



## Otago Mental Health Support Trust

### **Intentional Peer Support Workers' Code of Ethics**

- Attention to the Intentional Peer Support Worker's (IPSWs) own recovery is essential and critical to the performance of the PSW. When change occurs in the IPSWs personal mental wellbeing the IPSW will take personal responsibility to seek support
- IPSWs are honest in their interaction with people, keeping it simple and keeping it real
- Intentional Peer Support relationships are mutual learning experiences
- Intentional Peer Support workers have a responsibility to support people to find their own voices and to advocate for the principles of human dignity, self-determination and self-empowerment
- IPSWs honour commitments made to peers
- In dealing with peers, IPSWs strive to always explore peers worldview, ask open-ended questions rather than make assumptions
- IPSWs provide service and support in a manner that always respects the rights, dignity, beliefs and values of all people
- IPSWs explore alternatives and options with peers rather than give advice
- IPSWs negotiate within the relationship with peers in order to facilitate mutual responsibility for the relationship, choice and shared power
- IPSWs avoid power struggles and favouritism
- IPSWs will not exploit, devalue, manipulate, abuse, neglect, or ignore a peer
- IPSWs and peers will not loan or borrow anything from each other, especially not money

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## Intentional Peer Support Workers' Code of Ethics - continued

- IPSWs will not establish romantic relationships with peers and will refrain from intimate or sexual activity with peers
- IPSWs avoid dual relationships. When they are unavoidable, appropriate boundaries are established within the relationship with the support of the supervisor/team leader
- IPSWs will not violate a peer's confidentiality outside of the organisation except when required by law in which instance it will be discussed with the peer prior to such violation of confidence or as soon as possible after such instance.
- Accepting or giving personal gifts by an IPSW is not permitted.
- IPSWs do not take peers to their homes and do not disclose private contact details; any exception to this must have written agency approval.
- IPSWs ensure people know how to contact them through the Peer Support office.
- IPSWs documentation in the agency record is person directed and done collaboratively with the peer
- IPSWs take responsibility for their own professional development and are proactive about expanding their knowledge and honing their skills with continuing education and training.
- IPSWs have a responsibility to educate themselves about available community resources and to establish helpful contacts in the community.
- IPSWs do not make medical diagnoses and are guided by people's responses to trauma and life events rather than by diagnosis or symptoms