

Where we've been, where we're going

A message from Thomas Lane, NCPS, CRPS, senior director, community and recovery supports



Tom Lane with his dog, Millie

Magellan has been creating and sharing the *eMpowered for Wellness* e-newsletter for more than six years, starting with our first issue in the Fall of 2012. During those six years, we have covered a wide range of topics with a strong focus on whole health, recovery, resiliency, and social inclusion. Early on, we knew we wanted this to be a resource for the 'peer' workforce – which has now come to include transition-age youth specialists, parent and family support partners and others.

Where we've been

In 2015, we changed the name of this publication from *Peer Support Whole Health & Wellness e-news* to *eMpowered for Wellness* to reflect the growing recognition of wellness as a broader context for our work. Over the years we've also recognized the great need to improve health literacy, so we added a section on key health and wellness subjects, provided in English and Spanish. Our Web Spotlight features valuable resources from the academic and advocacy community, with the goal of further equipping the peer workforce with tools and information to undergird our work. With the growth in technology-enabled solutions, we created a section dedicated to mobile apps and other digital resources. And we frequently feature a Thought Leaders section with nationally recognized leaders and subject matter experts discussing the mind-body connection, resiliency and the importance of social networks to our health and well-being.

We have continued to evolve along with the peer support movement, and we will continue to provide *eMpowered for Wellness* and other resources at no cost to all who are interested. Here's a glimpse of what to look for in 2019 and beyond.

Where we're going

Next year, we will expand and enhance our content in response to the rapid growth of the peer workforce, as we see peer support become more fully included in integrated health settings. Peers now support others in emergency rooms, federally qualified health centers, and in other systems. For example, forensic peer specialists are being recognized for the value and hope they bring to others who are involved with the criminal justice system. And we know there are many needs among those who have served our country, including their spouses, partners, and families. There is much work to do. Here are some topics you can expect to see in upcoming issues.

- **Social Determinants of Health (SDoH).** Look for a new section dedicated to the emergence of these determinants and how they impact individuals and communities.
- **Cultural humility and meeting the needs of diverse communities.** We hope to offer deeper insights into the different ways we experience diverse cultures and cultural communities.
- **Workforce development.** As peer support is more widely included in health care systems, we will broaden our attention to include content designed to increase knowledge and capabilities that equip us to be more effective and increase access to peer support in integrated settings. In addition, we will look at the challenges and opportunities for co-creating career pathways for peer supporters.
- **Self-care and wellness planning for peer supporters and others.** These are critical aspects of personal well-being and improving personal health outcomes. We need to move beyond just 'managing' chronic conditions to *improving* our health and well-being.

These are just a few examples of what to look for, and we have some surprises in mind. Our Thought Leaders section will expand, both in its areas of focus and in the incredible pool of leaders we feature who have a wide range of experiences and knowledge.

Until next year, I hope everyone enjoys the many upcoming holidays with family and friends.