

Painted Brain: *Peer Certification Outreach and Hiring Members of Minority Communities*

Presentation by Rayshell Chambers
COO and Co-Founder of Painted Brain



Introducing Your Speaker:

Rayshell Chambers



Rayshell Chambers is a Black community leader from Oakland, CA that has dedicated her personal and professional pursuits to designing and advocating for comprehensive health and human service programs that enhance the human condition of the most vulnerable populations. Rayshell holds a bachelor degree in Sociology and Masters of Public Policy & Administration and utilizes both her cultural experiences and lived mental health challenges as a peer to design culturally-responsive programs.

Rayshell is the co-founder of Painted Brain, a mental health, tech, and art nonprofit based in Los Angeles, that provides peer-based services and practice training in technology and clinical mental health. Rayshell is also an independent consultant that provides capacity building support and grant writing for small nonprofits that serve communities of color.

Learning Objectives

Our presentation intends to cover:

1. The importance of peer specialists and SB 803
2. Steps to community-specific outreach for workforce expansion
3. How to accommodate diverse voices in a workplace



Who We Are: Painted Brain

- *Mission:* Painted Brain (PB) creates lasting community-based solutions to mental health challenges and the impact of social injustice through arts, advocacy, and enterprise.
- Is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2005 that uses the arts and technology to tackle mental health challenges
 - Offers a series of groups run by mental health peers to include psychosocial rehabilitation groups
 - Is a peer-run organization
- Recruiter of diverse staff
- Collaborates with organizations such as the Black Mental Health Task, LGBT Center and disability rights agencies to interact with and empower diverse minority communities



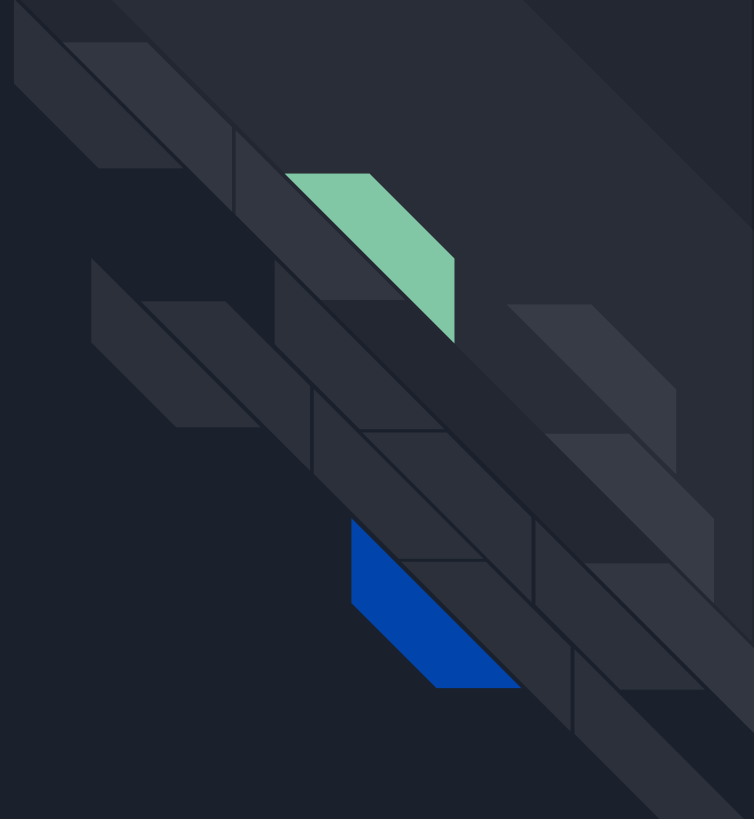
Terminology

- *Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist:* "individual who is 18 years of age or older, who has self-identified as having lived experience with the process of recovery from mental illness, substance use disorder, or both, either as a consumer of these services or as the parent or family member of the consumer, and who has been granted certification under a county peer support specialist certification program."
- *Services provided:* culturally competent services that promote engagement, socialization, recovery, self-sufficiency, self-advocacy, development of natural supports, and identification of strengths
 - Services include, but are not limited to, prevention services, support, coaching, facilitation, or education that is individualized and is conducted by a certified peer support specialist



SB 803: Peer Support Specialist Certification Program Act of 2020

Recognizes the benefit that peer support provides to individuals and families with mental health and substance use difficulties and the increase diversity and effectiveness peers bring to the health workforce (CalMHSA, 2021).



What is Senate Bill 803 (SB 803)?



- Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) will establish statewide requirements for the development of a program for the certification of peer support specialist under the Medi-Cal program, creating a new Medi-Cal provider type and service type.
- This means that a county who has chosen to opt into a peer certification program may seek reimbursement under this new benefit for services provided by a certified peer support specialist and meets the Medi-Cal reimbursement requirements (CaMHSA, 2021).
- **This creates an opportunity for Counties and peer-led nonprofits to hire peers from diverse backgrounds through this new program.**

What is SB 803? (continued)



- Counties or their agencies representing them must identify ways they will meet the statutory requirements
 - **Plans must be approved by DHCS**
- **Peer Support Services are billable to Medi-Cal**

Concepts to Consider: Peer Recruitment

- Diverse peer support services will require a workforce equipped to help a variety of people from different backgrounds
 - Counties and their representatives should incorporate diversity commitments
- Prepare the necessary accommodations needed to support diverse peer specialists once hired
- State Certified training vendors should be diverse and representative of the community
 - Offer web-based training for peer specialists, including digital literacy

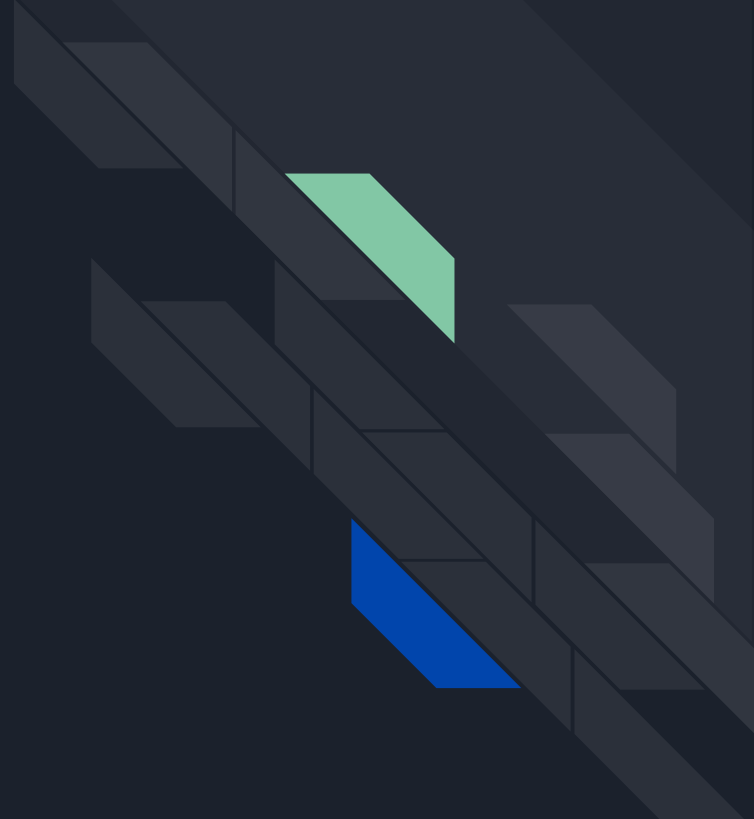


Why Does it Matter?

- Peers are essential to recovery
- Medi-Cal program provides additional viable funding resources to expand the peer workforce
- Diverse peers provide community insight
- Employers such as counties and nonprofits/community based organizations need to develop infrastructure to support and sustain people from diverse backgrounds once hired



*Responses from
Participants*



How We Collected Feedback



- Reached out to a variety of people of differing backgrounds
- “What are ways we can reach out to your community relative?”
 - Prior to hiring
 - Once onboarded

**Note: These responses are not intended to tokenize any community, and approach techniques should be expected to vary slightly between individuals*

Why This Feedback Matters

- Mental health disparities remain a persistent public health issue in the United States, particularly for underserved populations such as racial and ethnic minorities, sexual and gender minorities, individuals from lower socioeconomic strata, or those residing in rural or frontier geographic areas (NIMH, 2021).
- LGBTQ+ individuals are more than twice as likely as heterosexual men and women to have a mental health disorder in their lifetime.
- 2.7 million Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders have a mental and/or substance use disorder (SUD)...Cultural and structural barriers prevent Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders from accessing mental health services
- Gay men experience adverse mental health outcomes including mood disorders, substance use and suicide more frequently than heterosexual men.
- Information taken from [Psychiatry.org](https://www.psychiatry.org)



Why This Feedback Matters (continued)



- The people who need mental health assistance have identities that intersect with isolated communities
- We need peers who understand the cultural complexities that surround discussions/treatment of mental illnesses in a variety of communities

Workforce Outreach Considerations for LGBTQ+ Community

Outreach

- Establish contact in LGBTQ+ spaces
 - Ex: working in hospital with LGBTQ+ care ward
- Establish contact to build trust

After Hire

- Offer LGBTQ+ specific services
- Website page with staff pictures (show diversity)
- Pronouns in emails
- Consider if physical work site is in safe area
- Prepping the organization to be able to accommodate to these populations



Outreach Strategies to Engage Blind and Visually Impaired



Outreach

- E-flyers with alt text
- TikTik/short videos with voiceovers of information
- PSAs for radio, TV, video with descriptive audio
- [Work with Disability Rights California](#)
- [Braille Institute](#)
- [Wayfinder Family Services](#)
- Target disability job development programs

After Hire

- Create speciality for disability peer specialist in SB 803
 - Vocational Rehab, [State Independent Living Council \(SILC\)](#)

Outreach Strategies and Considerations for South Asian Community



Outreach

- Community centers:
 - Mosques for prayer
 - Identify various refugee communities to engage and employ
 - ex: Afghans
 - Younger demographic are most receptive (TAY)
 - Connect with County Ethnic Service Managers
 - [County Behavioral Health Directors Association](#)

After Hire

- Inclusiveness of diverse parent-partners
- Incorporating cultural practices in training and engagement strategies

Cultural Approaches and Considerations for Outreaching to Black Community

Outreach and Recruitment

- Partner with educational institutions, churches and nonprofits that employ and serve the community
- Target neighborhood locations with predominantly Black demographics
- Find community leaders in community-based orgs
- Develop basic guidelines to approaching groups
- Consider hiring cultural brokers

After Hire

- Incorporate cultural specific practices in training and engagement strategies



Cultural Approaches and Considerations for Outreaching to the Latinx Community



Outreach Consideration

- Steps should be taken to build relationships with the Latinx/Hispanic community and understand cultural differences
- **Time must be spent dedicated to developing relationships with families, individuals, businesses and organizations before outreach**
- Outreach should be offered in English and Spanish
- Outreach should include a family outreach approach. Accommodations should be made to engage or care for children and the elderly during outreach and engagement
- Accommodate varied work schedules

Approaches to Outreach to API Community



Outreach

- Churches
- Grocery Stores in Asian communities with Communal Bulletin boards
- Ethnic Enclaves (neighborhoods where API live, work and eat)

After Hire

- Employers/supervisors must consider the impact of cultural stigma surrounding mental health, and the effect that might have on peers of this background
- Employers/supervisors must develop a robust workplace reflective of this community being supported
- Foreign language accommodations

Moving Forward/ Call To Action

- Counties and CBO's must make a commitment to recruit, hire and train peers from diverse backgrounds
- Government oversight is needed to ensure follow-through on promises to create diverse workspaces
- Innovation projects for technical assistance to BIPOC, peer-led nonprofits relative Medi-Cal programmatic and business functions is critical



Moving Forward/Call to Action (continued)

- Employers should consider promoting individuals from diverse communities into supervisory positions
 - Create career pipelines
- Peer outreach is more than just initial engagement, its commitment to embracing diverse communities into different workplaces through hiring and training





Thank you

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