Starting a Peer-Run Warmline in Your Area: The Oregon Story

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What is a Peer-Run Warmline?

- A phone number you can call to talk to someone who has “been through it”

- Staffed entirely by people with lived experience

- Can be local, regional or national

- Redefines “crisis”
Possible Warmline Models

- “Virtual Drop-In Center”
- Stand Alone versus Co-Habitation
- Volunteer versus Paid Warmline Operators
- Central Location versus Call Forwarding
Virtual Drop-In Center

- Allows larger groups of people to communicate
- Employs a wide array of technology: chat rooms, blogs, Skype
- Links consumers together regardless of location
- Widens circle of people a warmline can reach
Stand Alone v. Cohabitation

- Stand Alone: independent organization not affiliated with any other
  
  **Advantages:** independence of mission and allocation of resources

- Cohabitation: warmline affiliated with parent or sponsoring organization
  
  **Advantages:** ease of establishing organization and acquiring resources; staffing issues handled by parent organization
Volunteer v. Paid Warmline Operators

- Can use a combination of both

- Paid operators works for organizations with larger budgets

- Volunteers tend to believe deeply in the mission of the warmline

- Parent organization can take care of hiring process
Central Location v. Call Forwarding

- Warmline resources dictate feasibility of central location

- Offsite call room or unpublished address ensures safety and confidentiality of operators and callers

- Cell phones issued to operators ensure they can work offsite
Important Considerations

- Collaborating with Other Groups and Organizations
- Educating yourself on resources available
- Hours
- Technology
- Training: Warmline Operators *can* handle almost every “crisis” situation
Warmline Resources

- Warmline Guide is now available!
- [www.mhselfhelp.org](http://www.mhselfhelp.org)
- [www.power2u.org/peer-run-warmlines.html](http://www.power2u.org/peer-run-warmlines.html)
Contact Us

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