

WHO WE ARE

People USA provides people living with mental health or addiction issues with the highest quality, effective peer services and behavioral health care.

We are a peer-run nonprofit organization. This means our agency is 100% made up of people with their own lived experience with mental health or addiction issues, trauma, crisis, recovery, and moving forward towards wellness. In other words, there is a mutuality between us and the people we serve.

Our mission is to educate, support, and empower people and communities to understand, manage, and overcome mental health, addiction, and social determinant of health challenges.

People USA (est. 1990 as PEOPLE Inc.) has grown from a grassroots peer advocacy and support organization to become one of the most recognized and respected behavioral health organizations in the United States.

We have spread our unique models and best practices across the United States and internationally.

SOLUTIONS TO CHALLENGES

Our nation's behavioral health care system is falling behind: hospitals are overutilized, jails have become treatment centers, healthcare costs keep rising, and people aren't receiving the type of quality care they need and want.

People USA has spent over three decades designing, developing, implementing, and operating crisis response services & systems-level improvements that effectively address these enormous challenges.

OUR SOLUTIONS:

- Reduce hospital ER visits, inpatient admissions, & readmissions.
- Reduce criminal justice involvement due to under-addressed behavioral health issues.
- Achieve the Triple Aim: (i) Improved customer experience; (ii) Better health outcomes; (iii) Reduced public costs
- Create effective systems of care that work better for people and communities.

Spring 2021

people USA

Staying Healthy and Well Together!



YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Coronavirus has amplified the massive challenges we face as a community, with dramatic increases in mental health issues, the opioid epidemic, social isolation, economic stress, housing instability, suicide, and of course the ongoing losses in our lives – our family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.

This all amounts to a lot of **trauma** in our lives.

Research continues to show trauma's universal reach and its lasting adverse effects – emotional, physical, cognitive, behavioral, and existential – which can be felt for years, decades, whole lives, and even generations to come.

But this doesn't have to be our destiny.

"Know this:

A. You're not alone.

B. As peers, we've dealt with trauma – of all sorts – for years.

C. There is hope.

D. We can all stay healthy & well together.

E. We can, do, and will recover."

I'd like to share with you some resources and skills that can help you through these traumatic times.

We have some of the best, most effective, easy-to-use, and innovative mental health & wellness services in the whole world, right here in the Hudson Valley – resources that **you** can take advantage of immediately.

And we'd also like to share with you some things that we can all do to be more trauma-informed, the most common trauma symptoms to look out for in others and yourself, and some best practices for engaging with people who are ready to answer the question, "What happened to you?"

Let's all be there for each other. Let's help each other – as much as we can – to feel safe. Let's all share in a vision of hope, empowerment, and wellness.

Sincerely,

Steve Miccio, CEO
People USA

WAYS WE CAN HELP EACH OTHER THROUGH THIS TRAUMA



HOW TO BE TRAUMA-INFORMED

Now more than ever we have to be a community – people, organizations, businesses, everyone – that facilitates healing. Now more than ever we have to be responsive to people's traumas.

Here are some ways that we all can help:

- Recognizing the central role that trauma plays in people's lives.
- Shifting the focus from "what's wrong with you?" to "what happened to you?"
- Seeking to understand what happened to an individual and the meaning that person makes of those experiences
- Educating ourselves about trauma and its consequences
- Educating ourselves about the importance of people's voices
- Making our environments more healing and less re-traumatizing
- Emphasizing safety, choice, trustworthiness, collaboration, and empowerment, so that people can regain a sense of control (a top priority)
- Supporting resilience, self-care, and self-healing 💙

MOST COMMON SIGNS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS*

Symptoms of Trauma Checklist:

- Headaches, backaches, stomachaches, etc.
- Sudden sweating and/or heart palpitations
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite, interest in sex
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- More susceptible to colds and illnesses
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs and/or overeating
- Fear, depression, anxiety
- Outbursts of anger or rage
- Emotional swings
- Nightmares and flashbacks – re-experiencing the trauma
- Tendency to isolate oneself or feelings of detachment
- Difficulty trusting and/or feelings of betrayal
- Self-blame, survivor guilt, or shame
- Diminished interest in everyday activities 💙

* The National Council for Behavioral Health

BEST WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE

Follow the People USA approach.

Make sure that:

- The person feels welcomed
- Your communication style is *person-centered* – e.g. use open-ended questions (not "yes/no"), active/reflective listening, positive affirmations / see people's strengths
- You value the person's story and validate their experiences
- The person feels *respected* – demonstrating to them, unconditionally, that they have value and importance
- They can express their thoughts and feelings freely without being judged or rushed
- Their personal boundaries are recognized and respected
- The environment in which you are engaging is comfortable, allowing for mindfulness.
- The person has privacy when they need it
- You have an open-door policy, so that people know you're always there to engage
- You connect people to services, supports, and resources in the community that can help with trauma
- **Contact People USA if you don't know where to begin**
- You use your *empathy* as a strength – identifying with and understanding the other person's perspective, experiences, or motivations
- You have positive expectations for their recovery
- You recognize that people's recovery journeys are more circular than linear, with overlaps and cycles that are useful as learning opportunities (rather than 'setbacks' or 'failures')
- You remember and promote the idea that recovery encompasses whole health or all the dimensions of a person's *wellness* 💙

Clip and Save!

RESOURCES TO KNOW, USE & RECOMMEND IN THESE TRAUMATIC TIMES

We serve over 5,000 New Yorkers every year through a diverse group of crisis response, transitional care, and ongoing wellness services. In these trying times, here are some (but certainly not all) of our resources (all 100% free) that you and your families may find useful:

ROSE HOUSES

Dutchess County • Ulster County • Orange County • Putnam County • Warren County • Washington County

People USA's Rose Houses are 24/7 short-term crisis respite (1-7 days) that are home-like alternatives to hospital psych. ERs and inpatient units, where guests can work with highly skilled and trained peer staff on a full, customizable menu of services designed to help them understand, manage, and overcome the underlying causes of their crises, now and in the future. (Ages 18+)

CRISIS STABILIZATION CENTER

Dutchess County

The Dutchess County Stabilization Center is a 24/7 community crisis response hub where people of all ages can connect immediately with an integrated team of clinical counselors, peer specialists, health care professionals, and community service providers, to address any mental health, addiction, or social determinant of health needs. (All Ages)

NY PROJECT HOPE / COPING WITH COVID

Westchester County

People USA is a NY Project Hope provider: Project Hope is a COVID-19 crisis counseling program that provides information, education, emotional support, and links to resources; it is designed to help people recognize common reactions to COVID, build coping skills for the recovery process, manage disaster-related stress, and identify & meet children's needs. (All Ages)

WARM LINES

Dutchess County • Ulster County • Orange County • Putnam County • Warren County • Washington County

People USA's Warm Lines are 24/7 peer-run crisis response & support telephone lines where people can feel safe and open talking about difficult issues; share stories, personal feelings, information, and strategies for living well; begin to look at life patterns differently; and get inspired and motivated to move towards health & wellness. (Ages 18+)

FORENSIC MOBILE CRISIS & RESPONSE TEAM

Westchester County

The Westchester Forensic Mobile Crisis & Response Team works directly with law enforcement in the field and courts seeking alternatives to incarceration (ATI), to provide immediate crisis response and/or transitional care services to people at risk of entering the criminal justice system due to under-addressed mental health, addiction, or social determinant of health issues. (All Ages)

WELLNESS COACHING

Dutchess County • Ulster County

People USA's Recovery Centers provide people with personalized whole health / wellness coaching, meeting them anywhere in community (e.g. bookstore, hiking trail, gym, etc.) and working side-by-side with them on their own self-determined goals, which can involve learning new mental health self-management skills, improving social life & community engagement, developing new personal or creative interests, improving physical health, developing independent living skills, becoming better advocates, and connecting with resources to help find employment or advance professionally. (Ages 18+)

"People USA has some of the kindest, most understanding people I've ever met. They've really helped me gain confidence in my abilities and expand my horizons. Bright light of hope in such a dark year. I know I can always find a kind, sympathetic ear at People USA."

—Kat, Poughkeepsie NY

PEOPLE USA MAIN PHONE: (845) 452-2728

ROSE HOUSES OR 24/7 WARM LINES:

Dutchess County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 606
Orange County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 607
Putnam County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 616
Ulster County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 607
Warren/Washington Counties: (518) 502-1172

PROJECT HOPE:

(914) 995-1900

WESTCHESTER FORENSIC MOBILE TEAM:

(914) 995-6194

DUTCHESS COUNTY STABILIZATION CENTER:

(845) 485-9700

WELLNESS COACHING:

Dutchess County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 211
Ulster County: (845) 452-2728, ext. 211

LEARN MORE AT: [PEOPLE-USA.ORG](https://people-usa.org)

BORN IN NEW YORK STATE WITH NATIONAL IMPACT

DYSON FOUNDATION



Thank you to the Dyson Foundation for your long history of support for People USA (12 years now!). You make it possible for us to bring our unique services and models to more and more people every year, improve.

PA OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES & WA STATE HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY (HCA)



Thank you to both the states of Pennsylvania and Washington for continuing to work with us to develop new peer-operated crisis respites (4 total) using People USA's Rose House model. We will continue to help you both to reduce preventable hospital utilization in your states, and improve emergency mental health services for the people in your communities.



DUTCHESS COUNTY

Thank you to Dutchess County for your continued partnership in bringing innovation to our local crisis response system. We are proud to be the lead agency operating the Dutchess County Stabilization Center, and to continue leading the county's CIT program, through which we've trained >500 officers in how to better respond to behavioral health crisis situations.

ULSTER COUNTY

Thank you to Ulster County for awarding us the new Care Manager Systems Specialist position, as part of the county's High Risk Mitigation Team, to provide people living with persistent

high-risk opioid/substance use with intensive transitional care management, systems navigation & advocacy, and direct connections to ongoing treatment & wellness services.

DAILY FREEMAN



Thank you to the Daily Freeman for your excellent coverage of our "Crisis Intervention Team Training Graduation" for Ulster County based law enforcement.

NEW YORK PEER SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION BOARD (NYPSCB) WITH ACADEMY OF PEER SERVICES (APS) & WELLNESS COLLABORATIVE OF NEW YORK (WCNY-IPA)

Thank you to NYPSCB, APS, and WCNY for holding the 4th Annual NYPSCB Conference, and for having People USA present on multiple topics, including forensic peer mobile team services, peer-run crisis alternatives for hospital & jail diversion, and peer leadership in the behavioral health system of care.

S2I, FOUNTAIN HOUSE, THE CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION (CCI), THE W. HAYWOOD BURNS INSTITUTE, AND THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COLLABORATIVE (TAC)

Thank you to S2i, Fountain House, CCI, W. Haywood Burns Institute, and TAC for holding the "Structuring the Mental Health Emergency Response System" Virtual Discussion, and for having People USA discuss its peer-led crisis response services, including Rose Houses, the Crisis Stabilization Center, and the Forensic Mobile Crisis & Response Team.

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES (NYAPRS)

Thank you to NYAPRS for holding the Hudson Valley Regional Forum on "Responding to People in Distress: An Exploration of the Roles of Mental Health Workers, Police, and Racism", and for having People USA participate in the Dutchess County Panel, along with our local behavioral health and criminal justice partners, including our CIT Coordinator, Det. Dawn Anemelos.

POUGHKEEPSIE JOURNAL



Thank you to the Poughkeepsie Journal

for your excellent story on People USA assuming lead management of the Dutchess County Stabilization Center: *"Dutchess' Stabilization Center, Mobile Crisis Team is under New Management. What it Means."*
<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/story/news/local/2020/12/09/dutchess-county-stabilization-center-mobile-crisis-team/6463212002/>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTORS (NASMHPD)

Thank you to NASMHPD for funding the Westchester County Jail Diversion Pilot Project, through the Transition Transfer Initiative (TTI). This will allow us to train 911 & police dispatchers in how to screen for mental health issues, assess callers for different levels of risk & need, and divert them to appropriate resources to prevent criminal justice involvement.

