

What is a Peer Worker?

A peer worker is a person who uses his or her lived experience of alcohol and other drugs, plus skills learned in formal training, to deliver services in support of others.

In Victoria, the AOD peer workforce is recognised as an integral part of quality service delivery, resulting in many organisations formalising and integrating peer work into their service.

Peer workers provide non-clinical assistance; they utilise their personal experiences in a way that promotes understanding and fosters connection. Peer workers are complementary to and work collaboratively with multi-disciplinary teams to provide support in line with organisational frameworks.

Peer workers offer support to others who have shared experiences by:

- Facilitating authentic connections
- Sharing their personal experiences in a way that inspires hope
- Offering help and support as an equal, within a defined role
- Developing positive relationships that demonstrate the power and possibility of change



*We understand because
we've been there...*

*Peer
Projects*

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Peer Projects

At Peer Projects, a program of SHARC, we believe in the value of lived experience, one peer helping another, at all levels of the service system.

Peer Projects provides a dedicated effort in Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) peer workforce development and operates as a sector resource for peer support initiatives.

SHARC

Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC) promotes self-help approaches to recovery from severe alcohol and drug related issues. SHARC provides opportunities for individuals, families and communities affected by addiction and related problems to recover and achieve meaningful, satisfying and contributing lives.

'They know what we are going through and they understand us on our level'

– Jodie, Family Drug Treatment Court parent

'They have walked in our shoes'

– Robert, Drug Treatment Service, Resident

What we do:

Peer Workforce Development and Support

Peer Projects works alongside the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to support the growth, development and sustainability of Victoria's AOD peer workforce in the treatment sector.

We deliver services under the SHARC Peer Worker Model, a framework that seeks to ensure a quality, consistent and sustainable peer workforce. Services include:

- **SHARC Peer Worker Training**
- **Peer Worker Practice Supervision**
- **Organisational Readiness Training**
- **AOD Peer Workforce Community of Practice**

Peer Workers in AOD

We facilitate the placement and support of Peer Workers within Victorian AOD services. We offer services to organisations in planning, recruitment, training and supervision.

Peer Workers in Justice

We also facilitate the placement and support of Peer Workers within the Justice System. These Peer Workers offer support to clients who are in the justice system as a result of their drug and alcohol use. For example: our Peer Workers are currently employed in providing support to parents engaged with the Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTIC).

The Peer Projects Community

At Peer Projects we are actively building a community that supports the recognition and growth of Peer Work. Our relationships expand across states, countries and sectors as we work collaboratively with key stakeholders to define, support and advocate for the AOD Peer Work discipline.