

Peer Support Role Description

A Peer Supporter is a staff member that has been trained and has developed the skills necessary to offer formal support to his or her colleagues in upsetting situations, such as adverse events. A Peer Supporter helps colleagues by: listening, normalizing feelings, validating competency, discussing need for time away from work and/or need for additional resources, and directing peer to additional resources. The Peer Supporter will maintain short- and long-term contact with affected peers as often as the Supporter deems appropriate in each situation. It is **not** within a Peer Supporter's role to participate in any Quality Improvement analysis, offer disclosure coaching, deal with job performance issues, or counsel peers regarding substance abuse or mental health issues. This role does not replace any existing support structures in place at the medical center.

Once the Peer Supporter has been nominated by colleagues as someone to whom they would most likely go when in need of support, the following commitments are asked of the Peer Supporter:

- Attend a three-hour training session
- Maintain strict confidentiality
- Be available and willing to provide support if you are contacted by a peer
- Respond to monthly emails that track the number of times you have given support and the general types of support given
- Attend two debriefing sessions a year
- Identify yourself to peers as a Peer Supporter

Search "Peer Support" on the BIDMC portal for more information about the program or contact Lisa Buchsbaum at lbuchsba@bidmc.harvardd.edu