

## “Peer Support Specialists, Race, and SUD Treatment”

### Study Overview

This study examines racial disparities among individuals enrolling in and transporting themselves (same day) to substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. The study explored whether peer support specialists improved enrollment and transportation to treatment.



A **Peer Support Specialist** helps another person who is going through something similar to what the PSS experienced.



For this study PSSs were individuals with shared life experience related to substance use, two years of sobriety, two weeks of training with a certification test, and six hours of continued training each year. PSS duties include:

- 1) Meeting with patients
- 2) Offering resources
- 3) Providing general assistance and helping solve problems/challenges.

## TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Study findings suggest racial disparities among patients being referred to SUD treatment by peer support specialists.
- ✓ White patients with PSSs were more likely to enroll in treatment than Black patients with PSSs.
- ✓ There were no significant differences in enrollment by race/ethnicity between those receiving inpatient versus outpatient care.
- ✓ In the emergency department, white patients were 93% more likely than Black patients to enroll in treatment after speaking to and/or working with a PSS.
- ✓ White patients were more likely to be transported to a treatment facility from the emergency department than Black patients. While this difference by race/ethnicity was seen in the emergency department, it was not seen in the total sample or in the subcategory of individuals receiving inpatient care.