

Preparing the Peer Workforce to Support People in Crisis Services

Results of the NE MHTTC Interviews and Focus Groups with Peer Support Workers

March 16, 2023



New England (HHS Region 1)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



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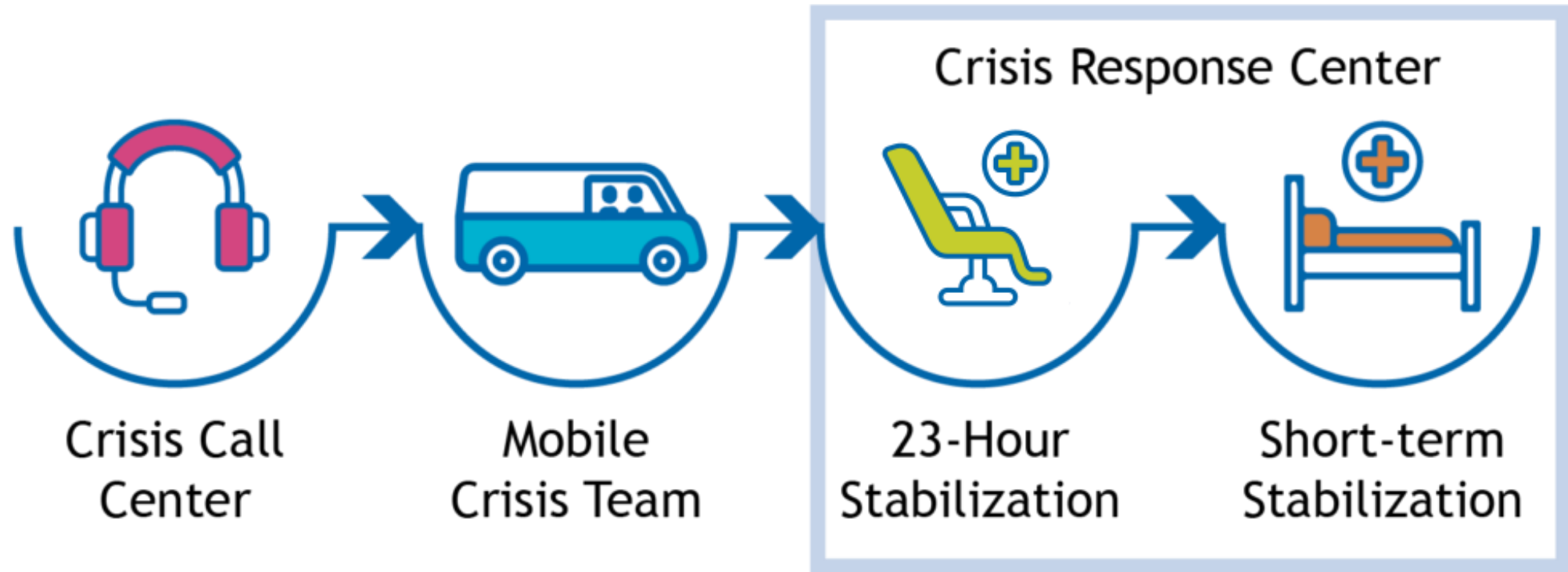
Community & Behavioral Health | Recovery | Social Change

Agenda

- Overview: Crisis care system and peer support services
- NE MHTTC's efforts to identify essential competencies for peer support workers employed in crisis service programs
- Peer support workers in crisis services: Role, function, and competencies
- Peer support services: Supportive program structures and activities
- Professional development of peer support workers in crisis services

What is the Crisis Now Framework?

Someone to Talk to, Someone to Respond and a Place to Go



9-8-8 Overview

The 9-8-8 law requires states to enhance the current system's ability to respond to those experiencing a behavioral health crisis by providing:



Someone
to Talk To

- Available 24/7 for calls, text and chat
- Peer-run warm lines offering callers emotional support, staffed by volunteers who are in recovery themselves



Someone
to Go

- Mobile crisis response available statewide
- Coordination with 9-1-1/EMS as appropriate
- Outpatient community provider response



Somewhere
to Go

- Crisis receiving and stabilization units
- Peer crisis respite (living room models)
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment
- Inpatient treatment
- Outpatient crisis



Crisis “System” Past and Present

- Over-reliance on law enforcement
- Over-reliance on hospital emergency departments
- “Psychiatric boarding” in emergency departments
- Potentially traumatizing for all involved
- Increases risk for violence
- Lack of effective responses to crisis
- Lack of available needed services & support
- Lack of follow-up

Principles of Crisis Services

- Embracing recovery
- Significant role for peers
- Trauma-informed care
- Suicide-safer care
- Safety/security for staff and consumers
- Crisis response partnerships with law enforcement

National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care, SAMHSA, 2020, p. 26



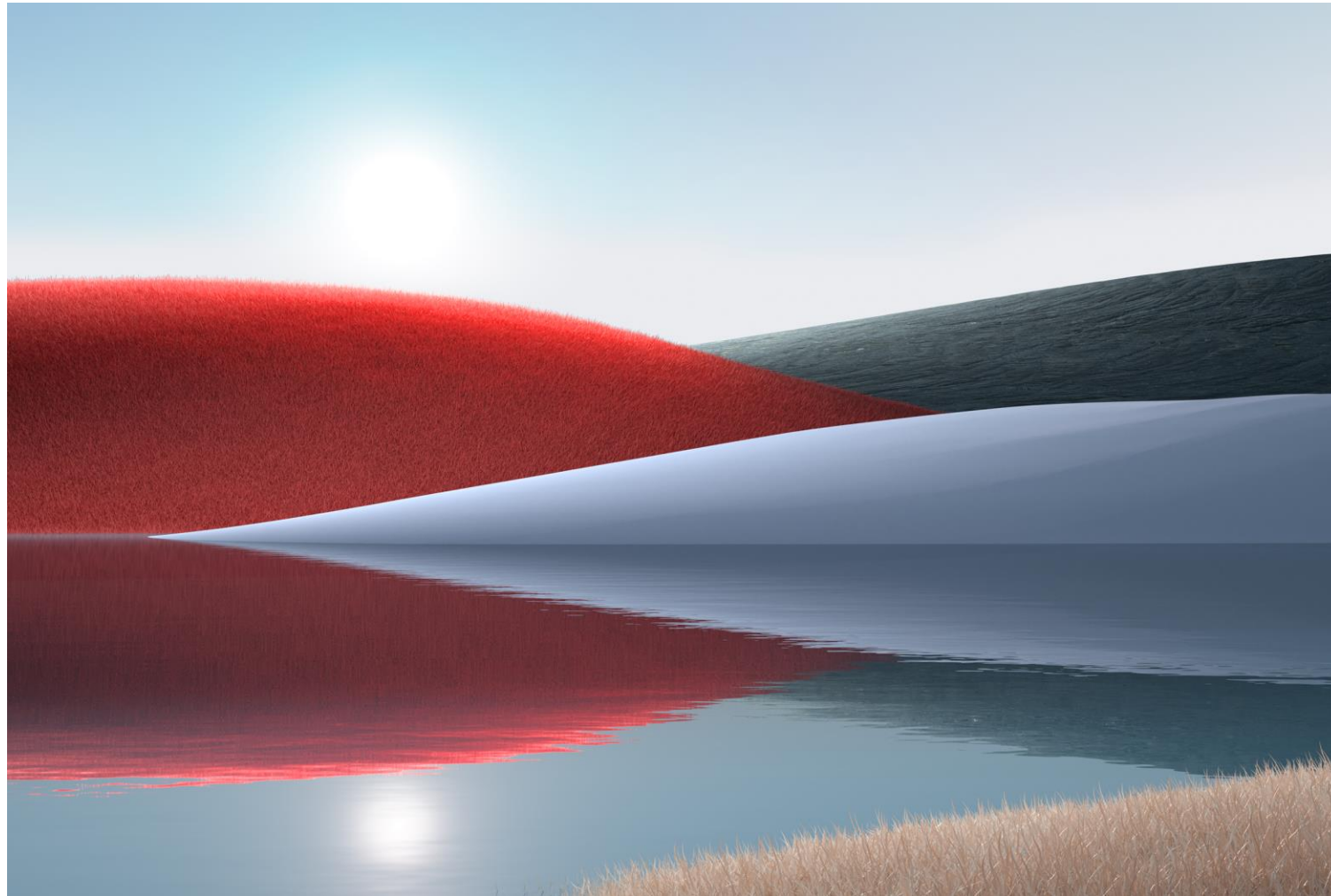
Peer Roles in Crisis Services

- Peer support specialist/recovery coach in ED
- Peer support provider on inpatient unit
- Peer support on a crisis warmline/hotline
- Staff in peer-run residential respites
- Peer support provider on mobile crisis teams
- Peer support provider in crisis care center
- Outreach/Harm reductionist
- Outreach team member
- Staff in peer-run drop-in centers



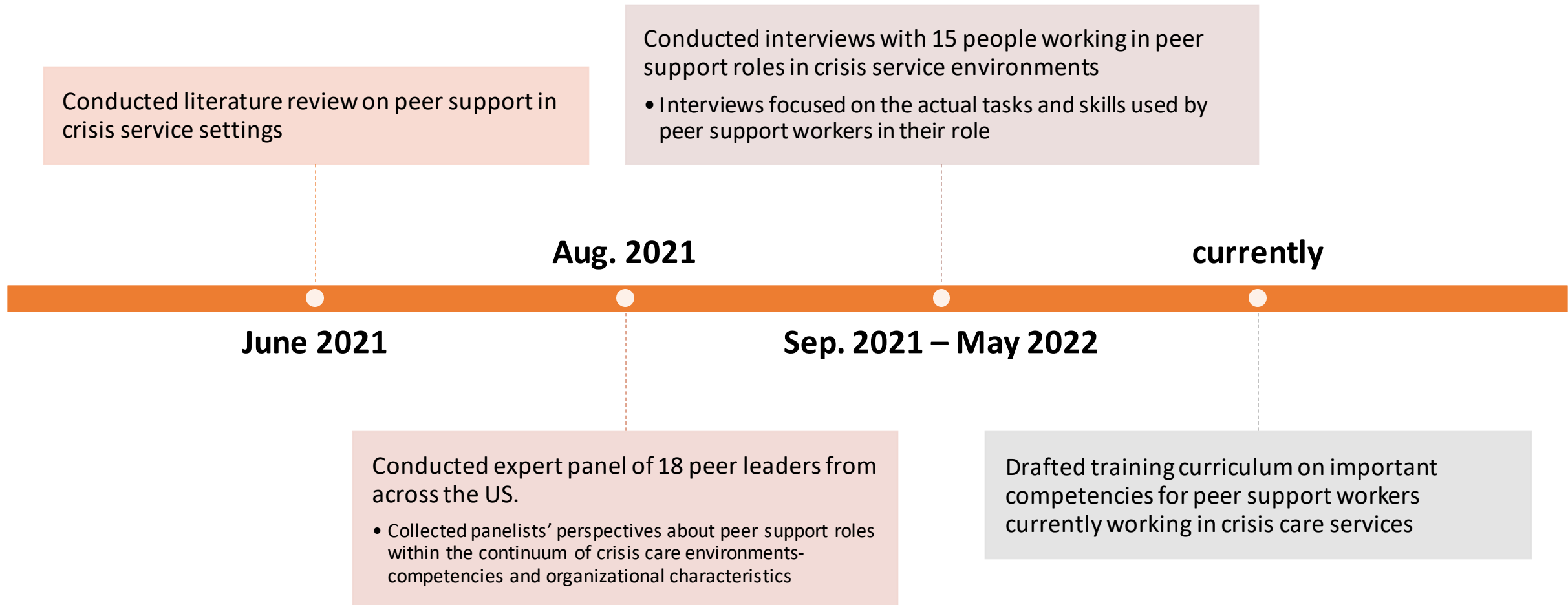
Peer Roles in the Crisis Care Continuum

Crisis Prevention	Crisis Response	Post-Crisis Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual peer support• Peer support groups• Peer-run residential respite• Peer drop-in center	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crisis Call Centers• Mobile Crisis Services• Crisis Receiving and Stabilization Programs• Peer-run Respite Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-to-1 peer support• Peer support groups• Peer navigation services• Community participation



New England
MHTTC
Activities

NE MHTTC Activities



NE MHTTC Current Activities

- Conducting a series of trainings with experienced peer support workers employed in crisis services in New England
- Revising training curriculum based on experiences and feedback
- Collaboration with the South Southeast MHTTC to learn more about opportunities and challenges related to peer support services and workers integrated into behavioral health crisis services. Analyzing interviews with 18 peer support leaders



An aerial, high-angle photograph of a complex highway interchange. The image shows multiple levels of overpasses and ramps, with various lane markings and traffic signs. The scene is captured from a high vantage point, looking down on the intricate network of roads. The colors of the road surfaces and markings are visible, including white, yellow, and blue. The overall impression is one of a large-scale engineering project.

What We've Learned

Listening to the voices of people working in crisis services

- Interviews with people providing peer support who work in crisis services
- Expert panel of leaders in peer support in crisis services



Learnings

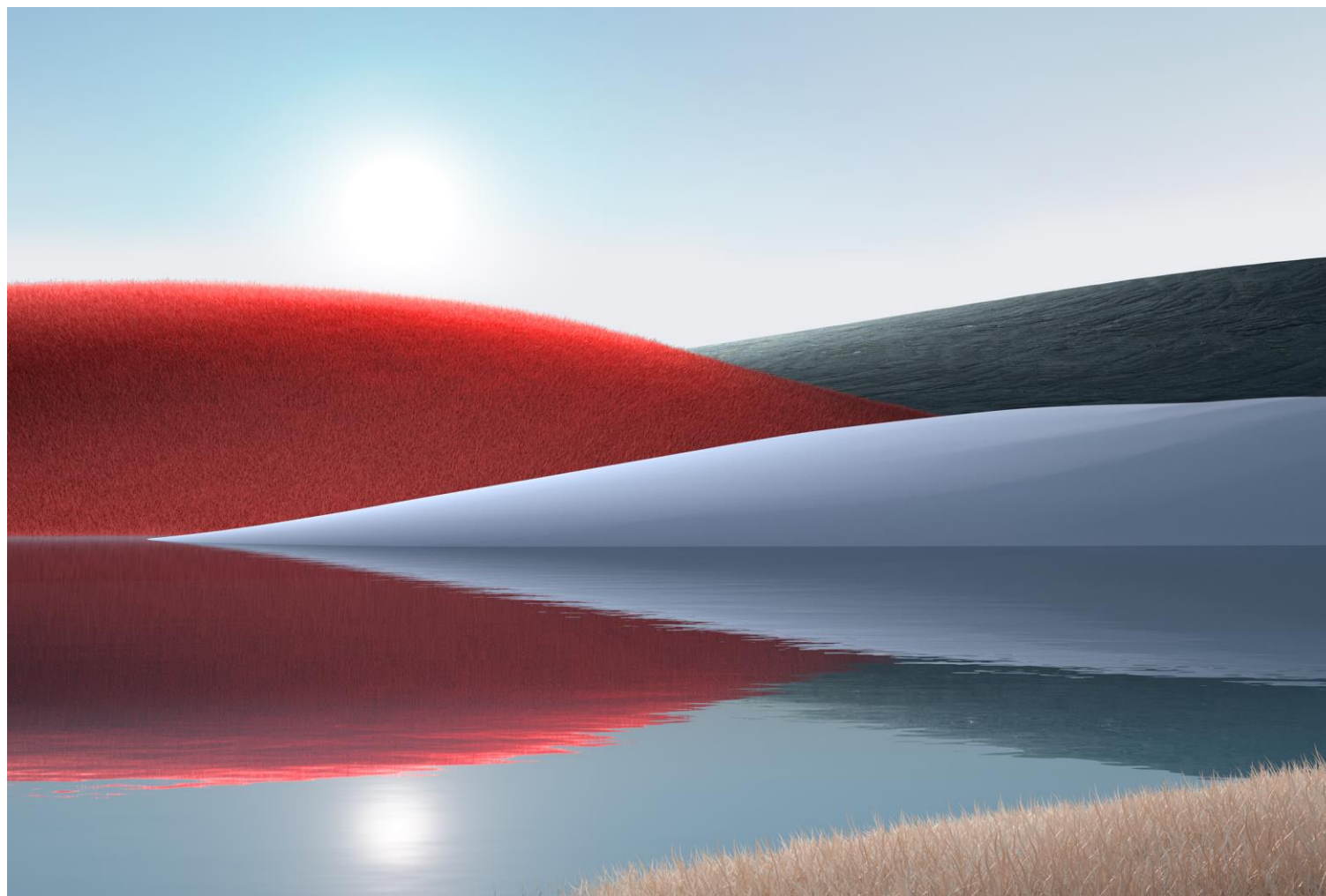


Competencies

- Engaging people experiencing crisis in empathetic supportive relationships
- Supporting decision-making
- Advocating for self-determination
- Promoting team resiliency

Organizational Structures

- Supervision
- Training, cross-training
- Opportunities for connection with team members
- De-briefing sessions
- Recovery-oriented mission and values



Competencies for Peer Support Workers in Crisis Care Services




Engaging people experiencing crisis in empathetic supportive relationships

- Core peer support skills
 - Listening
 - Empathetic responding
 - Expressing curiosity
 - Non-judgmental stance
- Calming strategies
 - Non-coercive language
 - Non-threatening body language
 - Centering yourself
- Demonstrating positive regard

Supporting Decision-making


- Listening for understanding
 - Person's preferences, needs, and resources
- Expanding options
 - Brainstorming options
 - Natural supports
- Planning for resolution




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Advocating for self- determination

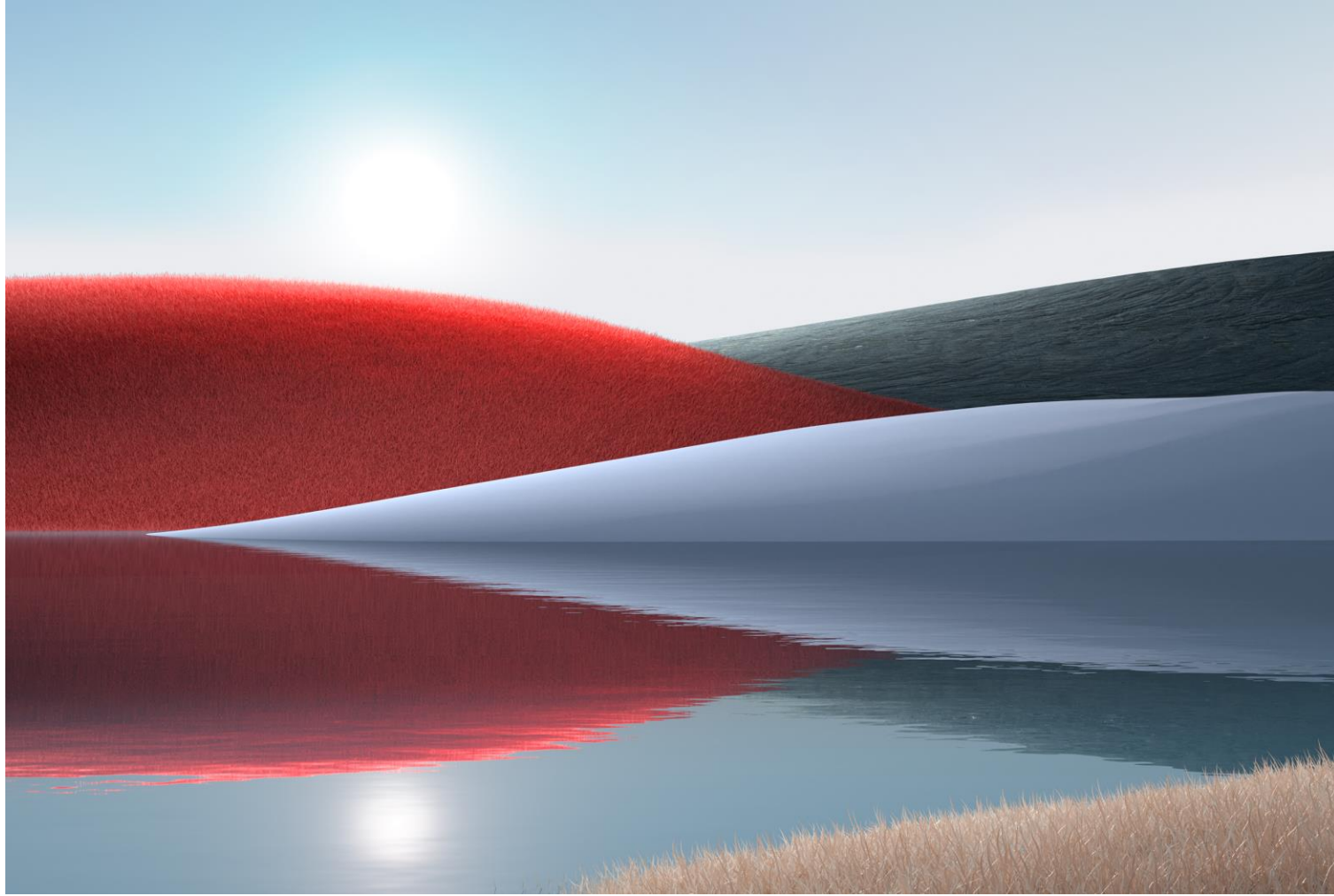
Advocating for self- determination with team members

- Expressing curiosity about team choices
 - Upholding person-centered principles and peer practices
 - Presenting other options
- 
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An aerial photograph of a rowing team in a blue body of water. The team is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the image, moving towards the top. The water is a deep blue with some lighter patches, and the rowers are visible in their shells, with their oars dipping into the water. The image is framed by a white curved border on the right side.

Promoting Team Resiliency

-
- Engage in excellent self-care for work
 - Connect with colleagues
 - Participate in team meetings, including debriefings



Organizational Structures

Supervision

- It's essential for organizations to invest in competent supervisors and prioritize time for supervision and staff development
- Supervisors need management skills in addition to the skills that support people to perform their jobs most successfully
- In crisis services a strong program of supervision is necessary for all team members-lots of opportunities for learning



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Training and Cross- training

Opportunities for on-going training and education for all staff

Opportunities for providers from different disciplines to train together

Training on peer practice for all staff

Training on recovery from mental illness and substance use disorder for all staff

Staff members train each other on areas of interest and expertise

Organizational Training/Implementation

Training

- All staff have a recovery orientation
- All staff understand the role and benefits of peer support services
- Staff are trained in compassionate de-escalation processes
- Staff know how to participate in debrief sessions with colleagues

Implementation Needs

- Organization has strong commitment to supervision
- Organization has capacity to support peer practice
- Organization has recovery culture
 - Strengths-based
 - Goal oriented
 - Learning
 - Support
- Hiring qualified personnel

De-briefing Meetings

- Team members – 2, 3, or more people with different professions and roles in the crisis
 - What were we trying to do?
 - What happened?
 - What can we learn from this?
 - What can we do differently next time?
 - How is everyone?
- Planned, safe, honest space for reviewing an event or process-may be structured and facilitated



What We Need to Learn

Into the Future

01

Crisis services will expand and will include peer support services

02

US will continue to experience mental health and addiction crises

03

The behavioral health workforce shortages will continue

Thank you!



<https://ttc-gpra.org/P?s=621857>



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- NE MHTTC will disseminate and train peer support workers in the competencies of crisis care services
- NE MHTTC will provide technical assistance to organizations wanting to incorporate peer support in crisis services
- NE MHTTC wants to hear from you about your experiences in crisis services

Contact Us

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