

THE PIPELINE

SINCE 1991

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2020 GEORGIA EVENTS

GMHCN Board Meetings
Face-to-Face
Macon, May 8
St. Simons Island, August 17
November 7-8

Conference Call
March 9
July 8

Board Retreat
November 5-6

Certified Peer Specialist Trainings
2020 Trainings
Macon, Feb. 3-8
Augusta, May 11-21
Cordele, July 18-23
Columbus, Sep. 21-Oct. 1
Atlanta, Dec. 7-17

Certified Peer Specialist CEU Forum
Macon, April 8

Whole Health Action Management
Duluth, April 22-23

Georgia Peer Support Institutes
Helen, May 5-7
St. Simons Island, Nov. 11-13

Mental Health Day at the Capitol
Atlanta, February 7

Georgia Parent Support Network
Mardi Gras Ball, Atlanta
February 25

5th Annual Ken Whiddon Memorial Golf Tournament
Skiyl Island Golf Club
May 2

GMHCN 29th Annual Summer Conference
St. Simons Island
August 18-20

Holiday Celebrations
throughout the year
at GMHCN's Peer Support, Wellness and Respite Centers statewide
Visit gmhc.org for times and locations

KEEPING GEORGIA CONNECTED

Peer support is a vital part of Georgia's recovery-oriented system of care, and it is a really big system. The State of Georgia, and its public behavioral health system, covers over 59,000 square miles inhabited by over 10,000,000 people. More than half of Georgia's population is condensed into ten of its 159 counties, but there are many areas of the state that are very sparsely populated. In fact, there are 24 Georgia counties with fewer than 10,000 people. Access to recovery and wellness supports is just as important for the people in those counties as for those living in metropolitan areas, but it is not always possible to have brick-and-mortar facilities that are practical for people who may live in rural areas, have limited mobility, or lack access to transportation. And for many Georgians, the times when our behavioral health providers are open are when we are at work ourselves. That is why for many Georgians, the ability to access support over the phone is an important part of our wellness and recovery plans. Georgia is fortunate to have a network of behavioral health allies who coordinate to make sure Georgians have access to the recovery and wellness supports.

The Peer2Peer WarmLine operated by the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network began providing peer support over the phone through its Peer Support and Wellness Center of Decatur when it opened in 2008. As each of four additional Centers have opened, the capacity of the Peer2Peer WarmLine has grown, and Georgians with behavioral health concerns are able to receive behavioral health peer support over the phone 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The real value of the Peer2Peer WarmLine is in the relationships that emerge, according to Roslind Hayes, Statewide Coordinator for Georgia's Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers, who says "In the ten years I have been working with the Centers, it has just been phenomenal to see how mutuality empowers hope, and authentic connections build resilience. When peers who have been calling in for support show up to an event at one of the Centers for the first time and are able to make that direct personal connection with someone they have been talking to on the phone for months or even years, you can see that joy of realization, of that essential direct human contact—and you see how much the support they have been receiving on the WarmLine has really meant to them."

The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse launched the CARES WarmLine in November 2017 to provide telephone peer support to Georgians in or seeking recovery from substance use. According to Neil Campbell, GCSA's Executive Director, "Our CARES WarmLine keeps us connected to rural Georgia. We get calls from people all over the state experiencing loneliness, who want to be connected with people who won't judge them. They are surprised when they learn that we aren't going to push them down a particular pathway to recovery. We are here to walk with them on the path they choose." The CARES WarmLine is operated 8:30am-11:00pm every day of the year.

The Georgia Crisis and Access Line provides telephonic crisis intervention, clinical triage, and referral for Georgians in need 24/7/365. GCAL also operates as the preferred point of entry for Crisis Stabilization Units and State Hospitals, provides Mobile Crisis Dispatch Georgia's Mobile Crisis Response Teams, and generally serves as the front door to Georgia's public safety net. For people in need of clinical support who do not know where to turn, GCAL has the answers. Even more than that, according to Wendy Farmer, the Chief Executive Officer of GCAL, "Reaching out can be really hard. We want people to know that we are available 24/7 and no issue is too big or small. That phone can feel so heavy, but so often when someone does reach out, they feel so much lighter afterwards. Sometimes just a little time with someone who cares and will listen makes all the difference."

PEER2PEER WarmLine 24/7 Peer Support 888-945-1414

www.peer2peer.center

CARES WarmLine 8:30am-11pm Substance Use Peer Support 844-326-5400

www.gasubstanceabuse.org

Georgia Crisis and Access Line 24/7 Crisis and Referral 800-75-4225

<https://dhhdd.georgia.gov/access-services>



