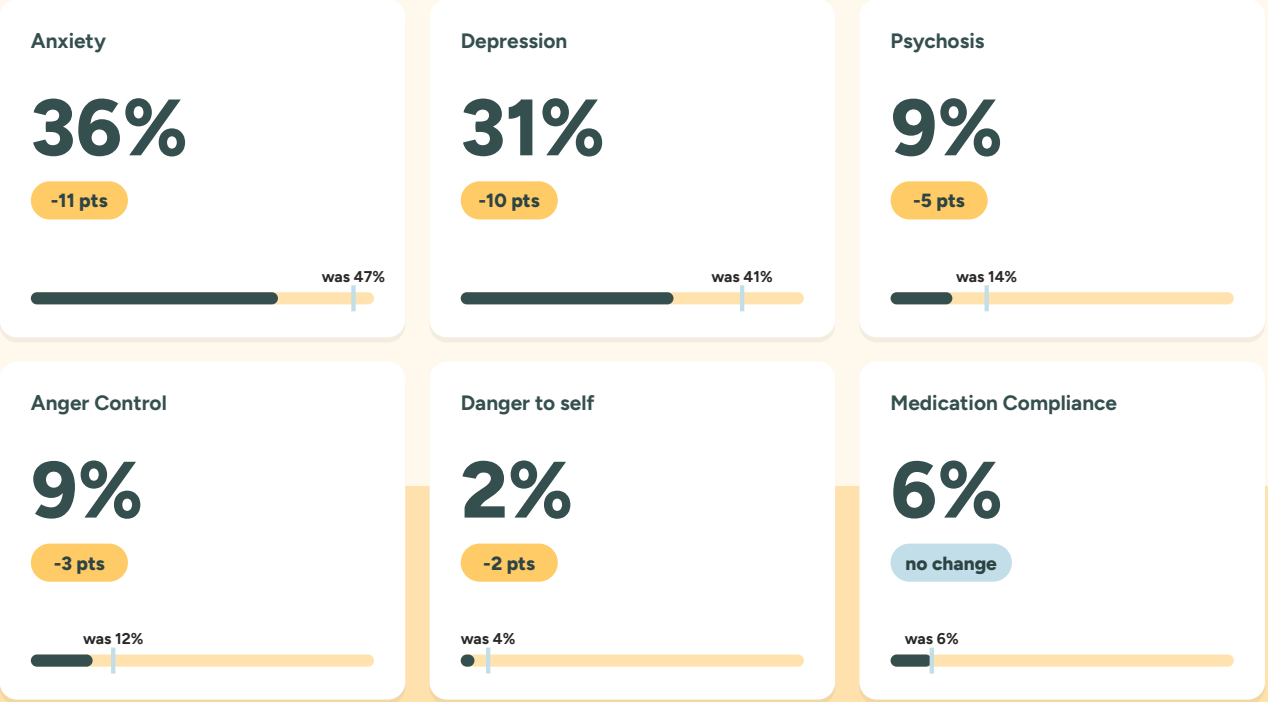
Lighter than
when they began.

The same Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment measures twenty-four areas where peers may need support — from anxiety and housing stability to medication and sleep. After time in peer support, the burden eases.



Behavioral Health

% of peers with each identified need · sorted by reduction



↓ -11

BIGGEST SINGLE REDUCTION
in Anxiety (47% → 36%)

★ 4%

LOWEST REMAINING NEED
in Treatment Involvement

⚡ -3

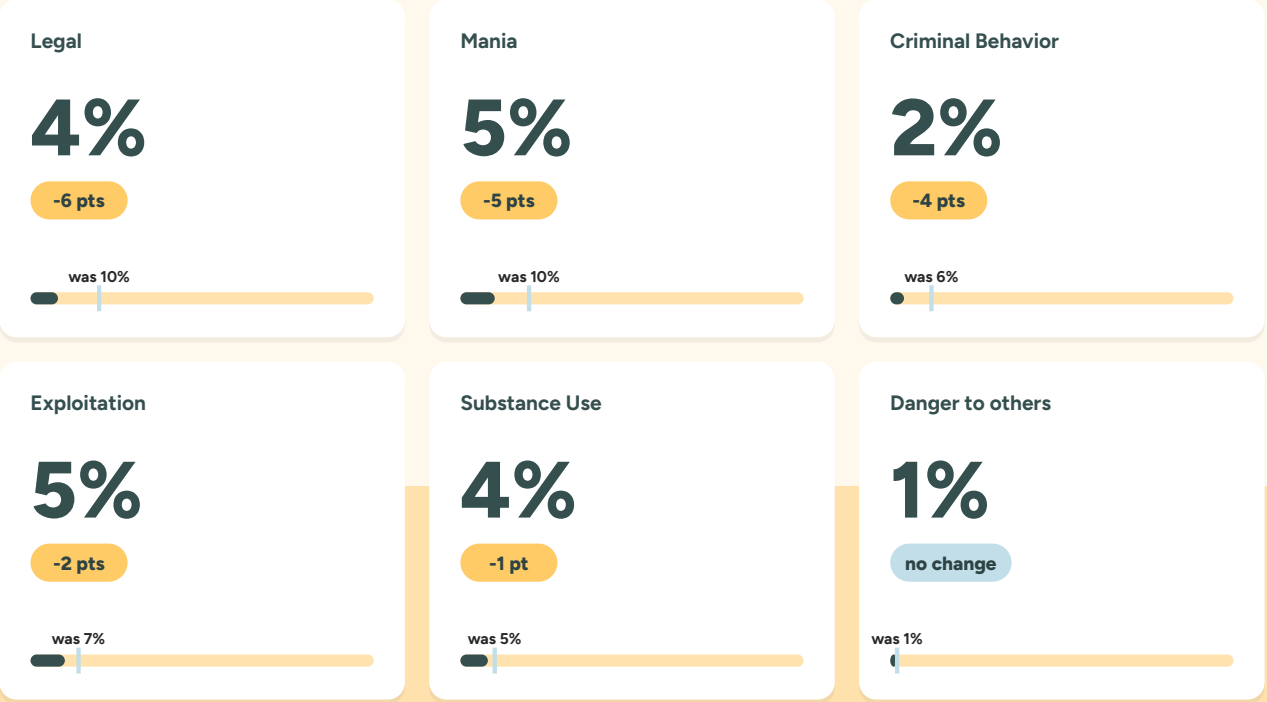
AVERAGE POINT REDUCTION
across all 24 dimensions

🔄 22/24

DIMENSIONS REDUCED
or held steady, from intake to current

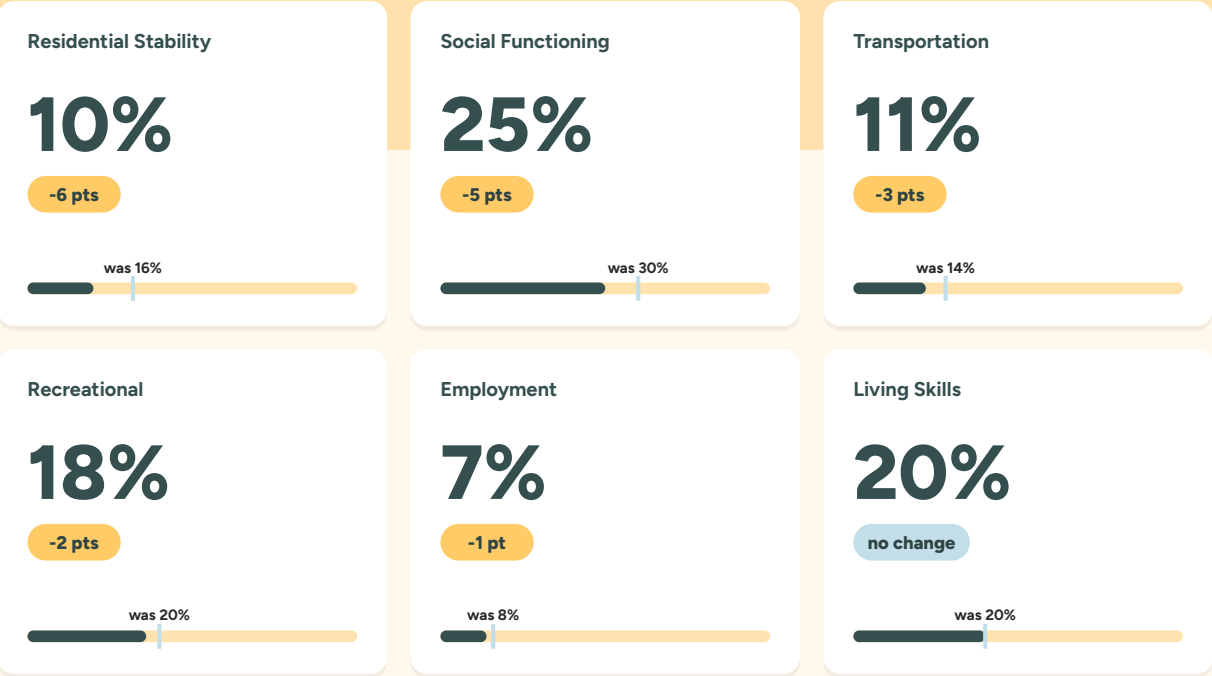
Risk Behaviors

% of peers with each identified need · sorted by reduction



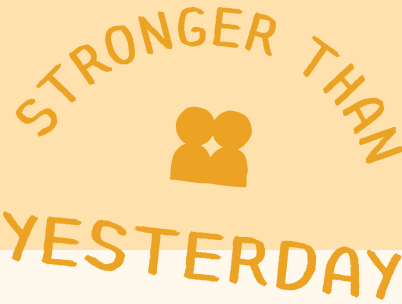
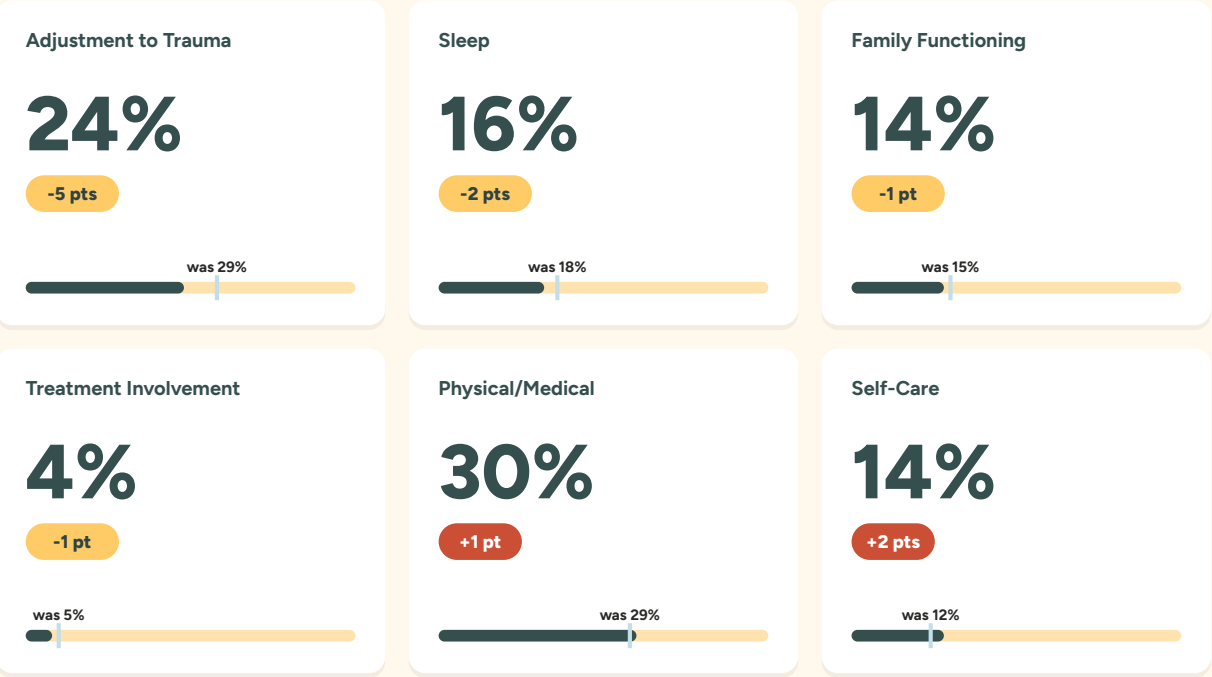
Life Functioning

% of peers with each identified need · sorted by reduction



Health & Family

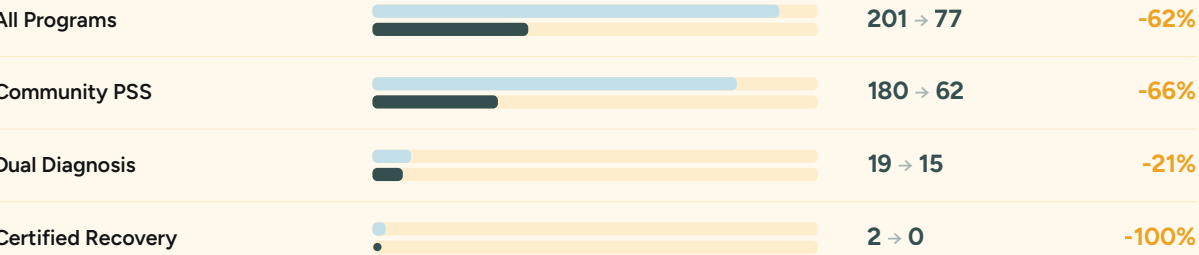
% of peers with each identified need · sorted by reduction



2025 OUTCOMES · CONTINUED

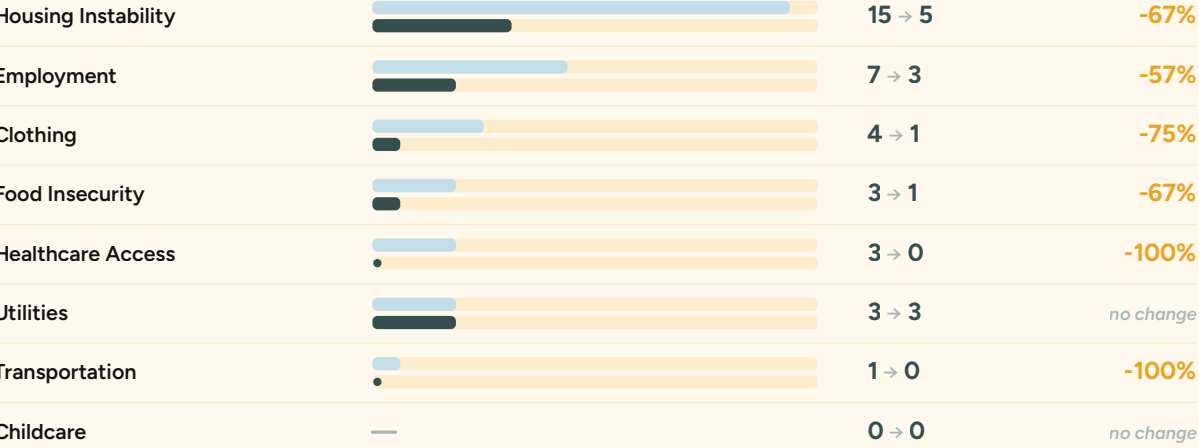
Psychiatric Hospitalization

Peers hospitalized in any 6-month window



Social Determinants of Health

Peers reporting an actionable need



At intake Current

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT
SENIOR LIVING

Meeting
older adults
where they live.

Peerstar’s Empowered Aging Peer Support program brings certified peer specialists directly into partner senior living communities across Pennsylvania — when and where older adults need support most.



REACH

Where Peerstar showed up in 2025

 **12** COUNTIES
across Pennsylvania

 **48** PARTNER COMMUNITIES
senior living facilities served

TEAM

The people delivering the care

3 Program
Managers

5 CPS
Supervisors

59 Certified Peer
Specialists (CPS)



SHAPE OF ENGAGEMENT

The typical peer journey — from intake to close

 **19**
avg sessions per peer

 **39.4**
avg service hours per peer

 **92 days**
avg length of care

152 PEERS
SERVED
IN 2025

88% STAYED ENGAGED
PAST INITIAL
GOAL-PLANNING

2,878
PEER ENCOUNTERS
one-on-one sessions delivered in 2025

5,986
TOTAL SERVICE HOURS
delivered on-site in 2025

SUCCESS STORY • PEER A

Engagement & behavioral stabilization

3 months of service • 45 sessions • 112.25 hours



“Nothing to do and nowhere to go.”

— How this peer described their situation at intake



AT INTAKE

This resident lived in a highly reclusive state, with minimal social interaction. He frequently sought connection by sitting in the nurses’ office, and once called the police to say he had “nothing to do and nowhere to go.”

THE APPROACH

The peer specialist established trust through small, consistent engagement, redirecting unstructured time into recovery-based conversation and meaningful activity. Social and wellness skills were supported to reduce daily distress.

WHAT CHANGED

Disruptive behaviors have significantly reduced. The resident now looks forward to daily peer interactions and facility activities, shows improved emotional regulation, and has meaningfully decreased the burden on facility staff resources.

ILLUSTRATES
CORE COMPETENCY

Sustained relational support

SUCCESS STORY • PEER B

Personalization & persistence

IRP completed August • 38 sessions • 98.25 total hours



“It took ten visits before he’d speak.”

— The peer specialist’s early observation



AT INTAKE

This resident was non-engaged during the first ten attempted sessions, with limited communication and participation. His Native American heritage represented cultural needs that had not yet been fully recognized within the facility.

THE APPROACH

The peer specialist maintained continued presence and consistency across every visit, collaborating with facility staff to allow gradual engagement without pressure. Cultural preferences were identified and honored throughout.

WHAT CHANGED

The resident now actively participates in every session and is working toward personal goals of advocacy and wellness. Communication with facility staff has improved, and the facility itself has adjusted communication style and activity offerings to be culturally responsive.

ILLUSTRATES
CORE COMPETENCY

Cultural responsiveness and persistence

Looking ahead

As we look toward 2026, our organization remains committed to advancing the quality, accessibility, and impact of peer support services across the communities we serve. Guided by our mission and informed by the evolving needs of individuals navigating mental health and recovery journeys, we are focused on strengthening our operational foundation, investing in our workforce, and expanding the reach of our programs.

In the coming year, we will prioritize operational excellence by refining internal systems and processes that support both staff and service delivery. This includes finalizing and implementing an updated employee handbook and enhanced performance evaluation framework, as well as continuing to improve payroll accuracy, benefits communication, and overall administrative efficiency. These efforts will ensure a stable, responsive infrastructure that enables consistent, high-quality peer engagement and minimizes barriers to care.

Recognizing that our workforce is central to our impact, we will expand professional development opportunities, coaching, and

supervision to better support our team. We are committed to fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment that promotes staff well-being, strengthens retention, and builds capacity for growth. By investing in our people, we are positioning our organization to meet increasing demand while maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of our services.

Programmatically, we will pursue strategic expansion to reach more individuals in need. This includes extending peer support, Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS), and Empowered Aging Peer Support (EAPS) into additional counties and facilities, as well as increasing our focus on jail-to-community and reentry programming. We will also explore opportunities to grow specialized services, including our Dual Diagnosis, Youth and Young Adult, and CRS programs. We will work to strengthen these efforts by developing new partnerships that can help improve funding streams to ensure long-term sustainability.

Finally, we will deepen our engagement with the communities we serve by increasing our presence at local wellness events, shelters, drop-in centers, and reentry programs. Strengthening collaboration with judicial, correctional, and behavioral health systems will remain a key priority as we work to build trust, improve coordination of care, and demonstrate measurable impact across regions.

Through these strategic priorities, we are not only preparing for growth, we are reinforcing our commitment to delivering compassionate, peer-driven support that empowers individuals and strengthens communities.



Leadership

The people guiding our mission



Larry Nulton, Ph.D
Chairman, CEO Emeritus



Jay Gittleson
Chief Executive Officer



Justin Weinberg
Partner



Jessica Peacock, Ed.D
Chief Recovery Officer



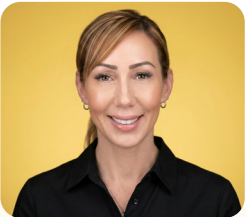
Cari Rebecca
Director of Care Management



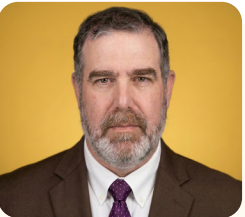
Lisa Bruno
Director of Recruiting



David Braid
Director of Senior Living



Jessica West
Director of Compliance



Adam Bender
MS, CPSS, CRSS, MHP
IRP Specialist Supervisor



Christina Jenkins
Director of Admissions



Jamie Bush, CPSS
Director of Outreach



Michelle Seaman
Director of Training and Development



Shalom Orlian
Director of Human Resources



Christy DiStefano
Director of Forensic Programs



Gerald Maida
Business Systems and Integration Lead



 **PEERSTAR**

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