

September 2024

# PEER VISITATION 101: GETTING STARTED

# AGENDA



Peer Visitation Series Overview



Establishing a group of peer visitors



Program Benefits



Screening and Training Peers



Breakout Rooms

POLL

## GOALS FOR THIS WEBINAR

Provide an outline for planning a Peer Visitation Program.

Talk to fellow TSN Coordinators about your plan and get some feedback.

Leave with at least 2 steps you can take before our next session.





**TSN PEER  
VISITATION  
AT-A-GLANCE**

- 211 TSN Centers listed in TSN Coordinator Directory
- 38 Trauma Centers offer Peer Visitation
- 10-15 Trauma Centers in the planning process

# PEER VISITATION 101 SERIES

## Session I

- Establishing a group of Peer Visitors

## Session II

- Training and facilitating visits

## Session III

- Trouble Shooting, Q&A: TSN Coordinators with active Peer Visitation

# ESTABLISHING A PEER VISITATION PROGRAM IN YOUR HOSPITAL

Session I

Establishing a group of Peer Visitors

MEET BRANDON AND TINA





# WHY START A TSN PEER VISITATION PROGRAM?



Traumatic injury impacts not only the physical function of a person but the psychosocial health of the patient and their family.



They may face isolation, financial upheaval and continued feelings of anger, depression or guilt.



TSN Peer Visitors can offer an opportunity to connect with other survivors and receive and give support.



These groups can help normalize the experience of recovery!

# WHAT IS A PEER VISITOR

A TSN peer visitor is someone who has experienced traumatic injury and is now living a productive life.

Peer Visitors are sensitive listeners who use their training and communication skills to support other support another patient's recovery.

A peer visitor is **not** a professional counselor, therapist or advisor (medical, legal or otherwise).

# PEER VISITATION IS WIDESPREAD

## Informal

- Peer Support is not a new concept and occurs informally in most everyday settings.
- New parents, graduate students, etc.
- Close connections can be forged between strangers, in these situations

## Formal

- Amputee Coalition
- Spinal Cord Injury
- These programs tap into the expertise and caring of those that have “been there”.



## THE TRAUMA EXPERIENCE

Trauma can be isolating.

In addition to being injured and in pain, patients surviving trauma are thrust unexpectedly into a new world.

Trauma alters routines, roles and relationships.

Few trauma survivors have friends or family members that have shared their experience.

TSN Peer Visitors are in a unique position to normalize the trauma patient's experience to offer hope and perfective.



# BENEFITS OF PEER VISITATION

## PEER VISITATION CAN BENEFIT PATIENTS, FAMILIES AND THE TRAUMA TEAM.



Patients and families can glean hope from interacting with someone who has injured and moved on to recover.



Patients have the opportunity to tell their story to someone that understands.



Hospital staff members care deeply about their patients but cannot always dedicate the time to this important task of supporting the patient, emotionally.



In the acute care environment, it is not often that the staff members can see a patient thriving in recovery. This can often be very heartwarming for the staff members.

## ESTABLISHING SUPPORT, PROMOTING THE PROGRAM AND BUILDING THE TEAM

- Peer Visitation will be more successful when the hospital staff is familiar with the program and support it.
- TSN advisory committee



# COSTS, RESOURCES, NEEDS

## Costs

- Managing a peer visitation program is not costly, but does require the time and energy of a TSN Coordinator

## Resources

- Volunteer services and the Peer Visitation Training

## Needs

- Space for training and debrief

# MARKETING THE PROGRAM

Word of mouth

Flyers

Brochures

Direct Mailing

Newsletter

Hospital Website



## Peer Visitation Program

### What is Peer Visitation?

Peer visitation offers trauma patients the opportunity to talk with a trained volunteer who has experienced the aftermath of a serious injury. TSN peer visitors understand the concerns of trauma patients on a personal level, the TSN peer visitor can relate to the uncertainty they may have about recovery, and offer understanding and tips for getting through the day. Most importantly, they are there to listen.

### What are the benefits of talking with a peer visitor?

- Getting answers to questions from the perspective of someone who has lived through a similar experience
- Learning practical tips about recovery and how to move forward
- Receiving encouragement and support
- Feeling less anxious and alone

## WHO IS READY TO BECOME A PEER VISITOR?

- Demonstrates an ability to listen to others
- Comfortable meeting new people and working in the hospital
- Communicates with compassion
- Understands the recovery process
- There is no “time frame” after injury for when someone is ready to become a peer, but the individual should have made sufficient progress in their recovery and has resumed work, education or home activities.

## WHO IS NOT READY?



Express a high degree of anger or unresolved feelings regarding their trauma are usually not included in the visitation process until they have progressed further in their emotional recovery.



Are not good active listeners



Was upset with their medical care and wants to make sure others do not experience the same thing

# PEER VISITOR TRAINING

# TRAINING

## Training as a Hospital Volunteer

- Important part of the training
- Working with your hospital volunteer office is an important step in establishing your program

## Peer Visitor Training

- 2-day training
- 3-hour condensed training
- Tailored to your center

# SAMPLE TRAINING

# PV TRAINING OVERVIEW

## Topics

- Identify the role of the PV
- How to present oneself in a helpful manner
- Discuss emotional and physical recovery
- Listening skills
- Handling sensitive issues



# RESOURCES

TSN Website



Coordinator Resources



Peer Visitation



# BREAKOUT ROOMS

WHAT TWO STEPS CAN YOU TAKE  
BEFORE SESSION II?



**QUESTIONS?**