

# Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs)

## The Hub of Recovery Support in the Community

presented by

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# ABOUT FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY

Our mission is to change the way addiction and recovery are understood and embraced through advocacy, education and leadership.



## ADVOCATE

Faces & Voices of Recovery works hard to advocate for public policies and funding that support addiction recovery for all.

- Stigma Reduction
- Public Policy
- Recovery Advocacy Movement
- Recovery Voices Count
- Recovery Bill of Rights
- Family Recovery Advocacy
- Sign Petition- Change the Name: End the Stigma
- Endorse the Recovery Set-Aside



## ACT

By uniting RCOs around the nation through ARCO, Faces & Voices of Recovery recognizes and supports all pathways of recovery.

- Capacity Building
- Share Your Story
- Become A Member
- Join Our Affiliates
- Donate Today
- Volunteer Now
- Careers at F&V
- Recovery Leadership Summit



## ADVANCE

Through public events, trainings, workshops, webinars and conferences, Faces & Voices of Recovery works to educate and advance the recovery community.

- National Recovery Month
- National Advisory Council
- Capacity Building
- Association of Recovery Community Organizations (ARCO)
- Council on Accreditation of Peer Recovery Support Services (CAPRSS)
- National Recovery Institute (NRI)
- Recovery Data Platform (RDP)



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# Programs and Services

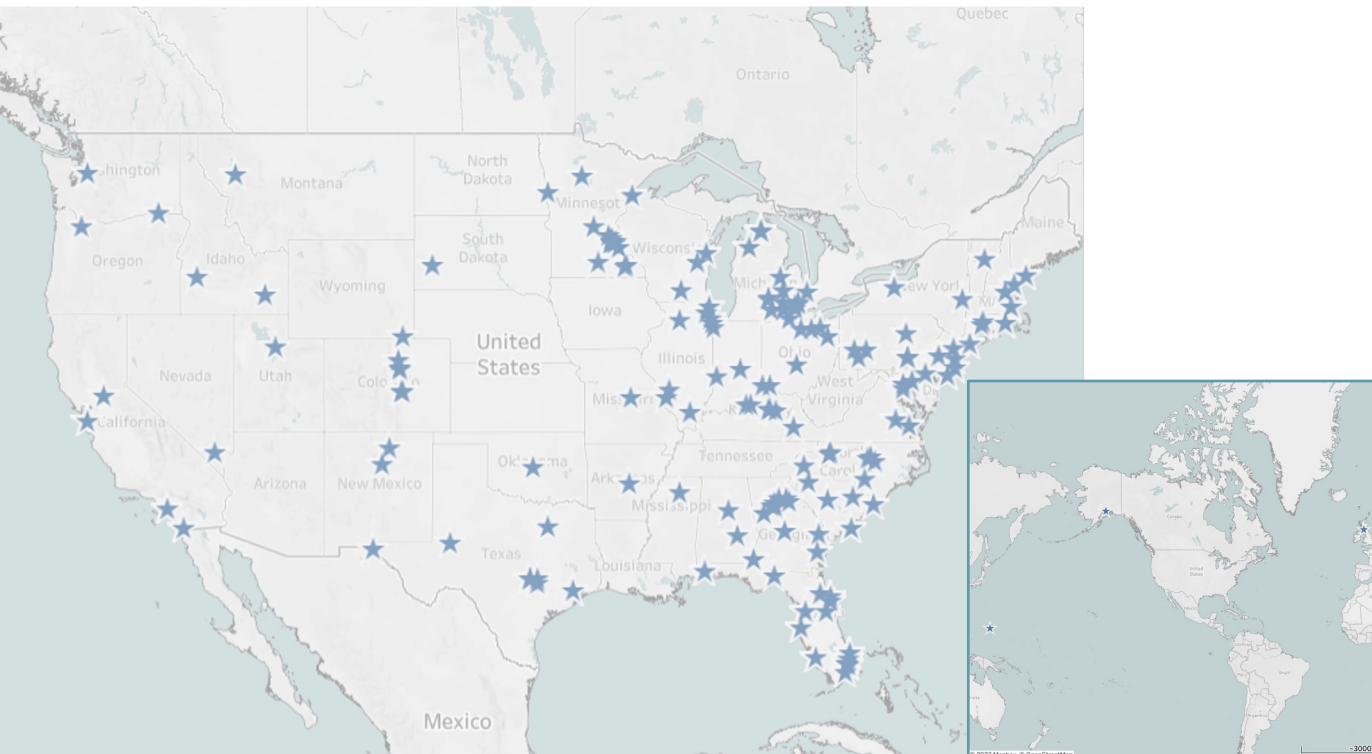
- Association of Recovery Community Organizations (ARCO)
- Council on Accreditation of Peer Recovery Support Services (CAPRSS)
- National Recovery Institute (NRI)
- Recovery Data Platform (RDP)
- Advocacy, outreach, research



# The Association of Recovery Community Organizations (ARCO)

ARCO was created in 2011 to unite and support a growing network of local, regional, and statewide recovery community organizations (RCOs). There are over 170 RCOs that are members of the Association.

➤ Learn more at <https://facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/services/arco/>



## ARCO

Association of Recovery  
Community Organizations

# History

## Part of a Movement

- Grassroots movement
- Recovery Community Organizations and Recovery Advocated
- Recovery Month
- The Americans in Recovery Act
- SAMHSA's Recovery Community Services Program (RCSP) Grants

## Early Leaders

- Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR)
- Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA)
- Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)
- People Advocating Recovery (PAR)



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# Defining an RCO



A recovery community organization (RCO) is an independent, non-profit organization led and governed by representatives of local communities of recovery.

- Phillip A. Valentine, William L. White and Pat Taylor, 2007

# Core Principles of RCOs

## Recovery Vision:

The RCO, its leaders and its members have a singular goal: enhancing the quantity and quality of support available to people seeking and experiencing long-term recovery from substance use disorder.

## Authenticity of Voice:

Authenticity of voice means that an RCO ensures that the voices of people who have the lived experience of recovery, including family members, are heard and embraced, and represents the interests of communities of recovery.

## Accountability to the recovery community:

RCOs credibility and effectiveness depends on their ability to be accountable and responsive to the community they work in and with. In most cases, this means being an independent, stand-alone nonprofit organization, where they can manage their relationships with other organizations, free from conflicts of interest.

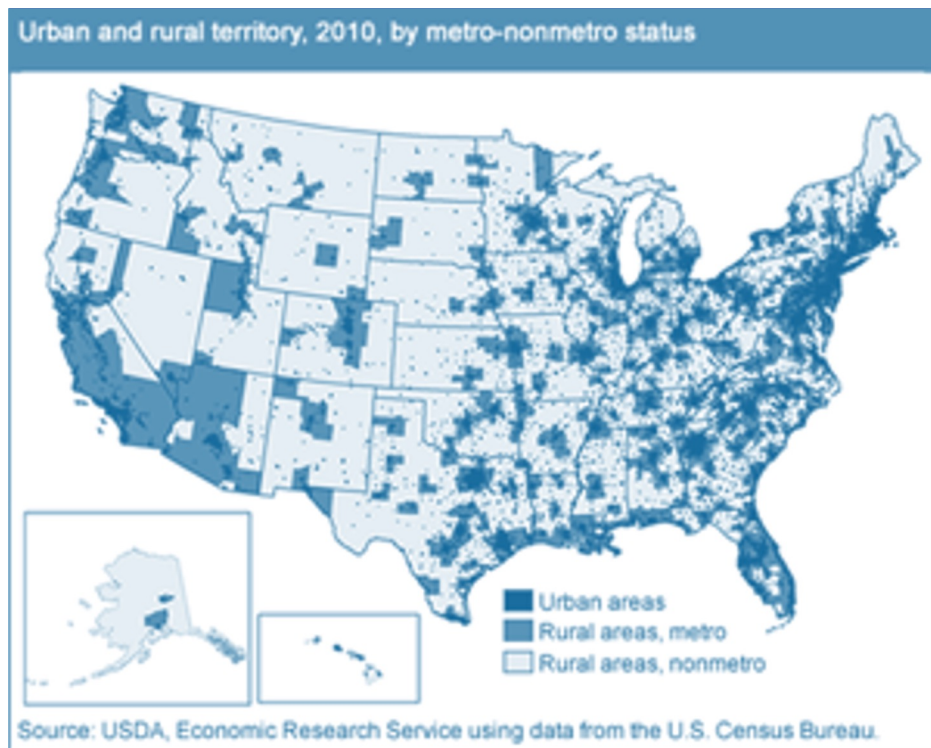
# 10 Best Practices

1. Non-profit Organization
2. Led and Governed by the Recovery Community
3. Primary Focus is Recovery from Substance Use Disorders
4. Grassroots
5. Participatory Process
6. Peer Recovery Support Services
7. All Pathways Towards Recovery
8. Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Policies, Practices, and Services
9. Recovery-Friendly Language
10. Code of Ethics and Grievance Policies





# Types of RCOs



**Metropolitan/Urban >50,000**  
1,000 persons/Sq. mile

**Urban Clusters 2,500 – 49,999**  
1,000 persons/Sq. mile

**Rural & Small Town <2,500**  
> 500 persons/Sq. mile

# What do RCOs Do?

## Capacity Building, Peer Recovery Support Services and Advocacy

### Capacity Building

Support the development of recovery support institutions

- education-based recovery support programs
- recovery community centers
- recovery cafes
- recovery ministries
- recovery-focused employment programs
- recovery-focused prison reentry programs
- more

### Peer Recovery Support Services

Provide peer recovery support services (PRSS)

Conduct ongoing local needs assessment surveys or focus groups

### Advocacy

Organize recovery-focused policy and advocacy activities

# What do RCOs Do?

## Education & Outreach

### Education

- Increase recovery workforce capacity and expertise through training and education
- Conduct recovery-focused public and professional education events



### Outreach

- Conduct outreach to engage people seeking recovery, in recovery, or in need of recovery support services
- Conduct events to educate and raise public awareness
- Host local; regional; or national recovery celebration events,
- Collaborate on the integration of recovery activities within local prevention; harm reduction; early intervention; and treatment initiatives

# Examples of Peer Recovery Support Services Provided by RCOs

- Recovery coaching
- Recovery planning
- Support groups
- Life skills training
- Job seeking support
- Family support
- Naloxone distribution
- Overdose prevention
- Food assistance
- Housing assistance
- Peer warm line

## Partnerships and contracts with

- Health care providers
- Emergency departments
- Accountability courts
- Jails and correctional facilities
- Treatment agencies
- Housing providers
- Child welfare agencies
- Faith community
- State and local government agencies
- Managed care organizations
- Managing entities/ community service boards
- More

# **The Impact of RCOs**

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# Recovery Supports Cultivate RECOVERY CAPITAL

# Peers Speak Out Priority Outcomes for Substance Use Treatment and Services

## What we learned

- Outcomes of SUD treatment and recovery support services that matter most to individuals:
- Staying alive
- Improving quality of life
- Reducing harmful substance use
- Improving mental health
- Meeting their basic needs
- Increasing self-confidence / self-efficacy
- Increasing connection to services and supports

Disconnect  
between these  
priorities and focus  
of current policies,  
clinical standards &  
quality assessment



# Core Strategies & Impacts

- Building strong, grassroots organizations that develop leaders, offer opportunities for recovering people to express their collective voice and provide a forum for community service.
  - 168 ARCO members in 2022
    - **1 US Territory**
    - **2 International**
    - **39 States**
- Advocating for meaningful representation and voice for people in long-term recovery and their family members on issues that affect their lives.
  - RCOs host and support recovery advocacy days in their states
    - **Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)**
    - **Advocates for Recovery Colorado**
    - **People Advocating Recovery (Kentucky)**
    - **Georgia Council on Substance Abuse**
    - **Others**
  - A New Path
    - **A New PATH works to reduce the stigma associated with addictive illness through education and compassionate support, and to advocate for therapeutic rather than punitive drug policies.**
    - <https://www.anewpath.org/>





# Core Strategies & Impacts Continued



According to [Brandeis Opioid Resource Connector](#), “MOAR has been instrumental in policy changes to insurance coverage, the criminal justice system, licensed recovery residences, housing, and education for those seeking and in recovery. In addition, MOAR has had a presence on the Governor's Opioid Advisory Task Force as well as multiple state commissions on a wide range of topics such as [recovery coaching](#) and [civil commitments](#).”

# Core Strategies & Impacts Continued

- Assessing needs related to the adequacy and quality of local treatment and recovery support services.
  - In 2016, the Recovery Needs Survey surveyed almost 1700 people impacts by SUDs across NY
    - **FOR-NY**, <https://for-ny.org/recovery-needs-survey-2016/>
  - Advocacy Project 6 Month Report
    - **FAVOR UK** - <https://www.facesandvoicesofrecoveryuk.org/advocacy-project-6-month-report/>

“There are no specific advocacy services in the UK fighting for the rights of people seeking access to treatment & this service could easily be the start of a whole new desperately needed sector. The last 6 months has more than ever brought home very clearly the unending dedication & commitment of loved ones trying to get solutions to the pain & despair of watching their loved ones suffer. This report is dedicated to all of them.”

# Core Strategies & Impacts Continued

- Educating the public, policymakers and service providers about the prevalence and multiple pathways of addiction recovery.
  - Multiple Pathways Conference
    - **Hosted by an ARCO Member, CCAR**
    - **Several ARCO Members Spoke at the 2022 conference!**
      - The Phoenix
      - Lost Dreams Awakening
  - All Recovery Meetings to support multiple pathways
  - Recovery Needs Survey FOR-NY
    - **Pathways of Recovery focused report highlight**
    - <https://for-ny.org/recovery-needs-survey-results-pathways-recovery/>
- Developing human and fiscal resources by expanding philanthropic and public support for addiction treatment, recovery support services and recovery advocacy and cultivating volunteerism within local communities of recovery.
  - Many RCOs have a volunteer sign-up form on the organization's website
  - PRO-ACT has the largest Recovery Month event in the nation
    - **Many people volunteer at this event**

# Core Strategies & Impacts Continued

Advocating for policy changes at the local, state and national levels that promote recovery and remove barriers to recovery.

- Retooling Care to Meet Our Needs:  
A Recovery Community Vision for a Five-Year Focused Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Care System,
  1. A Substance Use Disorder Service System that supports long term recovery
  2. A Service System that meets the needs of our young people
  3. Build the 21st Century workforce to serve the next generation
  4. Although there are many social, employment, legal, educational and other important issues with the person with a SUD, there are a couple of exceptionally important areas. (Employment, Education, and Self-Sufficiency)
  5. Recovery Housing Opportunities

<https://pro-a.org/retooling-care-to-meet-our-needs-2/>



Dr. Rahul Gupta, the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), stopped the Salt Lake Recovery Community Center to discuss how RCOs like USARA are making a difference in communities across the country by promoting the voices of people with lived experience of recovery.-Salt Lake City, Utah, May 6, 2022

# Core Strategies & Impacts Continued

## Recovery Month

- Celebrating recovery from addiction through public events that offer living testimony of the transformative power of recovery.
- Recovery Month & International Recovery Day
  - 160 events shared on the 2021 Recovery Month calendar, many hosted by RCOs and ARCO members

<https://rm.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/>



## Research

- Supporting research that illuminates effective strategies and the processes of long-term recovery.
  - Study of recovery community organization participants over time shows peer-based recovery support activities are associated with modest improvement in recovery capital
    - <https://www.recoveryanswers.org/research-post/study-recovery-community-organization-participants-peer-based-recovery-support-modest-improvement-recovery-capital/>

# What Can You Do?

## Learn about

Learn about RCOs in your community and neighborhood community

- Collaborate
- Support
- Refer

## Start

Start an RCO in Your Community

## Make

Make a donation or attend a fundraiser

## Volunteer

Volunteer your skills and talents

## Educate

Educate policymakers about the important role that RCOs have in your state or community.

# For more information



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