



Foundation *for*  
Opioid Response Efforts

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06/12/23

# Strengthening the Opioid Use Disorder Workforce

Findings from a Groundbreaking Multi-State Survey of Peer  
Recovery Coaches



# Introduction



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**Karen A. Scott, MD, MPH**  
President  
Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts



Findings from the study can be found:  
<https://www.ForeFdn.org>

# Agenda

## 1. Introduction and Webinar Logistics

Karen A. Scott, MD, MPH (President, FORE)

## 2. Methodology of Survey

Robyn Rapoport, MA (Executive Vice President, SSRS)

## 3. National Peer Survey Results

Karen A. Scott, MD, MPH (President, FORE)

## 4. Reaction to the National Peer Survey Results from SAMHSA perspective

Paolo del Vecchio, M.S.W. (Director, Office of Recovery, SAMSHA)

## 5. State Opioid Response Director Perspective/Reaction to survey results

Dwayne Dean, RCPF, CPRS, RPS (Certified Peer Recovery Specialist,  
University of Maryland College Park)

## 6. State Peer Certification Program Perspective/Reaction to survey results

Justin Reid (Statewide Coach Coordinator, Maine Recovery Hub)

## 7. State Opioid Response Director Perspective/Reaction to survey results

Gordon H. Smith, Esq (Director of Opioid Response, Maine Governor's  
Office of Policy Innovation and the Future )

## 8. Question and Answer Session

Ken Shatzkes, PhD (Program Director, FORE)

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# Webinar Speakers



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**Robyn Rapoport, MA**

Executive Vice President  
Health Care, Public Policy Research and  
Strategic Initiatives  
SSRS



**Justin Reid**

Statewide Coach Coordinator  
Maine Recovery Hub  
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**Paolo del Vecchio, M.S.W.**

Director  
Office of Recovery, Office of Management  
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Administration (SAMHSA)  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



**Gordon H. Smith, Esq**

Director of Opioid Response  
Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and  
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State of Maine



**Dwayne J. Dean, RCPE, CPRS, RPS**

Peer Recovery Specialist  
Global Mental Health & Addictions Program  
University of Maryland College Park

# Webinar Logistics

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1. The webinar is being recorded and will be available on [www.ForeFdn.org](http://www.ForeFdn.org) shortly after the session ends.
2. Presentation slides will be made available for download on our website.
3. Please use the “Q&A” found at the bottom of your Zoom screen.
  - If you have a similar question, please upvote using the thumbs up button on the question.
  - We will read as many questions live as time permits.
4. There will be a brief survey immediately following the webinar. Please provide us with feedback!

# About FORE

Founded in 2018, the **Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE)** is a 501(c)(3) private, national, grantmaking foundation focused on one urgent public health emergency – **the opioid crisis**.

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## Vision

To inspire and accelerate action to end the opioid crisis

## Mission

To convene and support partners advancing patient-centered, **evidence-based solutions** addressing the opioid crisis

## Focus

With **patients at the center**, our focus includes:



Professional  
education



Payer & Provider  
strategies



Policy initiatives



Public awareness



**FORE**

# Methodology of Survey



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**Robyn Rapoport, MA**

Executive Vice President

Health Care, Public Policy Research and

Strategic Initiatives

SSRS

# Methodology – Overview

- With this survey, FORE hoped to better understand the experiences, needs, and challenges faced by certified Peer Recovery Coaches across the country.
  - Informed by qualitative research conducted in 2021 and in collaboration with the FORE Team and FORE's Advisory Group
- **Key Challenge** - Developing a Representative Sample
- In lieu of a national sample source, SSRS collaborated with the FORE team to gain support from individual states/certification boards
  - DE, PA, RI, VA – International Credentialing and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)
  - Oregon - Mental Health & Addiction Certification Board of Oregon (MHACBO).
  - Maine - Portland Recovery Community Center (PRCC)
  - Nevada - Center for the Application of Substance Use Technologies (CASAT)
  - New York – Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASA)
  - Arkansas – Department of Human Services
  - Ohio and Idaho – publicly available data



# Methodology – Key Components

Worked closely with an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the proper protection of the rights and welfare of the peers we interviewed, particularly given the sensitive nature of the survey



Survey instrument informed by qualitative research, with input from FORE and Advisory Group. Conducted five cognitive pretest interviews with peers from FORE's network ahead of the field period to test the survey instrument



Tailored outreach to PRCs in 11 states, including invitation and reminder emails. To increase cooperation, a \$25 virtual gift card was offered to all respondents upon completion of the survey.



Self-administered web survey, conducted October 25, 2022-January 19, 2023.

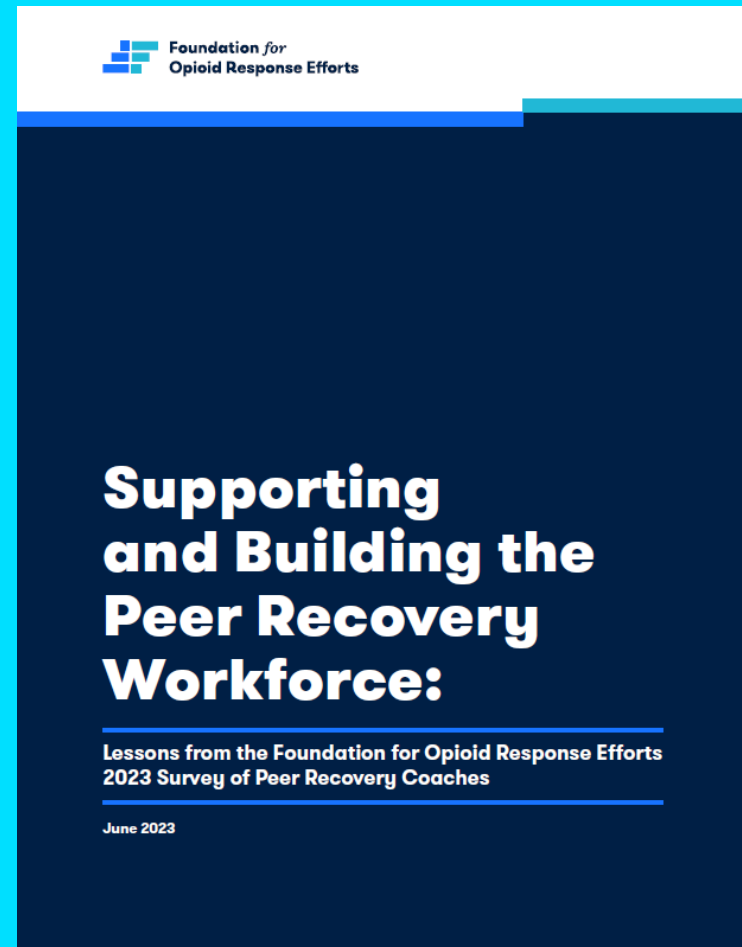
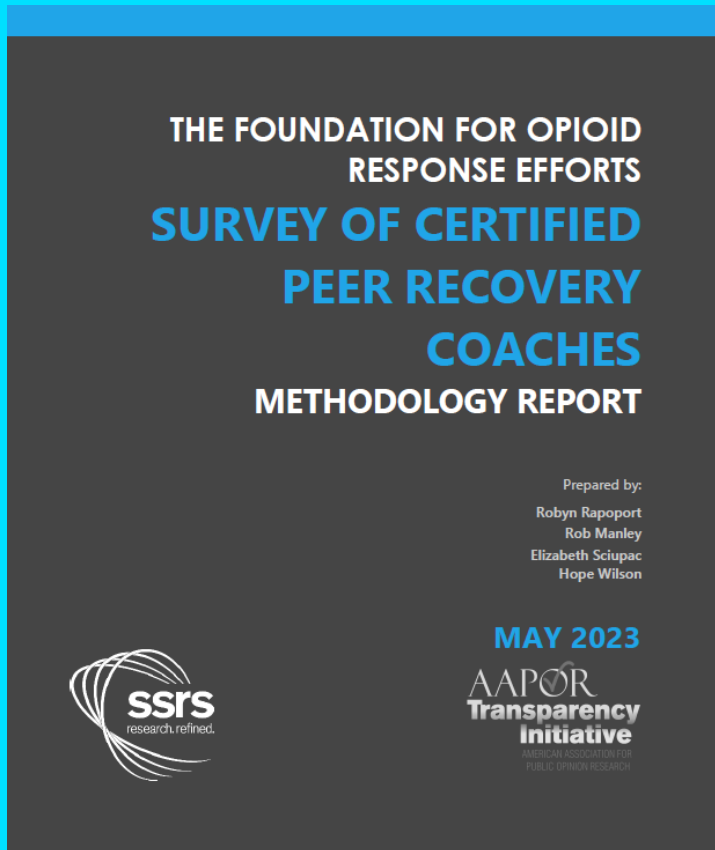
State	Available Sample	Total Invited	Total Completed Interviews	Response Rates
Delaware	150	150	73	50%
Pennsylvania	1565	398	154	46%
Rhode Island	173	173	76	47%
Virginia	927	456	171	42%
Oregon	1565	250	85	37%
Maine	104	104	57	69%
Nevada	228	228	84	53%
New York	3053	339	207	NA
Arkansas	166	166	43	34%
Ohio	834	834	198	26%
Idaho	653	653	26	11%
TOTAL	9,418	3,751	1,174	

Note: Please see full methodology report for details on how this survey was conducted.

# National Peer Survey Results



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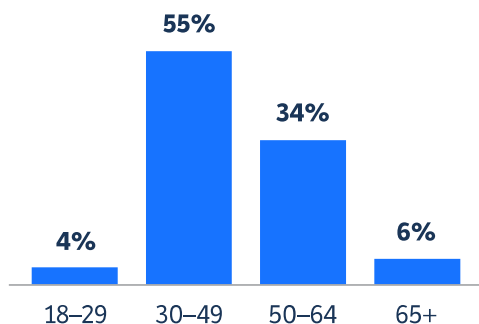


See Reports on: [www.ForeFdn.org](http://www.ForeFdn.org)

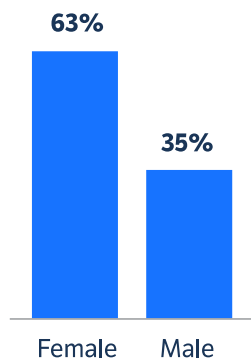
# Demographics of PRC Survey Respondents

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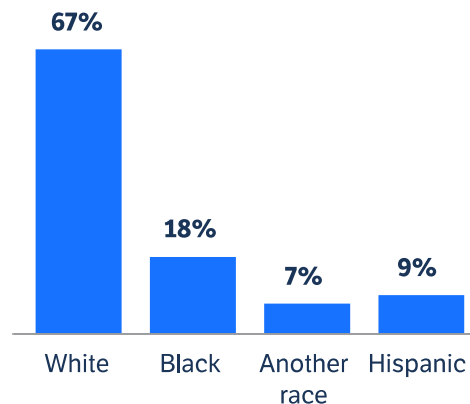
**Age**



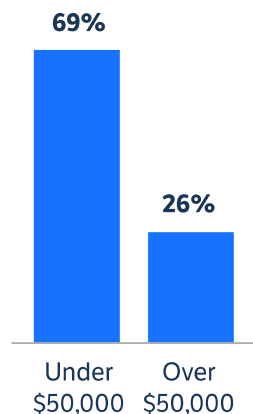
**Gender**



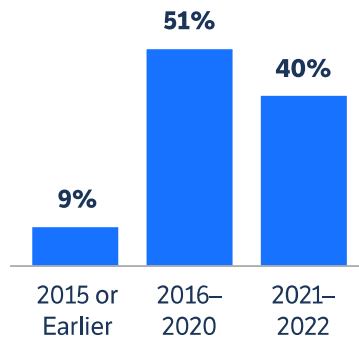
**Race/ethnicity**



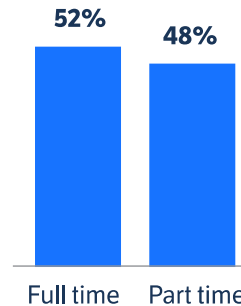
**Household income**



**Year became a peer**



**Employment status**



**Survey Respondents  
reported being highly  
motivated and mission  
driven to support people in  
recovery – but concerned  
about ability to stay in the  
field.**



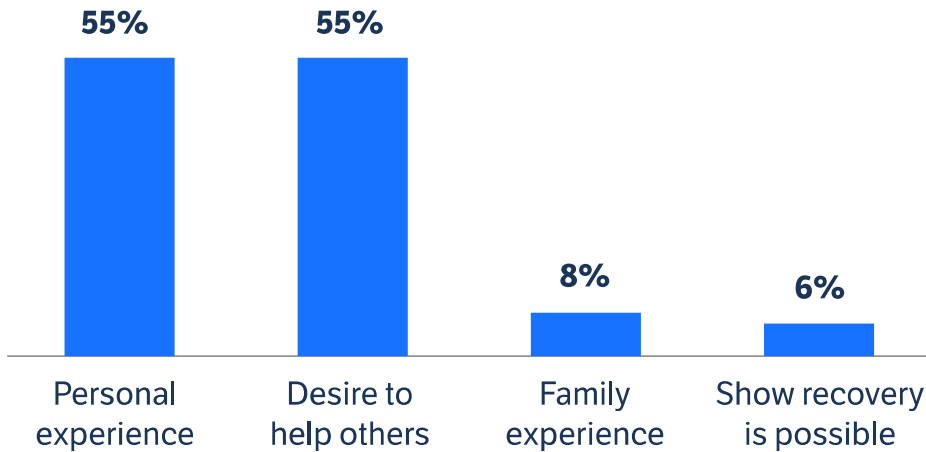
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# Motivation for Becoming a PRC

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***Q: Thinking back to before you started working as a peer, what was the main reason you wanted to support people experiencing OUD?***



Note: Multiple responses were allowed

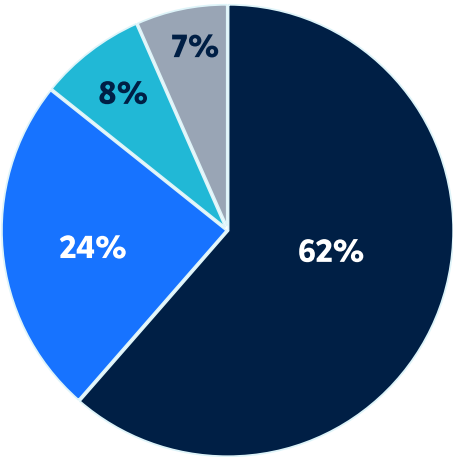
Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts 2023 Survey of Peer Recovery Coaches

# Interview with Peer Recovery Coach

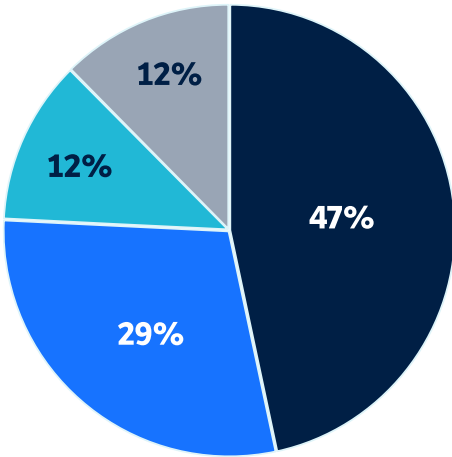


# Likelihood of Remaining a PRC

*Q: Thinking ahead two years, how likely is it that you will still be a PRC in 2024?*



*Q: Thinking ahead five years, how likely is it that you will still be a PRC in 2027?*

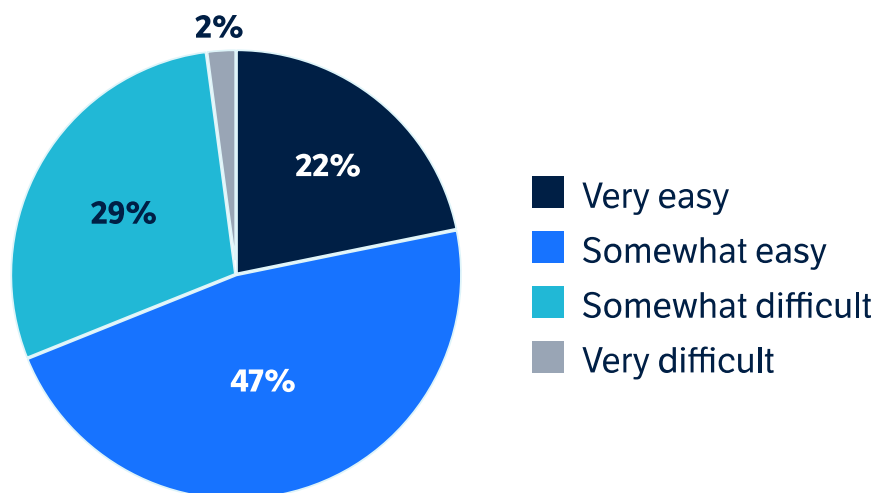


- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely

# Certification Process

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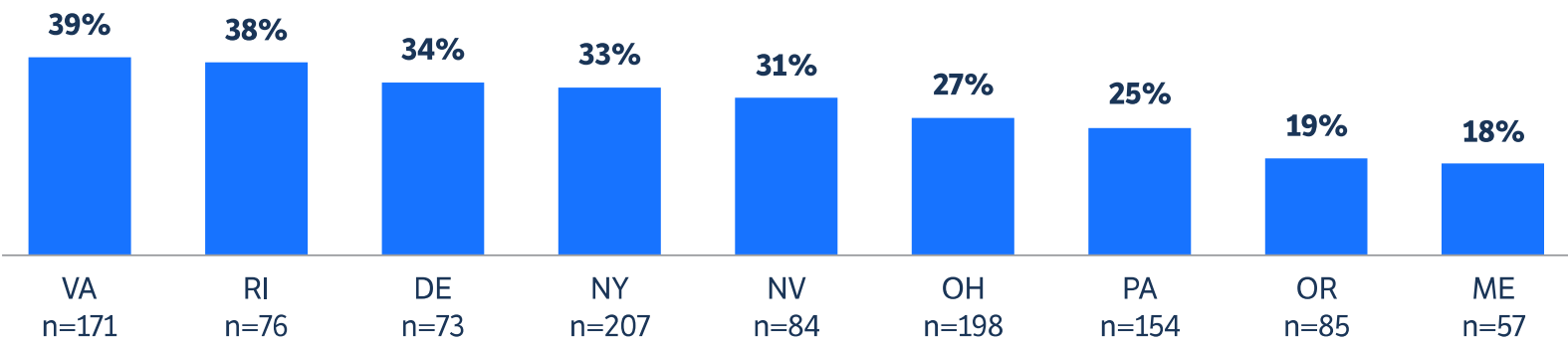
***Q: Overall, how easy or difficult was the certification process?***





# Ease of Certification Process

*% of PRC respondents who say the certification process was very or somewhat difficult*



Note: Data shown for states where there were more than 50 responses  
Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts 2023 Survey of Peer Recovery Coaches

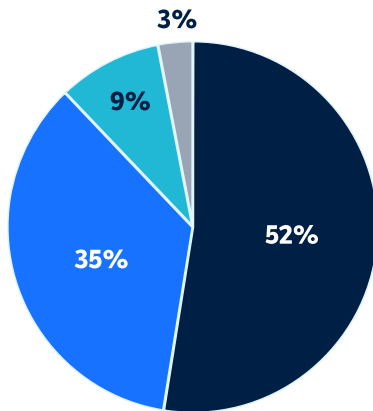
**PRC respondents reported working in many different settings, with people from many backgrounds, and engaging in a wide range of activities.**



# Defining Responsibilities

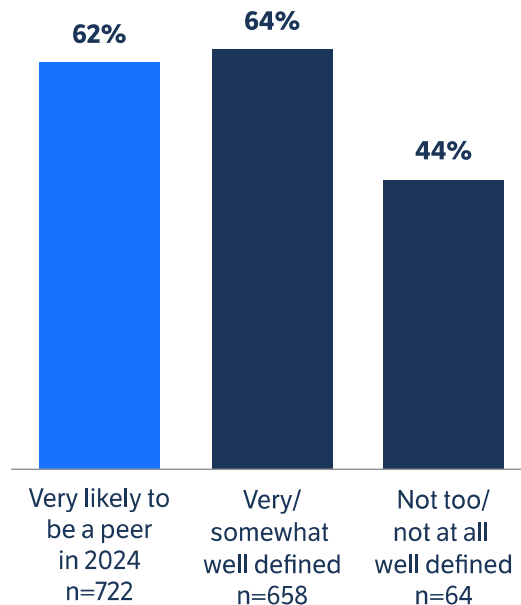
19

*% of PRC respondents who say their role is...*

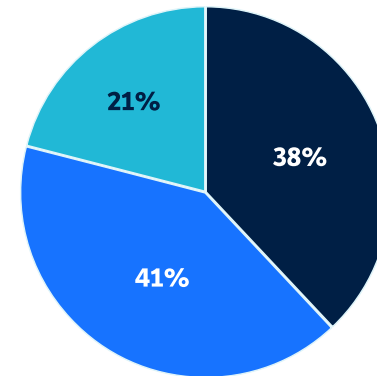


- Very well defined
- Somewhat well defined
- Not too well defined
- Not at all well defined

*% of PRC respondents who are very likely to still be a peer in 2024, by how well they feel their role is defined*



*% of PRC respondents who say their coworkers understand their role as a PRC...*

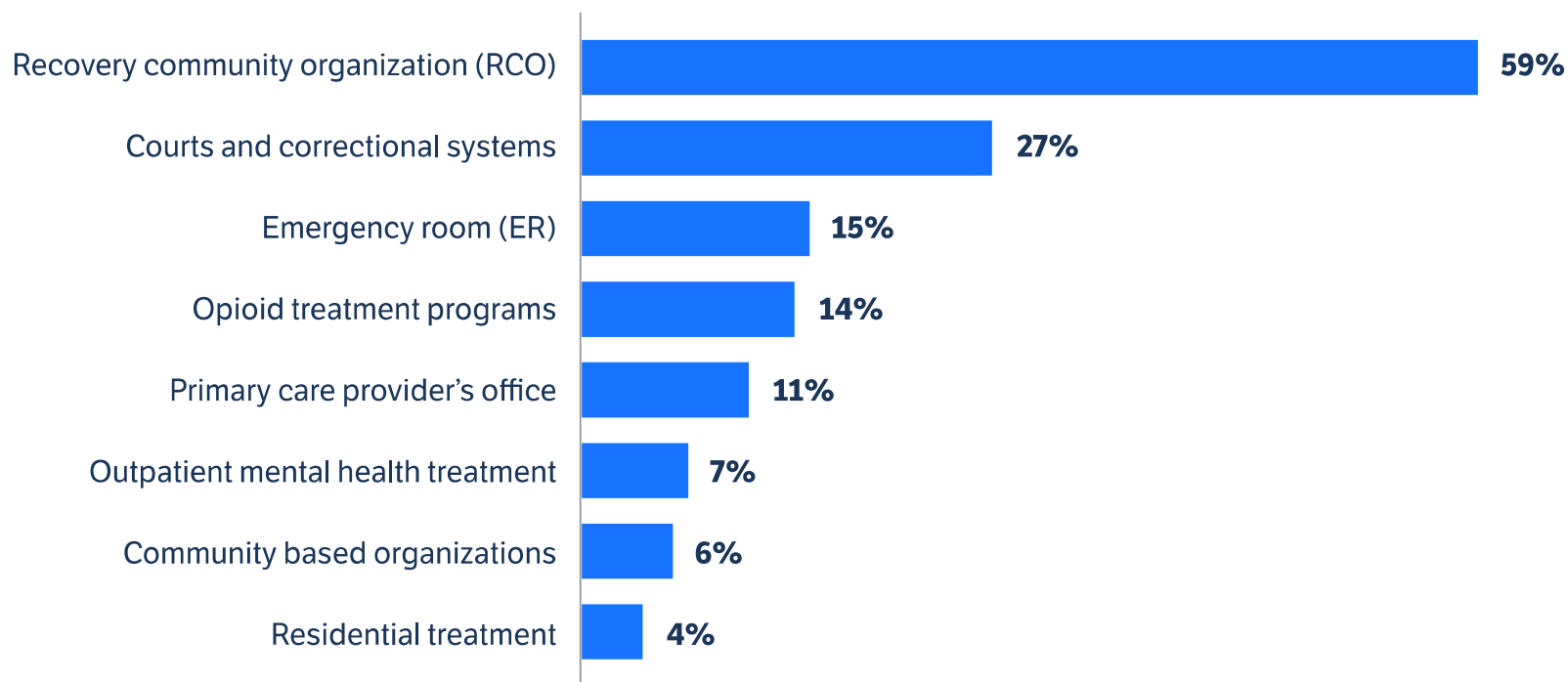


- Very well
- Somewhat well
- Not well

# Work Settings

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***Q: In which of the following settings do you currently support clients?***



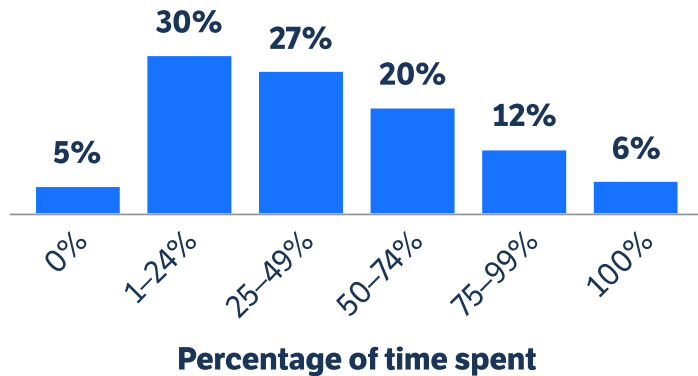
# Time Spent Supporting Recoverees

**Q: What portion of your time, on average, is spent supporting recoverees in the following ways?**

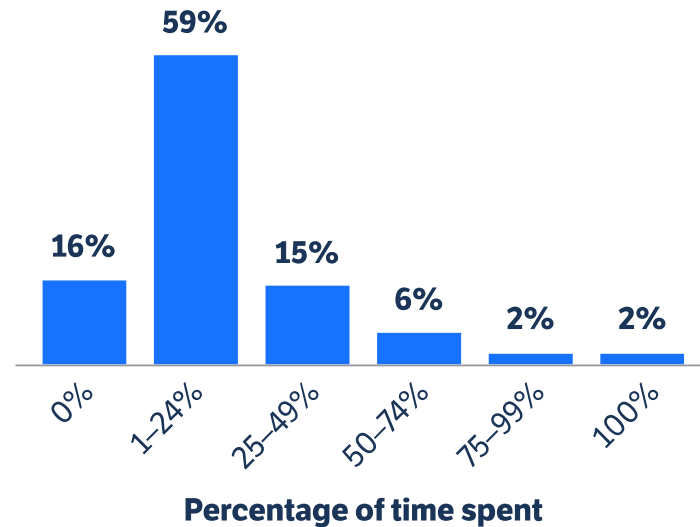
**% of PRC respondents**

21

Assisting with social needs such as housing, food, employment



Connecting with legal services/ assisting with legal issues



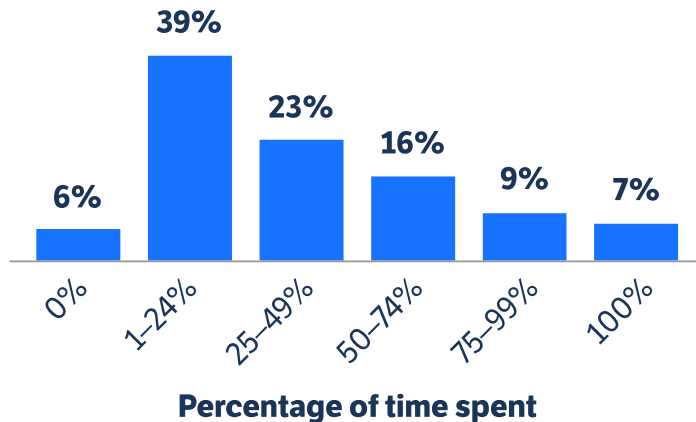
# Time Spent Supporting Recoverees

**Q: What portion of your time, on average, is spent supporting recoverees in the following ways?**

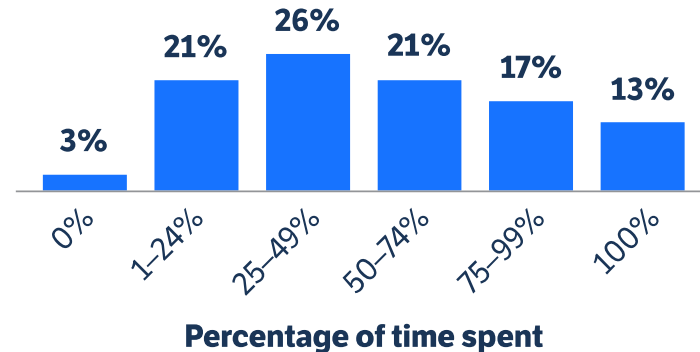
**% of PRC respondents**

22

Providing support to help recoveree stay on their medications/in treatment

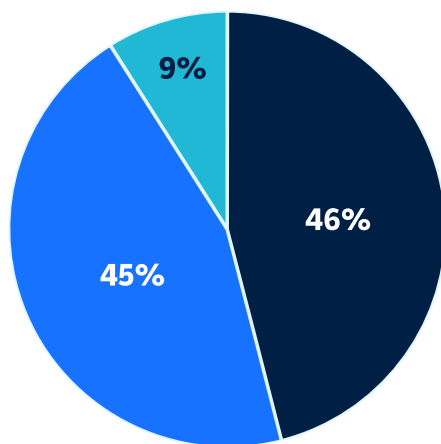


Providing specific counseling supports such as motivational interviewing



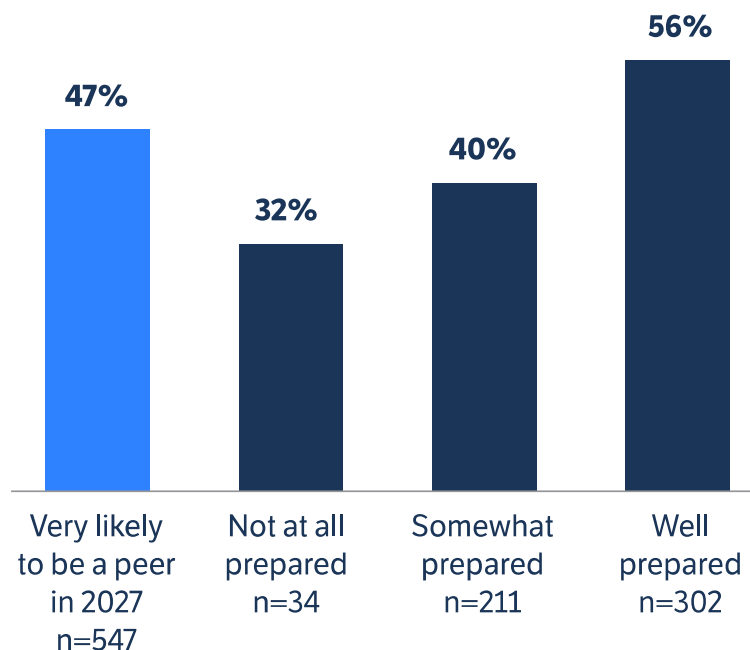
# Preparation for the Role

*Q: Upon entering the workforce, how prepared did you feel for your role as a PRC?*



- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared

*% of PRC respondents who are very likely to still be a peer in 2027, by how prepared they felt for their role*

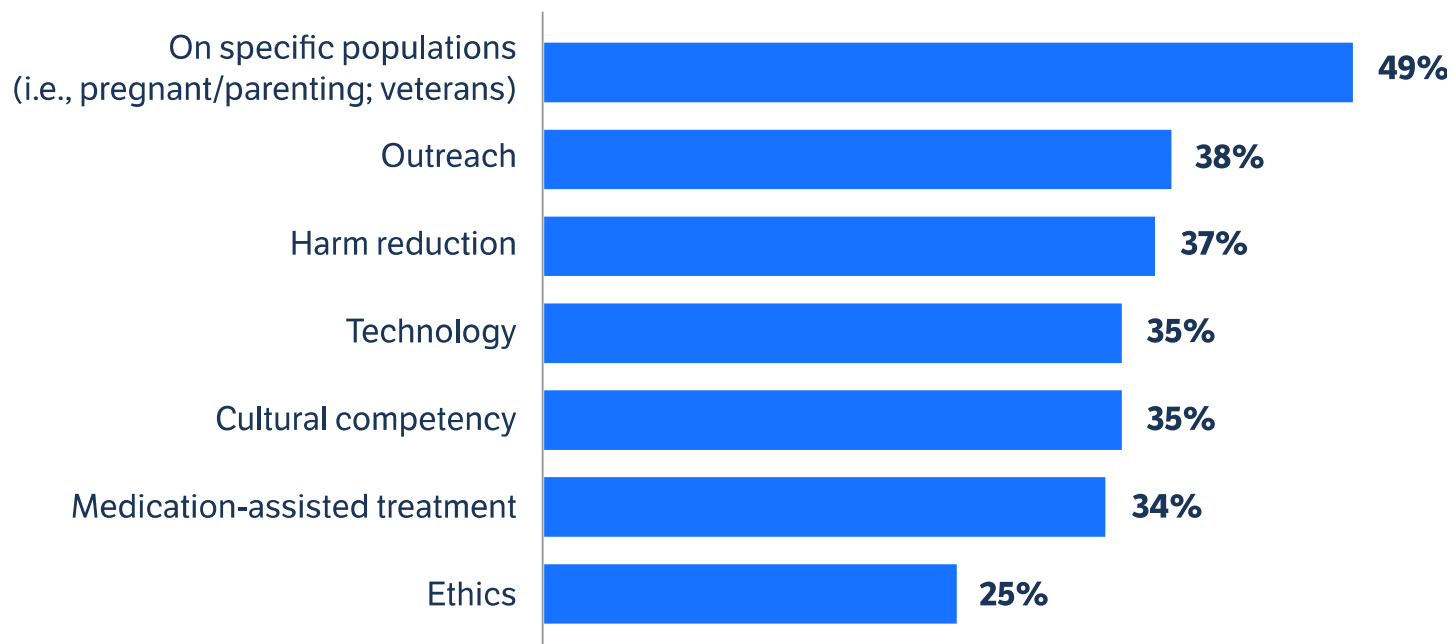


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# Training Needed

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***Q: In which of the following areas, if at all, do you feel you need (additional) training?***





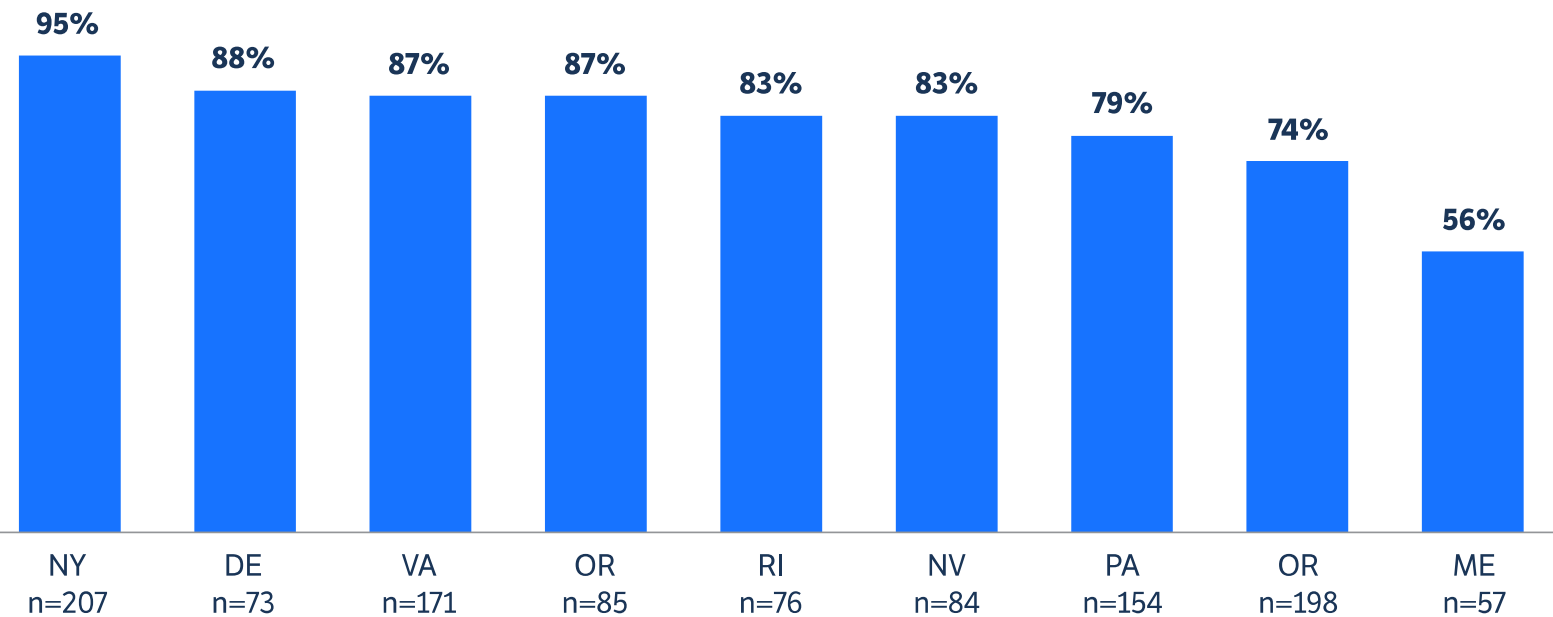
**PRC respondents reported concerns with financial compensation and stability, and levels of burnout and stress.**



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# Financial Compensation

*% of PRC respondents who receive financial compensation for the work they do as a PRC*

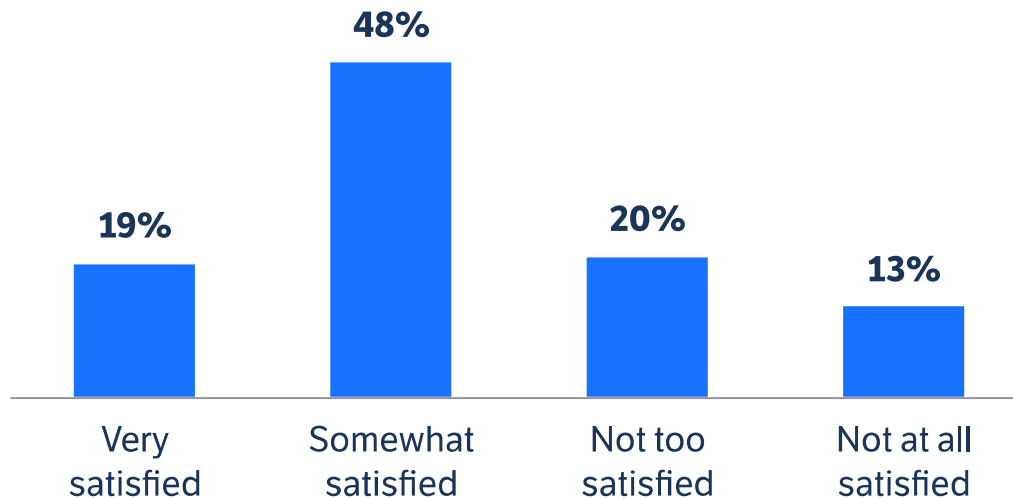


Note: Data shown for states where there were more than 50 responses  
Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts 2023 Survey of Peer Recovery Coaches

# Financial Compensation

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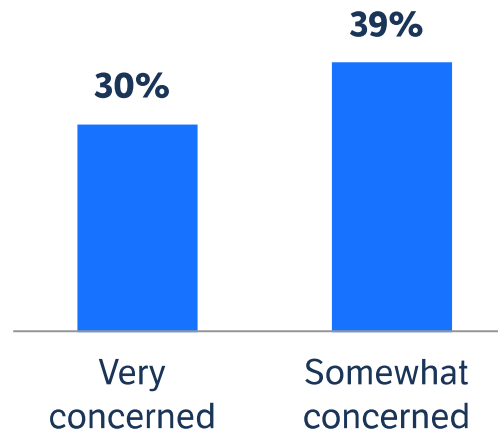
***% of PRC respondents who are very/somewhat/not too/  
not at all satisfied about their financial compensation  
(among PRCs who receive financial compensation, n=968)***



# Financial Compensation

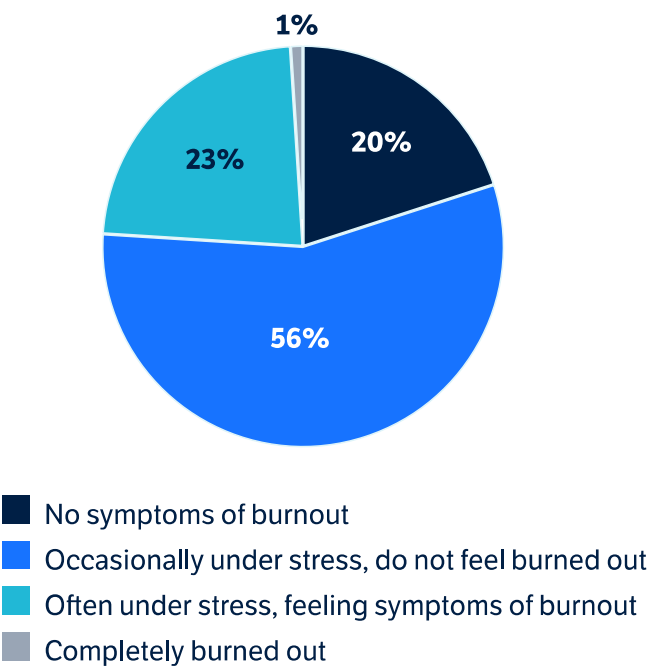
28

***% of PRC respondents who are very/somewhat concerned about potential budget cuts/loss of funding to support the PRC position within the next two years***

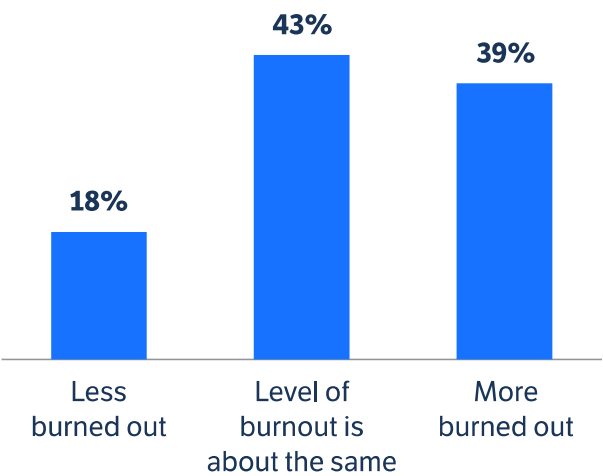


# Battling Burnout

Level of burnout



% of PRC respondents who say they feel \_\_\_\_ compared with before the pandemic began in March 2020, n=412



# Causes of Burnout

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*What's contributing to burnout? Based on those who feel some level of burnout, n=941*

**48%**



Emotional strain  
of working with  
recoverees

**26%**



Do not feel  
supported  
at work

**24%**



Working too  
many hours

**23%**



Caseload is  
too large

**Experienced supervision,  
career advancement and  
financial supports can all  
contribute to strengthening  
this workforce.**



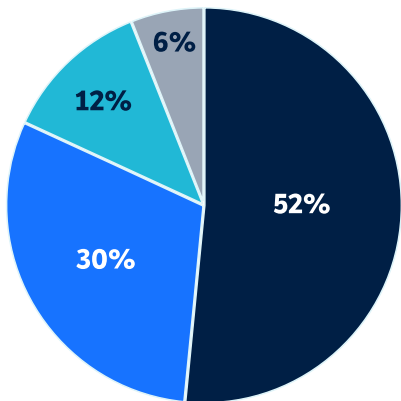
# Interview with Peer Recovery Coach





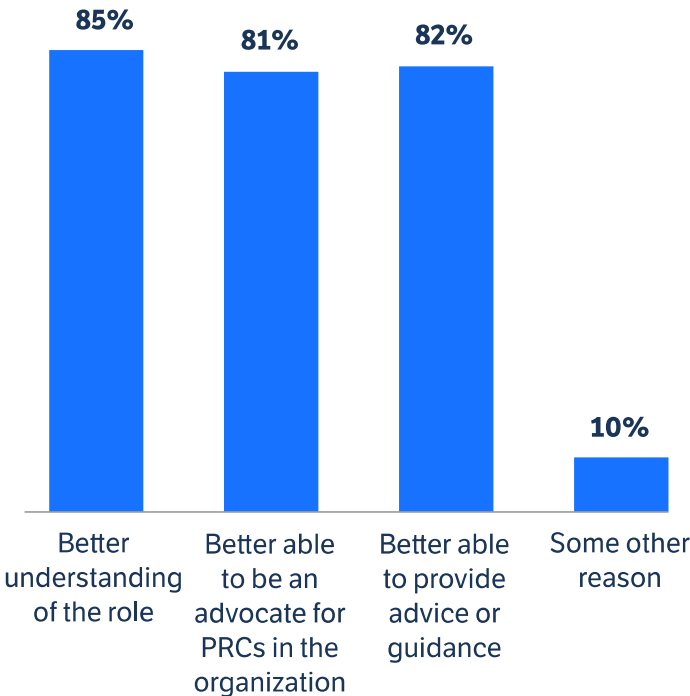
# Importance of Supervision

*Q: How important, if at all, is it to have a supervisor that is a PRC themselves?*



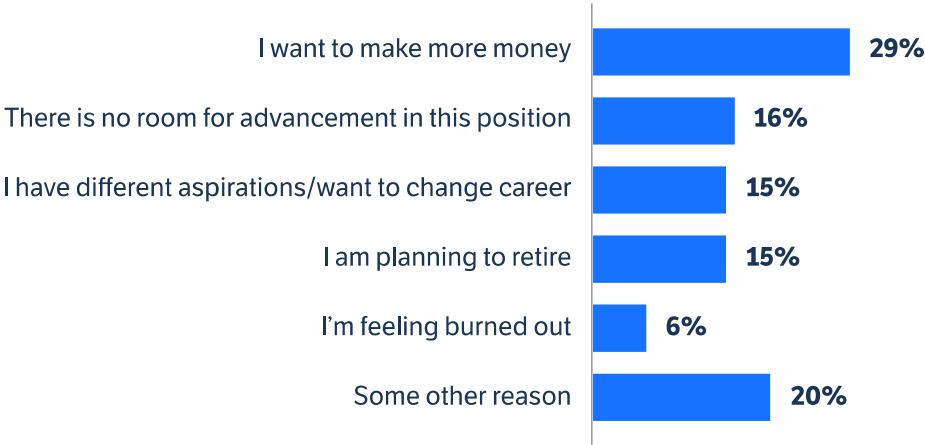
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Not at all important

*Q: Why is it important their supervisor is a PRC?*

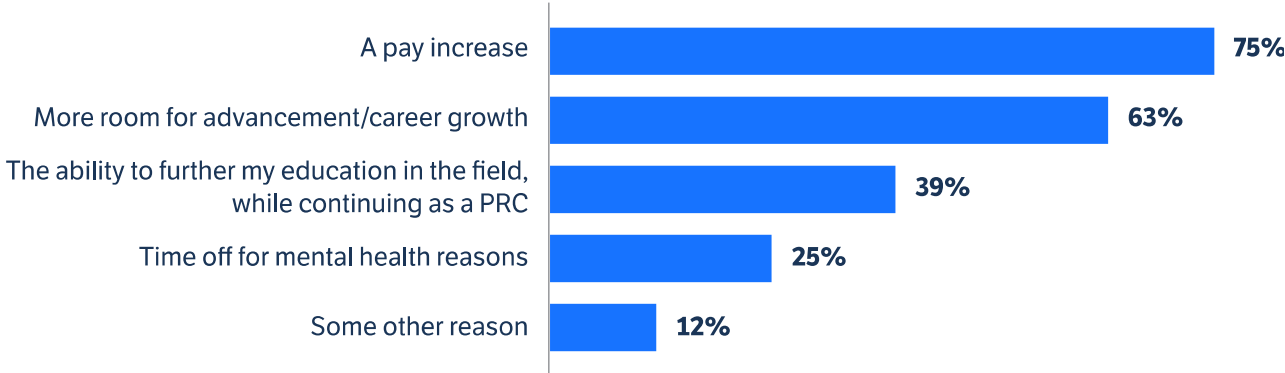


# Career Goals

**Q: What is the primary reason you are likely to find another career path?**



**Q: Which of the following factors, if any, would make you more likely to remain a PRC?**



# Conclusions

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## **PRCs are mission-driven, but face many challenges.**

- PRCs work in a relatively new and evolving field. While they feel passionate about their work, they face several challenges that could make it hard to sustain and grow this workforce.

## **PRCs need adequate compensation.**

- Employers, state Medicaid programs, public or private funders, and others who help pay for the work of PRCs should assess what comprises an appropriate level of compensation, considering whether peers earn a livable wage and their employment benefits.

## **PRCs need recognition from coworkers and emotional support.**

- Some PRCs said they often felt stressed or experienced symptoms of burnout due to the stress of working with people in recovery, because their caseloads were too large, and/or because they felt unsupported by their coworkers.

## **PRCs want opportunities to learn and build careers.**

- Employers and others should ensure that certification and training opportunities are accessible to PRCs so they can pursue their mission and develop their skills.

# Acknowledgements

## Advisory Group Members

**Adrienne Brown, MSW**, Board of Directors, Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts, Former Senior Administrator, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services

**Dwayne Dean, RCPF, CPRS, RPS**, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, University of Maryland College Park

**Julia W Felton, PhD**, Assistant Scientist, Henry Ford Health System

**Karen Fortuna, PhD, LISCW**, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Geisel School of Medicine, Dartmouth University

**Cortney Lovell**, Director, Practice Improvement and Consulting, National Council for Mental Wellbeing

**Jessica F. Magidson, PhD**, Director, Center for Substance Use, Addiction, and Health Research, University of Maryland College Park

## SSRS

**Robyn Rapoport, MA**, Executive Vice President, Health Care, Public Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives

**Rob Manley**, Research Director

**Elizabeth Sciupac**, Research Director

**Hope Wilson**, Associate Project Director

# Reaction to the National Peer Survey Results from SAMHSA



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**Paolo del Vecchio, M.S.W.**

Director

Office of Recovery, Office of Management  
Technology, and Operations

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration (SAMHSA)

U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services

# Reaction to Survey Results: Peer Workforce Training



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**Dwayne J. Dean, RCPF, CPRS, RPS**

Peer Recovery Specialist

Global Mental Health & Addictions Program

University of Maryland College Park

# Peer Workforce Needs

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- Lack of clarity around peer role and responsibilities
- The effects of the peer role on personal recovery
- Providing tools for peers to use
- Creating peer networks and peer-supported mentorship

# Training Peers in Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) to Promote Retention and Engagement in SUD Treatment

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- Promise of training peers in EBPs
- Behavioral Activation
- Creating peer networks to support implementation



# Behavioral Activation (BA) Training

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- Structure of BA training
- Components of BA



# Best Practices and Future Directions

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- Importance of peer-led training
- Consistency of BA with current practices
- Catering to different learning styles
- Opportunities for interaction
- Need for networking and support for sustained implementation
- Importance of supervision
- Providing CEUs

# Best Practices and Future Directions

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- Refining hiring practices to ensure peer success
- Supporting peer recovery
- Clarifying peer roles and responsibilities for agencies and employers
- Broadening training and continuing education opportunities
- Need to include policy makers and payors

# State Peer Certification Program Perspective and Reaction to Survey Results



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**Justin Reid**

Statewide Coach Coordinator

Maine Recovery Hub

Portland Recovery Community Center

# State Opioid Response Director Perspective and Reaction to Survey Results



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**Gordon H. Smith, Esq**

Director of Opioid Response

Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and  
the Future

State of Maine

# Question and Answer Session



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**Ken Shatzkes, PhD**  
Program Director  
Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts



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**Take Care of Yourself!**  
**Thank You For Your Work!**

General inquiries: [info@ForeFdn.org](mailto:info@ForeFdn.org)



Follow ongoing updates on our website:  
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