



Enhancing Peer Support in Aviation: A Collaborative Workshop

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G-BOAF

BRITISH AIRWAYS





Workshop Agenda

- Introduction
- Key topic Exploration 1. What is a peer 2. Recruitment 3. Initial and recurrent training 4. Care and Maintenance
- Closing and Takeaways



IPAAC Stool of Peer Safety

- **TRUST of worker group**
- Independent
- Confidential
- Endorsed by worker group/ Union



- **Trust of management**
- workers to hide from proper clinical help or responsibilities
- codified escalation protocols
- steering committee provides oversight

- **TRUST of Regulator**
- Follows any legislation
- SMS
- Cases treated, managed without Safety compromised



- **TRUST of the health professional**
- avoid the pitfalls of casual assistance groups
- training has to be of a high calibre, qualified and professional standard

Defining a Peer



- Key question: “who is ‘the peer’ in our programmes?”
- Importance of defining roles (eg..Speedbirdpans’s terms “Client” and ‘Peer” for boundaries)
- Or is it a ‘Peer’ and a ‘PSV’ ?

Who is the Peer?

- Client
- Guest
- Case
- Participate
- I thought there was no difference between a PSV and Peer?
- Client is too stigmatising.

- **Participant and Volunteer**

What does a good PSV have?

- Small group activity- “Peer Competencies”
- Groups brainstorm qualities of an effective Peer Support Volunteer and create a “Peer Persona” on sticky notes.



Peer Competencies

- Listening
- Confidentiality
- Empathy
- Compassion / Kindness
- Guidance / Signposting
- Boundaries
- Knowledge



Peer Competencies

Rapport Building (RB)

- Ensures both Peer and Pilot have time for call
- Checks own capacity before call
- Introduces self
- Provides brief overview of PAN procedures
- Uses Pilot's name frequently
- Establishes common ground
- Uses gender-neutral words when appropriate
- Does not guess
- Avoids irrelevant questions
- Asks how it feels to share this issue and validates reply
- Does not end call abruptly

Understanding (U)

- Determines reason for contact today rather than before
- Asks about most difficult aspect of this issue
- Asks about previous partial or unsuccessful resolutions
- Queries who else has been consulted
- Asks about proximity of friends and family
- Asks who is being affected by the issue
- Asks how Pilot feels issue could be lessened or overcome
- Asks about likely outcomes if issue is not resolved
- Identifies the issue and checks for agreement

Empathy (E)

- Acknowledges the Pilot's pain or suffering
- Normalises when appropriate
- Shows interest in the Pilot's issue
- Demonstrates concern for the Pilot
- Adjusts own tone and pace according to Pilot's disposition
- Withholds judgment
- Shows gratitude to Pilot for sharing
- Shares own experience only if appropriate and helpful

Listening (L)

- Demonstrates active listening by asking appropriate questions
- Stays focused and avoids multi-tasking during call
- Ensures Pilot stays focused and avoids multi-tasking
- Questions positively using open questions
- Asks for detail of situation
- Embraces silence
- Allows Pilot to do most of the talking
- Use of non-lexical conversation sounds (uh-huh, hmm, etc.)
- Does not interrupt and pauses before speaking
- Makes notes
- Asks for repetition when necessary to check understanding
- Summarises, reflects back and seeks confirmation
- Asks how issue affects appetite, work, sleep, relationships, health

Threat Assessment (TA)

- Considers speech rate and volume
- Considers speech tonality and pauses
- Considers concentration and focus
- Considers relevance, coherence and clarity
- Considers sequence of thought and logic of connections
- Recognises over-reaction
- Recognises signs of disturbance in thought
- Considers congruence of mood
- Considers pilot's ability to understand the nature of the issue

Signposting (S)

- Ensures Pilot understands that Peers do not provide advice
- Transfers case to another Peer when appropriate
- Asks what Pilot would say to a friend with same issue
- Jointly explores options
- Collaborates in decision making
- Sign-posts only after due consideration
- Ensures agreement on path forward

Confidentiality (C)

- Complies with all GDPR requirements
- Re-iterates confidentiality policy on each call
- Ensures both Pilot and Peer are alone during calls
- Ensures Peer and Pilot are sober during call
- Only discusses cases with clinical supervisor

Knowledge of Resources (KR)

- Company employment policies
- Company employment procedures
- Health insurance processes
- Company provided mental health resources
- NHS resources
- Online resources

Follow-up (FU)

- Jointly decides if further contact is necessary
- Establishes how further contact will be initiated
- Keeps consistent and coherent records on Peer Portal
- Discusses case with clinical supervisor when appropriate
- Follows through with commitments
- Texts or emails Pilot when appropriate
- Avoids informal case closure



Recruitment: Choosing the Right Peers

- Key considerations: selection criteria, recruitment methods
- Common challenges and successful approaches
- **Activity:** Share experiences
- Each group discusses and shares successful approaches and obstacles encountered in recruitment.

Who do you involve in your recruitment?

- Volunteer / PSV = 15
- MHP & PSV = 11
- Union = 8
- Company = 1
- Take your time
- Resolve your doubts
- **It only takes 1 bad apple to ruin the barrel!**

Initial Training: Equipping Peers

- Common training topics (e.g., confidentiality, active listening)
- Certification/formal qualifications as a topic for discussion

- **Activity:** Essential Skills Brainstorm
- Groups brainstorm a list of essential skills and training topics, then share and compare.

~~Initial Training: Equipping Peers~~

• **Safety Training: Supporting Peers**

- 2-3 Days
- Role play
- 1 x Programme trained remotely / ALL others rostered by company / union
- PROSTANS / CIRP / HIMS
- 50/50 phone call support only VS able to meet in person.
- Europe / India mandatory topics or defined by regulator. Airline can add topics.
- Nobody wanted prescribed mandatory topics!



Recurrent Training: Continued Competency

- Importance of regular training to sustain skills and knowledge
- Methods: Annual check-ins, skill refreshers, certification updates

- **Activity:** Developing a Training Tracker
- Each group suggests tools (e.g., skills matrix, feedback sessions) for tracking peer development.

Safety Training: Continued Competency

- Skills matrix – minority
- 50 % using data to drive training content.
- 100 % agreement / Data driven training is the way forward.



Care and Maintenance: Peer Well-Being

- Critical need to maintain mental health for peer volunteers
- Ideas: Incorporating well-being activities like group breathing or meditation ?
- Discuss rewards, qualifications, and ways to combat peer burnout

- **Activity:** Peer Support Mechanisms
- Groups share support mechanisms used in their programs; gather input on any gaps.



Care and Maintenance: Peer Well-Being

- How do you know?
- Only 1 programme a formalised process. PAC – Post Activation Check
- Oversight Committee / Owner has a duty of care for peer volunteer welfare.
- Self care training most.
- Clear gap identified
- How do you deal with Peer fatigue?
- How do you know what's happening?

Best Practices Comparison

Milestone Description	Description	Current Programme	Best Practice	Action needed
Programme Monitoring & Evaluation EXAMPLE	Ongoing evaluation to assess program effectiveness and adjust as needed*	Feedback collected irregularly, minimal data tracking*	Regular data collection, structured feedback loop with improvement plans*	Develop a structured monitoring and feedback system*
PEER				
COMPETENCIES				
RECRUITMENT				
INITIAL AND RECURRENT TRAINING				
CARE AND MAINTENANCE				

IPAAC Stool of Peer Safety



Recommendations to IPAAC Conference



- ICAO adopt into Standards and Recommend Practices- SARPS
 1. Core competencies
 2. Evidence Based Training for peer support programs , due to adaptability of; culture, peer generation , company, geographical location, ethnicity and relevant themes.
 3. Data driven training