

Maine Warm Line

confidential non-crisis peer-to-peer support

Call toll-free from anywhere in Maine
5 pm until 1:30 am, daily - Voice/T
1-866-771-WARM (9276)

Call from Portland area
772-WARM (9276)



operated by
amistad

Purpose

Goals

Links

Contact Us



Telephone support services for non-crisis situations, including,
but not limited to the above.

Funded by the Department of Health and Human Services
Initial Funding provided by Maine Health Access Foundation

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Our Purpose

Establishment of a recovery-based, peer operated system of warm lines available statewide and directed towards a target audience of adults who utilize mental health services.

Maine Warmline Home Page

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Our Goals

Create a Maine Warm Line Network of collaborative local and state warm lines.

Educate consumers and providers on the potential and power of peer support and recovery

Awareness that Maine has a statewide network of confidential non-crisis warm lines

Promote the access and use of warm lines to consumers as a recovery tool

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Links to recommended sites

amistad "people helping people" - 207-773-1956

National Alliance for Mental Illness -
800-950-NAMI (6264)



Maine Chapter, National Alliance for Mental Illness

NAMI, Maine

Advocacy Initiative Network of Maine

Mid-Coast Mental Health Center - 800-540-2072

Crisis Hotline Services - 888-568-1112

Together Place Social Club (Bangor)

Depression Bipolar Support Alliance - National

Depression Bipolar Support Alliance - Maine

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault - 800-871-7741



2-1-1 Maine

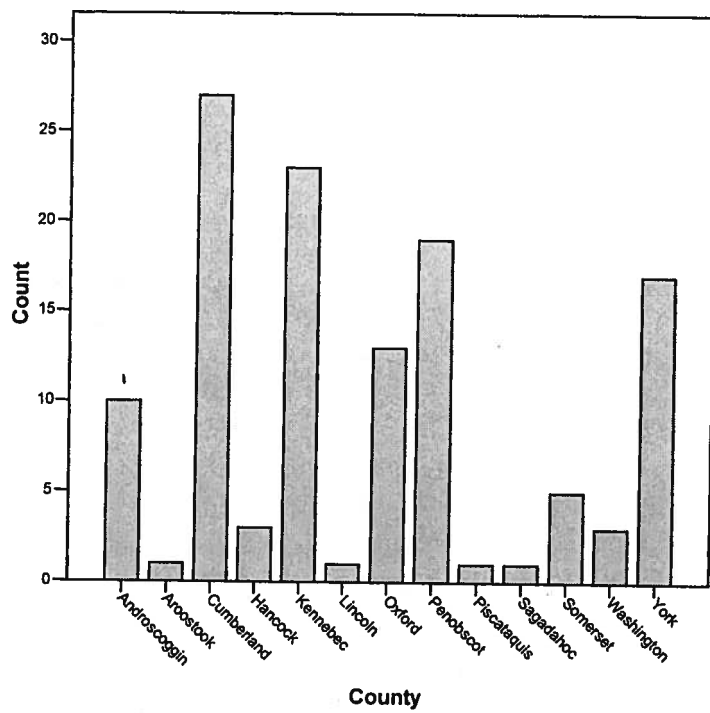
H.O.P.E. Recovery Center

Spring Harbor Hospital

Maine Warm Line

Maine Warm Line

Maine WarmLine HOME page



Warm-line Survey Participants by County 11/05-3/06

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Androscoggin	10	7.9
	Aroostook	1	.8
	Cumberland	27	21.4
	Hancock	3	2.4
	Kennebec	23	18.3
	Lincoln	1	.8
	Oxford	13	10.3
	Penobscot	19	15.1
	Piscataquis	1	.8
	Sagadahoc	1	.8
	Somerset	5	4.0
	Washington	3	2.4
	York	17	13.5
	Total	124	98.4
Missing	System	2	1.6
Total		126	100.0

Referral Sources

Reported referral sources for the MEWL service were varied but professional support services (counselors, psychiatrists, case managers, etc.) were named most often and when combined would account for nearly 55% of the referrals. Crisis Services across the state were the second highest named referral source, mentioned 28% of the time. Thirteen people (9.4%) said they did not know how they got referred to the MEWL.

Warm-line Survey Participants Referral Sources

	Frequency	Percent
Don't Know	13	9.4
ACT Team	2	1.4
advocate for disable	1	.7
Agency	1	.7
Amistad	9	6.4
Bangor Warm line	1	.7
Card	2	1.4
Caring Unlimited	1	.7
Case Manager	8	5.8
Center	1	.7
Coalition, Friend	1	.7
Community support wk	1	.7
Counselor	10	7.2
Crisis	39	28.0
CSI-Case Manager	1	.7
CSI-Counselor	1	.7
CSI	4	2.9
DBT-Class	1	.7
Detox	1	.7
Family	1	.7
Friend	8	.7
Group Home	1	.7
health reach	1	.7
Hospital	3	2.2
Ingraham	1	.7
Internet	1	.7
Luthern Social Servi	1	.7
McGeachy Hall	3	1.4
MH Center	1	.7
MH clinic, Crisis	1	.7
NAMI website	1	.7

NE family Institute	1	.7
Poster	1	.7
Psychiatrist	2	1.4
Recovery Class	1	.7
Respite in Rumford	1	.7
Russell McDonald	1	.7
Sexual Ass.-Augusta	1	.7
Simonne	1	.7
Social Worker	1	.7
Sweetser	1	.7
Sweetser Counselor	1	.7
Tri-County	6	4.3
Tri-County Counselor	1	.7
Voc. Rehab.	1	.7
Total	139	100.0

Professional Providers

The majority of MEWL callers surveyed reported having a number of professional mental health providers already in place. Most reported having multiple providers. Only four callers reported having no service providers prior to the call.

Mental Health System Providers	# of Survey Participants Reporting a Provider	Percentage of all Survey Participants
Case Manager	84	60.4%
PCP	116	83.5%
Psychiatrist	102	73.4%
Therapist	79	56.0%
Participant Reported No Providers	4	2.9%

Additionally, many callers listed other providers not identified on the survey (i.e. ACT teams, nurses (psychiatric), social workers, etc.). There responses are in the following table.

Other Providers Reported by Warm-line Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percent
Access Team	1	.7
ACT Team	4	2.9
Career Worker	1	.7
Counselor	1	.7
Crisis line	1	.7
Detox	1	.7
In Home Support	1	.7
Neurologist, Surgeon	1	.7
Nurse	2	1.4
P.A.	1	.7
PA, Trauma group	1	.7
Payee	1	.7
Psych.Nurse	2	1.4
Social Work	1	.7
Tri-County	1	.7
Visiting Nurse	1	.7
Total	139	100.0

Natural Supports

The MEWL caller survey participants were asked about the types of natural supports they had in existence when the call was made. Most callers reported having more than one type of natural support in place prior to the call. The majority of the callers seemed to use friends (69%), family (60%), their spirituality (57.1%), and pets for support.

Type of Natural Support	Frequency	Percent
Family	76	60.3
Hobby	17	13.5
Pets	63	50.0
Support Group	31	24.6
Spiritual	72	57.1
Peer Center	27	21.4
Friends	87	69.0
Work (paid/volunteer)	36	28.6
No Supports Reported	5	4.0

Because natural supports are so key to the recovery process, the peer support staff were asked to make relevant suggestions about natural supports when speaking to callers. MEWL caller survey participants were asked if they discussed Natural Supports with the peer support staff whom they spoke with on their call. The subject was discussed on 83% of the calls.

Type of Natural Support	Frequency	Percent
Family	69	54.8
Hobby	28	22.2
Pets	61	48.8
Support Group	36	28.6
Spiritual	52	41.3
Peer Center	31	24.6
Friends	70	55.6
Work (paid/volunteer)	36	28.6
No Supports Discussed	22	17.5

MEWL caller survey participants were also asked if they thought Natural Supports were helpful in their recovery. The majority (68.8%) said “Yes” while only a couple callers (1.6%) said “No”. However, nearly a third (27.8 %) of the callers said they “Didn’t Know” if Natural Supports were helpful in their recovery process.

	Frequency	Percent
No	2	1.6
Yes	88	69.8
Don't Know	35	27.8
Total	125	99.2

Caller Comments about Natural Supports:

- “just talking to the people is helpful, trying not to get addicted to calling”
- “planning on a part-time job and getting a car back on the road”
- “they help me get through my days successfully but I didn’t feel better”

Other Types of Support Services

MEWL caller survey participants were asked what other types of support services would they have used if MEWL was not available. The majority (73.8%) would have turned to their local Crisis Line had MEWL not been available, with the next type of support service thought to have been used being the ED/ER services in their community (34.1%).

Other Types of Services	Frequency	Percent
Crisis Hot Line	93	73.8
ED/ER	43	34.1
Law Enforcement	19	15.1
Regional Warm Line	26	20.6
No Alternate Services If Not MEWL	13	10.3

MEWL caller survey participants were also asked what types of support services had they actually used in the past 90 days. Many, 59.5% reported having called their crisis center with 24.6% reported not using any other services.

Other Types of Services	Frequency	Percent
Crisis Hot Line	75	59.5
ED/ER	34	27.0
Law Enforcement	17	13.5
Regional Warm Line	10	7.9
No Alternate Services Utilized	31	24.6

MEWL caller survey participants were also asked what types of support services had they actually used since their initial call to the MEWL. Again, the most heavily used Support Service is reported to be the Crisis Hot Lines with 47.6% of callers saying they had used it since calling MEWL in the previous week-10 days. Interestingly, the number of people saying they used No Alternate Support Service since calling the MEWL was reported at 41.3%.

Other Types of Services	Frequency	Percent
Crisis Hot Line	60	47.6
ED/ER	31	24.6
Law Enforcement	18	14.3
Regional Warm Line	13	10.3
No Alternate Services Utilized	52	41.3

When MEWL caller survey participants were asked if they thought using the MEWL reduced their need for Crisis Services. Many (48.4%) of the survey participants said "Very Likely" and another 25.4 % said "Somewhat Likely". About a quarter of the participants (21.4%) responded with "Don't Know".

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Likely	61	48.4
Somewhat Likely	32	25.4
Somewhat Unlikely	3	2.4
Very Unlikely	2	1.6
Don't Know	27	21.4
Missing	1	.8
Total	126	100.0

When asked if they felt better after the call to MEWL, 76.2 % said they felt better.

	Frequency	Percent
Felt Worse	6	4.8
No Change in Mood	12	9.5
Felt Better	96	76.2
Don't Know	10	7.9
Missing	2	1.6
Total	126	100.0

The majority of surveyed callers have called MEWL again. A large group of repeat callers surveyed continue to call the MEWL regularly with over 33 % calling more than 10 times since the first call.

REPEAT CALLERS	Frequency	Percent
0	17	17.0
1-9	48	48.0
10-19	13	13.0
20-29	4	4.0
30+	16	16.0
Don't Know	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

First time callers have a higher proportion of people reporting they haven't called again, but this is most likely reflective of the fact that they were called within 10 days of their initial call.

Where the repeat callers may have been counting how many times they called since their first call, potentially as far back as 3 months earlier. However nearly half (42%) of new callers have called the MEWL again.

Callers called MEWL again	Frequency	Percent
0	15	57.7
1	6	23.1
2-5	5	19.2
Don't Know	0	0
Total	26	100.0

CALLER SATISFACTION

MEWL callers surveyed were reported it very likely that they would continue to use the MEWL. The majority (94%) said it was very or somewhat likely they would call again. Only 2% said it was unlikely they would call again.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Likely	91	72.2
	Somewhat Likely	28	22.2
	Very Unlikely	3	2.4
	Total	122	96.8
	Don't Know	4	3.2
	Total	126	100.0

The majority of callers were very satisfied (65.9%) or satisfied (25.4%) overall with the MEWL.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Satisfied	83	65.9
	Satisfied	32	25.4
	Dissatisfied	2	1.6
	Very Dissatisfied	2	1.6
	Don't Know	7	5.6
	Total	126	100.0

When callers were asked what they found most helpful about the MEWL service there were many responses. An analysis of the comments produced 4 common themes:

- “Someone to talk to” – these comments referred to callers needing to have a person to listen to them during the evening/overnight hours. They indicated there is a great sense of aloneness and isolation for the majority of callers which can be alleviated by using the MEWL.
- “A person who can relate and truly understand” – these comments referred to caller’s desire and satisfaction to have a source of listener who is a peer- someone who has been through a similar struggle. Additionally, callers mentioned the helpfulness when a Peer Specialist disclosed a bit of their own struggle.
- “Peer Support Staff is well trained and quality listeners” – these comments reflected the pleasure callers felt at finding staff to be non-judgmental, caring, compassionate, easy to talk to, good listeners, good conversation makers and easy to be honest with during the call.
- “non clinical- non provider staff” – these comments reflected the callers needing/wanting to speak to someone who was not a ‘clinical provider’. It is a positive difference than calling crisis or a provider for support.

Comments are listed below.

Callers found most helpful:

- “very caring and warm”
- “place to go and talk”
- “they listened to me, they seemed concerned”
- “Connects me to somebody who has been there and understands”
- “Talk to another person at that time of night”
- “Accepting, willing to listen and people who ask questions, they care.”
- “Chad is very accepting. I am also gay. Always feel better after talking”
- “people are willing to listen to what’s really wrong they are really receptive”
- “being able to talk confidentially and get their help”
- “talking to a peer with good suggestions”
- “talk to different people rather than same old providers and they seem to understand better at times”
- “Somebody to talk to”
- “People there that have the problems we do, they understand”
- “When I needed to talk to somebody they were there and non-judgmental”
- “feedback”
- “a friend to talk to”
- “take the time to listen. They give good advice and they guide you with how to deal with your problems”
- “Compassion and understanding, knew what I was going through”
- “Glen was very helpful and shared his own experiences, a very nice fellow”
- “People are cordial enough to listen, I am not an outsider”
- “have a sense of humor”
- “just talking”
- “talking confidentially. They do not bring it back up later.”
- “having someone to talk to late at night, the other warm-line in Bangor isn’t open late”
- “talking to people”
- “just talk to someone when it is not a crisis”
- “talking to someone”
- “having someone to listen to you, listening for feedback”
- “one woman was very supportive and kind about my situation”
- “they are open until 3am”
- “PS’s voice was strong (male), felt secure”
- “Someone who has been through a similar crisis, someone to talk to”
- “People were compassionate, knew what I go through and tried to help me through it”
- “Educated people who understand mental health”
- “3 of 4 times got somebody who understood what I was going through. Erica’s suggestion of yoga helped me and we connected (she shared a similar struggle)”
- “having someone that understands and that can relate to me”
- “able to express myself and receive comfort”
- “able to call as much as needed”
- “sense of caring”
- “someone to talk to”

- "they talked me through it"
- "someone to help me in need"
- "I like to talk to people that are not my friends, the guy I talk to was helpful and calmed me down."
- "knowing that they are there if I need them, especially at 2am"
- "People are understanding where I am coming from- could open up to them"
- "Feeling I can talk (unload) when emotionally devastated"
- "not much- didn't know what to expect"
- "Being able to talk to somebody and tell my story"
- "helped to talk with somebody who understands what I was going through with my son"
- "talking, very nice woman"
- Suggested discussing medication change with doctor and it worked out well
- "listens, cares"
- "having them listen to my troubles"
- "Its somebody to talk to"
- "talking to somebody when not doing well and enabling me to make my own decisions"
- "talking to other people who have been there (to some degree) to kind of relate, they are consumers"
- "look forward to talking with these people, feel like old friends, can talk openly"
- "someone to talk to"
- "talking to another human being, talking to people who understand"
- "down to earth people, understand what I am going through"
- "available if I choose to"
- "friendly, warm, open, easy to talk to, gotten to know certain people. positive experience relating to someone with mental illness"
- "sincerity, active listening, skillful conversationalist"
- "someone I can talk to"
- "talking to them, not like the crisis line"
- "people sound like they care and want to make me feel better, help me deal with irrational fears"
- "Empathetic people, they know what we have suffered (peers)"
- "Somebody to talk to when your alone"
- "talk to someone who can relate"
- "I like Erica better"
- "talk without feeling judged"
- "someone being there to talk to when I am feeling down, because my son is not with me"
- "somebody there to talk to when you need them and nobody else is around."
- "alternative to crisis"
- "availability"
- "always there when you call, always answer"
- "Contact with other recovery people. Isolated when I am home"
- "someone at the other end that is always understanding. nothing too small or too great- shoot the breeze to crisis"
- "frank to me"
- "when you get lonely they are there"
- "identify with people I talk with"

- “suggesting Al-Anon”
- “by listening”
- “they help me out, they listen to me”
- “you can talk about anything without being judged”
- “people I’ve talked to have gone through the same thing, there not “text book” people. They talk about their own experiences.”
- “support and feedback”
- “available at phone reach”
- “good staff, good listeners, good feedback”
- “people are there during stated hours (Bangor WL unreliable) and people listen and don’t just cut to suggestions. But suggestions are made when needed in a positive way”
- “listen more than crisis, can call when I want to”
- “I know if something comes up that somebody is there to talk to”
- “they didn’t judge me, let me make my own decisions”
- “someone to talk to, people are nice , they try very hard”
- “they listen and they are friendly”
- “easy to talk to”
- Chad was very helpful, liked him very much”
- “active listening”
- “Connected with Glen on Politics and other PS on children’s addictions (shared experiences)”
- “sharing of each others stories and process”
- “just talking to them”
- “they are in the same boat, they are at a higher level than me and it is encouraging”

1st time callers

- “patience, they listened to me as long as I needed”
- “someone to talk to”
- “someone there who knows how difficult it is to go through this”
- “somebody to talk with, to tell feelings and thoughts, to tell good and bad things”
- “a person on the other end to talk through”
- “somebody to talk to if you need somebody”
- “listening”
- “somebody that had been through what I had been through”
- “somebody to talk to”
- “someone to talk to, felt alone in the world”
- “people with issues, I am not the only one out there”
- “having someone to talk to”
- “was put at ease when PS identified her background, made conversation easier”
- “very refreshing that someone can share their experiences, creates a bond”
- “somebody who understands my issues at a personal level”
- “able to talk and get it off my chest”
- “nicer than crisis”
- “sharing part of my story”
- “caring, forthright”
- “They listen, don’t judge, don’t ask clinical questions and I don’t have to hide my feelings”

- “feel the PS/MEWL can be trusted”
- “someone to listen to you, they have problems too”
- “took time to talk to me”

When callers were asked what they found least helpful about the MEWL service there were also many responses. An analysis of the comments produced 2 common themes:

- “difficult to access” – these comments referred to difficulty callers encountered due to lack of Peer Specialists available to handle the calls resulting in callers being put on hold for long periods of time. Additionally a number of callers requested the line being open longer during the night (after 3am) or even 24 hours.
- “unable to connect with Peer Specialist” – these comments referred to callers not being able to open up to Peer Specialists for a variety of reasons, or that they did not feel respected or listened to by the Peer Specialist, or that he/she did too much disclosure.

Comments are listed below.

Callers found least helpful:

- “I was on hold twice for at least 15 minutes and one time I had to hang up because I was too upset”
- “Last 3 times I called I only got through once and had to wait a half hour. Hope you get more funding to hire more people”
- “nothing, everything helped”
- “One woman wanted me to go to Amistad, I did not want to go”
- “PS was tactless/thoughtless. Very reactionary and didn’t listen well, could have been reflective of how you are feeling”
- “Hard to get through”
- “it’s only open 5pm-3am”
- “Didn’t feel comfortable talking with one person”
- “no advice given”
- “nothing, they are good at what they do.”
- “Put on hold 15 minutes to talk to somebody. Understandable with a new service but not enjoyable”
- “waiting on hold too long and not getting returned calls”
- “when they do not talk back”
- “the attitude of the woman and the lack of communication. she seemed dull”
- “As nice as they are they can’t really help me”
- “One time I called at 1:15am and waited until 2am on hold and finally I hung up”
- “not getting through a few different times”
- “Chad and another woman put me down and made me feel like I should not have called. Chad did not even talk. They wanted me to call crisis and it was not necessary.”
- “Second time I called the guy didn’t seem to want to take the time to talk to me. I cut the call short and tried to figure out what to do on my own”
- “Last time I called (not sure if he or she from voice), don’t remember the name and had no connection. Felt they should have called me. Heard more of their problem than mine!”
- “one time one person was not talkative they told me to take a warm bath, they did not want to talk to me”

- “left messages 2-3 times and never got a call back- very frustrating”
- “I didn’t feel well at the time”
- “would like to open after 3am”
- “First time I called had trouble getting through (after 12:00), person was too quiet, and then hung up (accidental?) Another night I was cut short because there were too many calls”
- “Different person second time”
- “wanted the same person, questioned too much on why you asked for this person”
- Not being able to have personal contact with the PS’s
- “Southern Maine- different world
- “difficult to talk with a specific person I want to talk to that night, Want 2 different people if I call twice in one night.
- “more workers from 12-3”
- “Erica – judgmental of others belief system, but still have fun talking to her. Open-minded. Her beliefs are the only right beliefs. A maturity issue.
- “Don’t want details (only a little) about the PS experiences, tell me what they have been through but short version”
- “some do not talk much, don’t give ideas or communication”
- “Calls not being returned even when left as early as midnight. Told by PS they thought it was an old call”
- “more availability”
- “line is busy, hard to get through, not every night, but some/occasionally”
- “hard to get in touch now that you’ve gone state wide”
- “misinterpretation or clear communication issues, did not understand all the jargon”
- “I don’t like to be put on hold for a long time”
- “don’t want to talk about sex”
- “Put more people on, I am on the phone and people are waiting. Some trouble getting through myself also, cut back on the hours of the workers so they don’t get burned out!”
- “open a little longer in the morning so you have someone to talk to when you get up”
- “didn’t connect initially with somebody but do now and have talked about it.”
- “sometimes overwhelmed with calls”
- “busy sign – have to call crisis, need to be open 4pm-5am, need more staff, especially after midnight”
- “older PS’s are hard to relate to prefer younger people who are in touch, better suggestions”
- “need more people, cant get through, would be helpful not critical to meet PS and put a face to the voice”
- “have to wait forever, busy signal or long queue”
- “sometimes I do not know what I want”
- “one time a lady was not talkative. I like to talk in person instead of phone sometimes”
- “hard time getting through”
- “when PS are too silent and not working the line”

1st time callers

- “PS in too much of a hurry, need time to warm up, too young”
- “not open 24 hours a day, people need help at all times”
- “ I did all the talking, would like PS to have more input”
- “it didn’t work, tried so many things, why keep trying things that don’t work, get more depressed”
- “on hold for an hour (literally!) at midnight
- “couldn’t open up to Chad because of the sexual ambiguity, couldn’t connect”
- “once at 2:45 I felt like I was being rushed”

Half (50%) of the callers surveyed had not heard about principals or ideas of Peer Support and Recovery prior to his/her MEWL call.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	63	50.0
	Yes	54	42.9
	Don't Know	8	6.3
	Total	125	99.2
Missing		1	.8
Total		126	100.0

However, the Peer Specialists were reported by callers to have discussed the principles or ideas of Peer Support and Recovery with them 36.5% of the time.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	63	50.0
	Yes	46	36.5
	Don't Know	16	12.7
	Total	125	99.2
Missing	System	1	.8
Total		126	100.0

The majority (82%) of callers surveyed reported discussing coping skills or strategies with the Peer Specialist. The types of strategies discussed varied by caller but most discussed at least 3 different ideas with the peer specialist. Other coping skills/strategies not listed on the survey but that were discussed included deep breathing, humor, music, showering, illegal drugs for self-medication.

Coping Skill/Strategy	Frequency	Percentage of the n=126
Daily Planning	37	29.4
Dietary	25	19.8
Exercise	42	33.3
Hobby	66	52.4
Journaling	47	37.3
Light Exposure	18	14.3
Medication Use	57	45.2
Meditation	35	27.8
Sleep Strategy	45	35.7
None Discussed	23	18.3
Other	8	6.3

The majority (66.7%) of callers found the strategies discussed helpful in their recovery process.

	Frequency	Percent
No	6	4.8
Yes	84	66.7
Don't Know	35	27.8
Total	125	99.2
Missing	1	.8
Total	126	100.0

Comments about Coping Skills or Strategies:

- “Especially sleep strategy it helped me get back to sleep a couple of times”
- “Would be if I did it, I have no car”
- “Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Depends on who you connect to”
- “always take my medication”
- “made me realize what I was thinking was in my head”
- “no, the act of talking is what is helpful, have tried these long ago and they don’t work for me”
- “tried these and many more in the past”

The majority (78%) of callers surveyed reported that access a peer support through the MEWL increased their sense of “well being” (ability to function) [37%-greatly increased, 41% somewhat increased]. Many callers commented that access to the MEWL peer support provided a sense of security knowing that support is there if needed. Based on the additional comments listed below, using the MEWL contributed to reduced feelings of isolation and being alone.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Greatly Increased	37	37.0
	Somewhat Increased	41	41.0
	Don't Know	21	21.0
Missing		1	01.0
Total		100	100.0

(n=100 survey participants who were repeat callers – 1 week callers were not asked this question)

Comments about Well Being:

- “they give me courage”
- “Gives me a sense of security. There if I need them.”
- “Feel safer inside”
- “Sense of security there is somebody”
- “Sense of comfort knowing somebody is there if I need them”
- “That’s a day to day issue”
- “For the moment”
- “Alright before calling”
- “It’s a crutch, helps that night but back to normal the next day”
- “I don’t feel so isolated. Feel connected with intellectuals with similar experience”
- “Don’t feel alone, or abandoned”

When asked if access to peer support through the MEWL had increased his/her sense of “personal empowerment” (ability to make your own choices) the majority (64%) again agreed (30%-greatly increased, 34%-somewhat increased).

		Frequency	Percent
	Greatly Increased	30	30.0
	Somewhat Increased	34	34.0
	Greatly Decreased	1	.01
	Don't Know	33	33.0
Missing		1	.01
Total		100	100.0

Comments about Empowerment:

- “Comforting to have my own fears validated”
- “Pretty good on that on my own”
- “More aware of it”
- “Already do that”
- “Neutral: Have difficulty making choices and MEWL hasn’t changed that”

- “Doing that anyways”
- “Combined with classes and therapist”
- “already have that, I advocate for myself”
- “no change, always made my own choices”

Peer Specialists provided many callers surveyed (70.6%) with information or referrals.

	Frequency	Percent
No	89	70.6
Yes	37	29.4
Total	126	100.0

From those who said yes information or a referral was provided, the majority (86%) said the information or referral was helpful.

	Frequency	Percent
No	3	8.0
Yes	32	86.0
Don't Know	1	3.0
Missing	1	3.0
Total	37	100.0

Comments on Referrals:

- “Counseling Services, information was helpful but didn’t work out”
- “Call caseworker on Monday”
- “filing for SSDI”
- Called referral and it didn’t apply to her situation
- Central Maine verses Southern Maine – different worlds
- “Iris Foundation”
- “12-step group”
- “Glen and Cathy have recommended AA and several other support groups”
- “SLA - Sex and Love Addicts”
- “rxassist.org”
- “Bi-polar support group”
- “offered to connect call to crisis, but opted to continue talking”
- “have a meeting in the home, since housebound”

When asked if they felt that using the MEWL contributes to their own personal recovery process the majority (78%) said yes.

	Frequency	Percent
No	4	4.0
Yes	78	78.0
Don't Know	17	17.0
Missing	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

(n=100 survey participants who were repeat callers – 1 week callers were not asked this question)

Comments about MEWL use contributing to personal recovery process:

- “knowing it is there gives me a feeling of security”
- “more aware of it”
- “helped for that bridge between therapist”
- “haven’t used it enough”
- “Been not recovering for 12 years
- “haven’t used it enough to get to know people. Crisis workers know me (they are my first choice) because I use them a lot”
- “slow process”
- “yes, limited to support only”

Surveyed Callers were asked at the end of the survey if they would like to make any additional comments and many did. The following common themes emerged from the comments listed below.

- “MEWL is a great service!” – Many callers used this space to say how much they liked and appreciated the service, how much it helped them, and that they wished it was open more hours.
- “Differences in Peer Specialists” – Some callers used this space to mention Peer Specialists they really liked or disliked and why.

Additional Comments:

- “I’d like to call more”
- “I’ve told a few friends about this and how beneficial it was”
- “Keep doing what your doing, it’s excellent”
- “I think it is valuable. It gives people a place to go when they need help. They know they can get help here.”
- “Needs more publicity so people will consider the MEWL over other more expensive alternatives”
- “Needs to be a nighttime clubhouse for people who call the MEWL so they could meet.”
- “Rather call MEWL than Sweetser Crisis”
- “I think it has been very fair to me and I hope they increase these types of services across the USA”

- "very helpful"
- "It's wonderful"
- "PS- are good at their job"
- "Some PS have a good sense of humor and that makes a big difference"
- "Some staff are not skilled enough, they do not ask questions or lead the conversation when sometimes I am not capable"
- "Some of the staff are very good; some of the staff need extra training."
- "I don't like when they answer the phone saying "how can I help you." They should want to have a normal conversation"
- "More available to more people"
- "Note: thought she could only call "near crisis" and so she has not been calling despite loving the service"
- "Problem is 'god damn' doctors who over prescribe drugs and fried my brains!"
- "I hate doctors! They are idiots!"
- "didn't realize you could call more than once (opposed to crisis line) and MEWL might want to consider 'key points' to communicate to new callers"
- "it's good"
- "haven't called as I keep a lot to myself. Hard to call"
- "I would not recommend it to anyone. I handed out cards to a lot of people I knew about the warm-line, now I wished I did not."
- "I think I will try it again"
- "very helpful, called because I was having difficulty from my divorce"
- "very pleased with concern people had for me!"
- "Thank Erica! I really appreciate it!"
- "don't call as often because she meets with a counselor once a week and can call her on her cell phone"
- "very pleased with service"
- "I am just glad it's there"
- "Called because just stopped 4 ½ year relationship with therapist."
- "Jan was very nice and helpful"
- "happy it was not a suicide hotline"
- PTSD from Iraq, cant remember things
- "Called about her son, not her personally, he was recently diagnosed with schizophrenia
- I have paranoia
- From California – new to area
- "thank you for listening to me! They are good people!"
- It is somebody to listen- nothing else.
- Just got out of Crisis unit – 12 days and manic now.
- "I am glad you are there and will call as long as they will let me"
- "encouraged me to pursue my art program, people are warm and very good given their limited training – PS's are intelligent.
- "some individuals are professional (too much) and don't demonstrate they are peers. Share their issues or diagnosis"
- "positive- Jan, Cathy, Chad, Glen, Trish – friendly and sharing"
- "have Jan multiply herself, I like Jan!"
- "call phone help less and they are happy about it!"

- "I have reduced sleep medication since using MEWL"
- "MEWL has been a godsend!"
- "Amazing to know somebody else is on the other end if I need it"
- "MEWL has kept me out of the hospital, thank you very much"
- "would call MEWL before crisis –they are jerks"
- "Nice people on the line (most, not all, try hard)"
- "Change the music, only 1 "your call is important to us" message, need soft rock that won't put you over the edge"
- "Chad and Jan are my favorites, they really listen and give good advice, Chad is polite"
- "Good program"
- "I have better relationship with mom because of the warm line, I feel like they are my friends, they can relate to me"
- "the best thing that ever happened to me"
- "open after 3 am would help me reduce the need for crisis services because that is when I am usually in crisis"
- "don't feel comfortable with one PS (Cathy), she doesn't make conversation, just sits there. I feel there should be more PS's for variety. I avoid the four days Cathy works."
- "warm-line should start earlier in day, feels bad calling crisis line when not too bad of emergency – thinks the warm-lines definitely are a good thing"
- "PS's are good people, helpful, supportive, can relate to them"
- "I prefer to call MEWL over Ingraham. No pressure to hurry, talk naturally about my feelings"
- "great bunch of folks!"
- "grateful for the service and that it is there"
- "excellent people, they recall things I have told them previously"
- "really appreciate having a warm-line, has really helped me, alternative feedback"
- "like the alternative to Northland crisis, (very clinical) and Bangor warm-line (jump to solution too quickly and don't listen)."
- "MEWL is more professional than Brunswick Peer Center, can share more openly"
- "Erica recommended a yoga kit that she bought and appreciated"
- "one day would like to be a PS on a warm-line."
- "one time I talked with a PS (Trish) that seemed to be struggling and not the way she had been on previous calls."
- "would be nice to have a social party for frequent callers where they could meet people, so people can make friends among the frequent callers."
- "safe place to call"
- "I passed out the warm-line info. at my church"
- "can't praise warm-line enough, wish it was 24 hours a day"
- "doing a good job!"

1st time callers

- "give suggestions or ideas or give advice"
- "glad it is there"
- "would like a different PS next time – "too young"
- "son uses the service, liked the mail package, not rushed like Ingraham, don't act harassed, felt like the only person they were interested in, they show caring and empathy, good listeners"

- “didn’t carry through on my promise to stop taking others medicines, (they couldn’t have done anything to help me though)
- “you guys did a great job!”
- “not trained in mental health crisis”
- “felt better because somebody listened but it didn’t solve the unsolvable problem.
- “Important stopgap between full blown crisis and doing nothing”
- “also uses Brunswick Sweetser warm-line (twice in past) and is very comfortable with the people.”
- “PS sounded like a woman but identified as a man and made me uneasy. Name was ambiguous”

**Warm Line Peer Support Staff
Personal Impact Evaluation RESULTS
From 12/23/05 & 6/9/06**

1. How satisfied are you with your job as a Peer Specialist on the Warm-line?

Not Satisfied-0

Somewhat Satisfied-0 (1) Very Satisfied- 6-(5)

Comments: 12/23/05

-I appreciate that we are given any tools that may help improve the services. There is great communication among the staff.

-It feels good to help others. It is very rewarding.

-I like the work because it lets me share my recovery with people.

6/9/06

- **This is the first position I have held where I knew I was working for much more than a paycheck- I truly enjoy my work.**
- **I feel appreciated by my callers. I feel more appreciation for my own recovery and no longer take my recovery for granted. In addition, it's great to work with/beside others who are in recovery.**
- **I love my job.**
- **Enjoyable, instills confidence, usefulness, self-worth.**
- **I really enjoy working on the warm-line.**
- **I am satisfied. It is very different from when we started in 2004. I like helping people and it has helped in my own life.**

2. Do you feel your work as a peer specialist working on the Warm-line has made a meaningful contribution to the lives of others?

Not Sure-0

A Little-0

Somewhat-0 (1)

Absolutely-6 (5)

Comments 12/23/05

-It's great that some callers will tell us how much they appreciate the warm-line, wished we were open more hours, or they send a card of thanks.

-Receive positive feedback from some callers. Also can tell we are making a positive contribution by the tone of caller's voice just before they hang up.

-Sometimes no, but most people really like the line and are very thankful.

6/9/06

- **I have genuine compassion for our callers, and I know that makes a difference.**
- **It is an opportunity to share my experience and what coping skills that work for me. Callers have shared how important it is for them to talk with someone who can relate to them, a person who has been there. As a peer specialist, I am a role model and set an example of what recovery can be. Some callers have expressed thoughts that maybe they can work on a warm-line. Many callers have said how grateful they are for the warm-line. Some have even gone as far as to say it has helped them stay**

out of the hospital. Some have said they like the warm-line because they don't have to be in crisis to call. They don't feel rushed.

- I have prevented callers from going to the hospital. I have also tag teamed with another peer specialist who called the police to save a woman's life. She was ready to commit suicide with a knife.
- Feedback from callers is clear and positive.
- Some consumers have said how much calling in the warm-line has helped them.
- I get comments from callers all the time on how the warm-line has helped them. They wish it was open 24 hours a day.

3. Do you feel that your overall well-being has improved since you began your job with the Warm-line?

Not Sure-1 A Little-0 Somewhat-1 Absolutely-4 (6)

Comments 12/23/05

-It feels good to help others. I have gained some insight into my own recovery by sharing with others.

-Have always worked on my own recovery (i.e. AA, AA sponsor, counselor, psychiatrist and family members.) Need to make time to do enjoyable activities that use creativity.

-I don't take as many meds and my outlook on life has improved. I am able to handle stress better. I have more hope for my future.

6/9/06

- By "practicing what I preach" I have become more creative, healthy, active, intuitive, supportive/supported, etc., etc., etc!
- It has helped my self-esteem tremendously. My own life challenges are put into perspective. With this work, I am given a purpose. It gives meaning to my life.
- I am now giving back what was so freely given to me.
- Could be coincidence, but the comments on question one apply here - Enjoyable, instills confidence, usefulness, self-worth.
- Yes, helping others is an important part of my personal recovery.
- I feel better about myself. I can say I'm working again and feel pride. This is the longest I've held a job in 12 years.

4. Do you feel more empowered since you began your job on the Warm-line?

Not Sure-1 A Little-0 Somewhat-1 (1) Absolutely-4 (5)

Comments 12/23/06

-When I began the line I hadn't worked in a while. I wasn't able to keep a job. Now I am looking forward in a year or two to buying a house.

6/9/06

- I walk 10+ miles per week, have been trying new things, and have enrolled in college for the fall!
- I am not a victim of my illness but an active participant in my recovery process. I now have a job where I don't have to hide my Mental Illness. My illness is an asset rather than a liability. It's a great feeling to be accepted for who I am.
- Feel as though my input and opinions are comparable to people when I thought were better thinkers than me. More assertive.
- I feel like everything that I have been through now is bearing fruit. Somehow, everything happened for a reason and this was the reason- so I could work on this line.

5. Has working at the MEWL impacted your own recovery process?

YES-5 NO NotSure -1

- I believe so due to feeling more advanced in areas I was once deficient.
- It has reaffirmed everything I have learned about recovery, and has given me a positive and healthy way to talk about my journey.
- Helping another person with my own experience, strength and hope. Being grateful and humble and maintaining my own well being. Staying clean and sober.
- My daily maintenance of my sobriety and stabilization of my mental illness symptoms are kept in the forefront. I need to keep my recovery in order to help others.
- I care more about my own recovery now. I keep looking for new ways to help myself, new meds., and new info that will keep me healthy.

6. We welcome any additional feedback about how this job has impacted your personal recovery process.

COMMENTS: 12/23/05

- have to be more aware of my ongoing self-care
- working as a peer specialist has fostered my own recovery
- I am reminded everyday of how far I have come and how much more meaning my well being has to me and the people around me.
- I get more from the people I serve, than I feel they get from me
- Have to be more aware of my ongoing self-care

6/9/06

- I can't say enough about the positive changes I have seen and felt since I became a Peer Specialist on the MEWL. This opportunity has been a blessing for me.
- I would love to see our MEWL go 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- It reminds me of recovery which is contrary to how I approach my recovery at times. The self-worth and confidence clearly heighten the extent of good periods.
- It reminds me of the struggles I have overcome and helps me appreciate my recovery from a dual diagnosis. Given my illness, I am a productive human being. Words can not express my gratitude for this job as a peer specialist. I am proud of

my accomplishments. Many callers have said how grateful they are for the warm-line. Some have even gone as far as to say it has helped them stay out of the hospital. Some have said they like the warm-line because they don't have to be in crisis to call. They don't feel rushed.