

PEER SUPPORT AND DESTIGMATIZATION

PROMISING CASES FROM DENMARK



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**”I NEVER MET A PERSON
WHO HAD RECOVERED
FROM SCHIZOPHRENIA.
I DIDN’T KNOW THAT
WAS POSSIBLE!”**

(An inpatient at a peer-driven group)



THE DANISH PEER INITIATIVE: A NATIONAL TRIAL OF PEER SUPPORT AS AN INTERVENTION FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

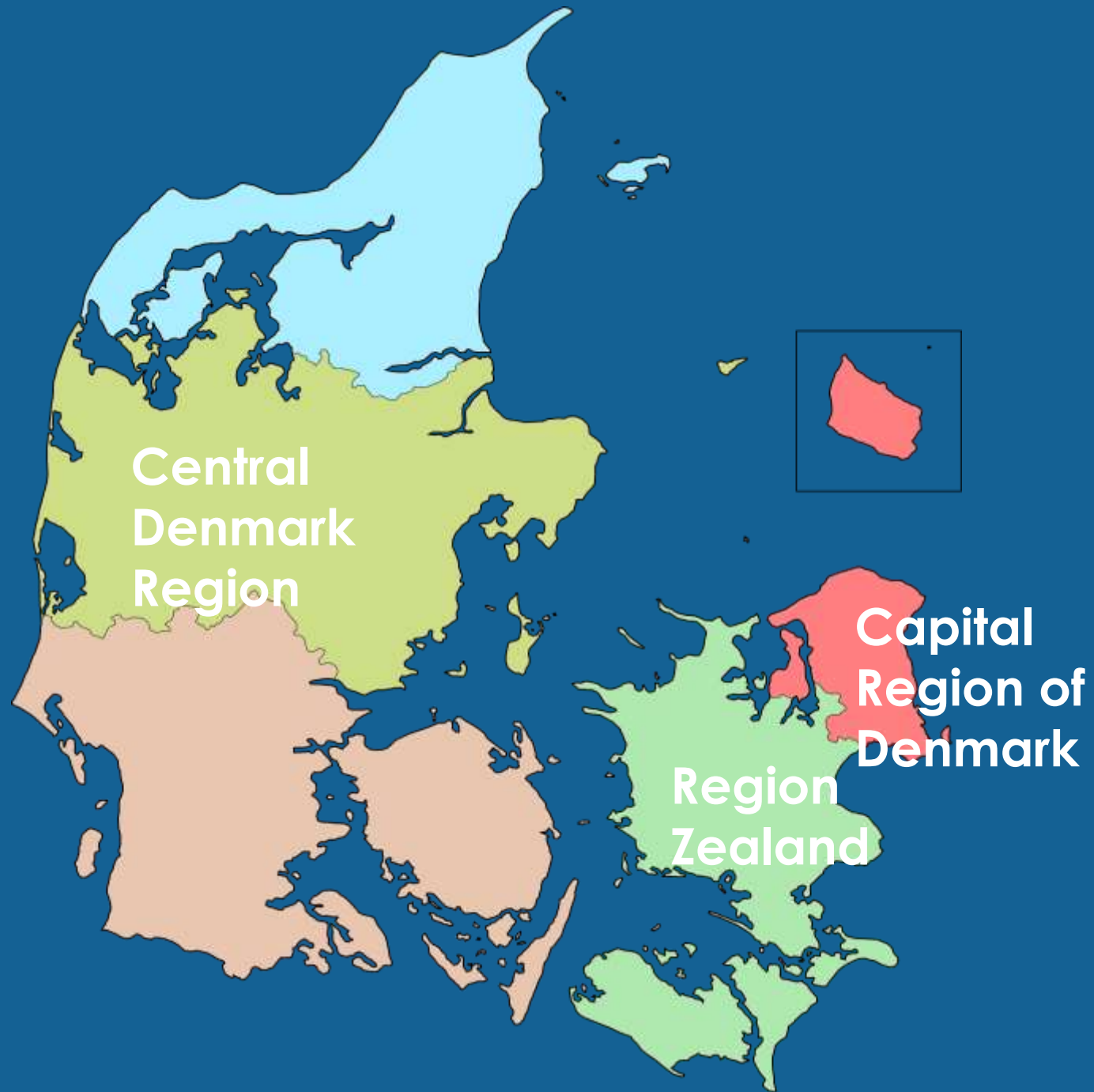
OUR APPROACH:

- Place & Train
- Peer Education & Hiring
- Implementation
- Evaluation

3 PARTNERSHIPS

Central Denmark Region	Region Zealand	Capital Region of Denmark
City of Viborg City of Randers City of Aarhus SIND Relatives Organization Psychiatry and Social Service of the Central Denmark Region	The Department of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, City of Roskilde Mental Health Services of Region Zealand SIND Patient Organization	Mental Health Services of the Capital Region City of Copenhagen City of Elsinore City of Rudersdal The Social Network The Consumer and Relatives Council of the Capital Region

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH:
THE NATIONAL BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES
THE DANISH PEER-NETWORK**



**The Danish
Peer
Initiative
2015-2018**

PEER SUPPORT IS OFFERED AT:

Inpatient Care	Outpatient Care	Live-in Facilities/ Group Homes	Community Services	Recovery Colleges
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PEER SUPPORT IS DELIVERED AS:

- 1:1
- Peer-led Groups
- Recovery Colleges

PEER SUPPORT AFFECTS STIGMA & SELF-STIGMA:

- Creating hope for consumers, staff and organisations
- Changing staff language, practice and culture to focus on consumer strengths
- Teaching & sharing skills

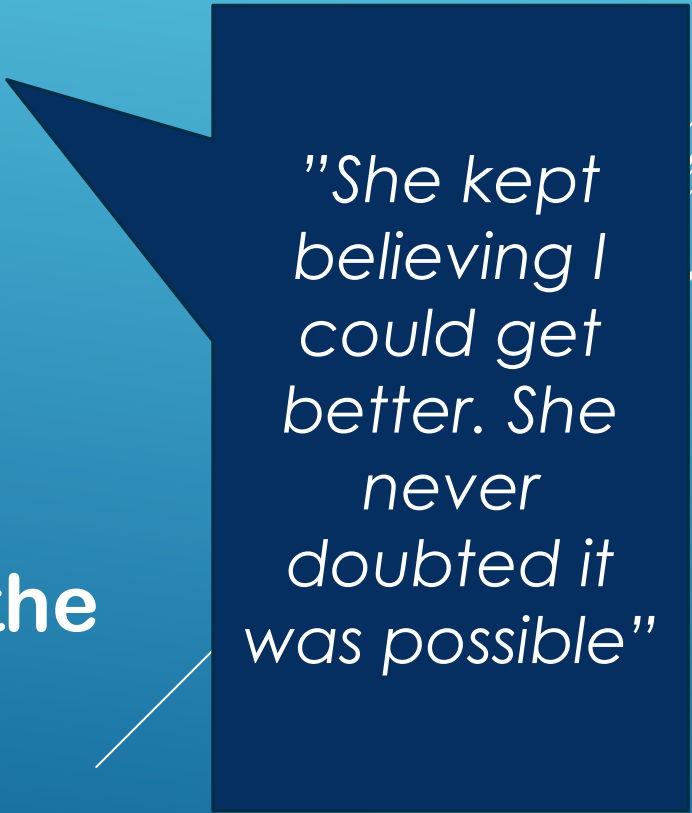
FINDINGS SO FAR...

"Conversations with peers are part of my recovery, so that I am not walking alone."

1:1 PEER SUPPORT

The reciprocal focus of individual peer support :

- ▶ Supports personal recovery
- ▶ Reduces self-stigma
- ▶ Creates hope and the courage to make changes in ones own life
- ▶ Changes focus, language and culture in the organization



"She kept believing I could get better. She never doubted it was possible"

PEER-LED GROUPS

- ▶ Change the consumers experience of being outside, alone and different
- ▶ Focus on a life outside the individuals' problems
- ▶ Support a positive identity through sharing life stories
- ▶ Help bridge people's hopes & dreams to staff

"We can't read in a book, how to support the consumers recovery"

(manager)

RECOVERY COLLEGES

Co-produced classes—taught by peers, practitioners and/or relatives—change the image of what consumers can do and bring hope to all participants.

- ▶ Education open to all—people are just students and human beings
- ▶ As teachers and as staff members peers change organizational culture
- ▶ New skills are crucial for recovery and in ending stigma

"My prejudices have been cut down and I have learned to engage by using my human experience and not just my professional knowledge"

HOPE – DOES IT MATTER?

- ▶ The cultural status of mental illness is affected by the chance of recovery
- ▶ A belief that recovery is possible creates self-efficacy
- ▶ A path to a positive identity
- ▶ Change (for the better) is possible

"I keep thinking, if she can do it, so can I.

That's very different from anything else I've ever thought"

DREAMING BIG

- Peer support as a natural, integrated part not only of mental health services but also adopted in other contexts
- Peers support and strengthen the recovery orientation of organizations
- Lived Experience becomes a recognized path to helping people onward in life – used by peers as well as practitioners

FORWARD FROM HERE:

Peers become an integral part of
ending stigma through
creating a focus on hope,
strength and skills in every place
where people need recovery