

'Healing through connection'. Impact of Peer support on Drug and Alcohol Recovery: Healthcare professional and Volunteer perspectives.

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INTRODUCTION

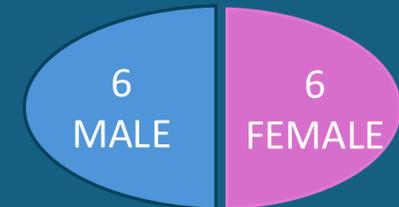
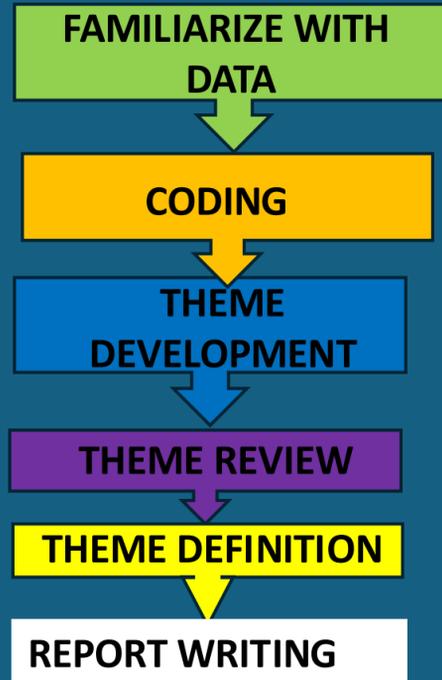
Substance misuse remains a major public health challenge in the UK, with 9,641 alcohol-related deaths reported in 2021—the highest since records began in 2001. Peer support, grounded in lived experience, plays a key role in promoting and strengthening recovery.

OBJECTIVES

- Explore the impact of peer support on drug and alcohol recovery.
- Examine positive and negative changes from both healthcare and volunteers.
- Investigate how lived experience shapes recovery service delivery.

METHODS

A Qualitative exploratory study of 12 peer supporters — in professional and volunteer roles — were randomly selected from 25 interviewed peer supporters.



- Semi-structured, anonymized interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.
- Data analyzed using Braun & Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis, highlighting researcher interpretation in theme development.

RESULTS

Peer Support from healthcare perspective



DISCUSSION

- Peer support builds Confidence, trust, fosters open communication and reduces stigma.
- Key challenges: role ambiguity and workload.
- Sustaining benefits needs clear roles, training, fair pay, and organisational support.

CONCLUSION

- Peer support enhances clinical recovery frameworks with person-centered, empowering approaches.
- Long-term sustainability needs structured training, clear roles, fair pay, and supervision.

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