ColumbiaCare makes it a top priority to apply the expertise and experience of Peers in multi-faceted ways by having them participate at each organization level. ColumbiaCare has Peer participation on the Board of Directors, at the table serving as members of our Quality Improvement committees, guiding policy and training, providing coordination as part of the Administrative Team, and last but certainly not least, providing direct services to clients within our facilities.

**Resident Advocate/Coordinator.** ColumbiaCare’s Resident Advocate Coordinator helps to broaden the understanding of ColumbiaCare staff to insure our residents receive the best quality care available. Other duties include investigating and resolving complaints in order to protect the rights, dignity and safety of our residents; keeping apprised of the latest developments in peer-to-peer treatment programs; and serving as a consumer advocate for all ColumbiaCare residents. The Resident Advocate Coordinator also serves as a resource for Peer QMHAs providing training, coordination and support.

**Peer QMHAs.** The Peer QMHA program is designed to give residents another tool as they pursue recovery from mental illness. ColumbiaCare employs a Peer QMHA in every residential program that is not only capable carrying the full responsibility and duties of a QMHA, but also as someone who models significant recovery from serious mental illness. On a day-to-day, moment-to-moment basis, ColumbiaCare residents get to witness the professional accomplishments of the Peer QMHA as evidence of the potential for their own recovery.

**Peer Training.** Another component of the Peer QMHA program, is generally based on the Intentional Peer Support (IPS) model created by Sherry Mead. In addition, our Peer QMHAs are encouraged to be trained through a State of Oregon AMH (Addictions & Mental Health) approved curriculum, as Peer Support Specialists (PSS).

For more information, please contact Mark Fisher, Resident Advocate Coordinator at mfisher@columbiacare.org.

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