



# Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers of Georgia

The Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers of Georgia are peer-run alternatives to traditional mental health day programs and psychiatric hospitalization. There are no doctors, nurses, case-managers, or clinical staff associated with the Centers, although each participant is free to utilize his or her established medical and community resources. Participants have a file consisting of their Proactive Conversation, contact information, and participation guidelines. Guests have access to their file upon request. No independent confirmation of mental health challenges or diagnosis is required. The Centers welcome self-referrals, and participation in all activities is entirely voluntary.

## Wellness Activities

10am-6pm daily

A variety of activities to support recovery and wellness are scheduled throughout the day at each Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Center. Examples include Trauma-Informed Peer Support, Double Trouble in Recovery, Wellness Recovery Action Plan, Art Exploration, and Whole Health.

## Respite Rooms

Respite is a non-clinical alternative to psychiatric hospitalization, and a proactive tool for maintaining one's wellness. Respite provides an opportunity for a person who may be feeling overwhelmed by life's challenges to be supported by peers in a healing, home-like environment. Our respite model is trauma-informed and rooted in values such as self-direction, mutuality, and the belief that healing and growth are possible for all.

Each of the five Centers has three respite rooms that are free of charge and can be utilized by an individual who feels they would benefit from 24/7 peer support. Each respite guest has their own room, and determines for themselves what they need or want during a respite stay. Guests are free to come and go at their leisure, and can be expected to be treated with dignity and respect. Food is provided, and free WiFi is available.

In order to be eligible to utilize a respite room, a Proactive Conversation must be on file at the Center.

## Proactive Conversation

A Proactive Conversation is an interactive dialogue between a peer staff and a peer who may choose to utilize a respite room in the future. The Proactive Conversation is designed to establish a relationship among peers before a respite room is sought. A Proactive Conversation is completed when a peer is doing well.

## Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Center Locations

*Decatur*

Address: 444 Sycamore Drive  
Decatur, GA 30030  
Phone: 404-371-1414

*Bartow County*

Address: 201 North Erwin Street  
Cartersville, GA 30120  
Phone: 770-276-2019

*Colquitt County*

417 2nd Street SE  
Moultrie, GA 31768  
Phone: 229-873-9737

*Henry County*

Address: 67 Keys Ferry Street  
McDonough, GA 30253  
Phone: 678-782-7666

*White County*

Address: 46 Knaus Drive,  
Cleveland, GA 30528  
Phone: 706-865-3601

For more information, please email [wellnesscenter@gmhcn.org](mailto:wellnesscenter@gmhcn.org), or call the Peer2Peer Warm Line at 888-945-1414 anytime.

## Come Say Hello!

The best way to experience what the Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers have to offer is to come visit us. Please feel free to stop by any Center from 10am-5pm for an introduction to our model of peer support.



[gmhcn.org](http://gmhcn.org)

## WHO WE ARE

The Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network believes in the ability of everyone living with mental health concerns to enjoy lives of purpose, meaning, productivity, and wellness. Since it was founded in 1991, this grassroots nonprofit organization has been led and run by mental health peers—people in mental health recovery. GMHCN has evolved into a statewide organization of over 100 employees engaged in advocacy, education, training, and peer support services for the people of Georgia.

At its core, the basis of peer support—one person using their lived experience to support another—is not new; in fact, it is the basis of human growth and development. Georgia's Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers, one of the many projects of GMHCN, employs peer specialists certified by the State of Georgia to provide peer support services.

The Certified Peer Specialists at Georgia's Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers do not give diagnoses or prescribe medications. We provide the evidence that we can and do recover from our mental health challenges. We provide skills, tools, and above all, a place for hope to thrive.

At Georgia's Peer Support, Wellness, and Respite Centers, we embrace the State of Georgia's recovery definition and guiding principles and values. They are not a definition that was provided to us, but one that Georgians across the state developed throughout a series of listening sessions sponsored by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities in 2013:

## GEORGIA'S DEFINITION OF RECOVERY

Recovery is a deeply personal, unique, and self-determined journey through which an individual strives to reach his/her full potential. Persons in recovery improve their health and wellness by taking responsibility in pursuing a fulfilling and contributing life while embracing the difficulties one has faced.

Recovery is not a gift from any system. Recovery is nurtured by relationships and environments that provide hope, empowerment, choices and opportunities.

Recovery belongs to the person. It is a right, and it is the responsibility of us all.

## GEORGIA'S RECOVERY GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Recovery...

- Emerges from hope
- Is person-driven
- Is strengths-based
- Is age-independent
- Recognizes the wisdom of *lived experiences*
- Occurs via many pathways
- Is holistic
- Is supported by peers, allies, advocates and families
- Is nurtured through relationships and social networks
- Is culturally-based and influenced
- Is anchored in wellness, addressing a person's emotional health, environmental well being, financial satisfaction, intellectual creativity, occupational pursuits, physical activities, social engagement and spiritual health
- Addresses trauma
- Supports self-responsibility
- Empowers communities
- Is based on respect

