

Peer Emotional Labour



An exploration of the experience of peer workers in Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT), with particular focus on Emotional Labour, with the aim of developing a Good Practice Guide for Peer Working - Peer Emotional Labour (PEL)

Introduction:

The Peer Emotional Labour (PEL) study seeks to explore the experiences of the different groups of peer workers in Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT), with particular focus on emotional labour:-

- The impact of managing the emotions resulting from work interactions (Hochschild, 1983).

PEL provides evidence that peer workers may experience a greater emotional impact from their job due to *'the emotional work of using and embodying lived experience, and aspects of the working environment'* (Faulkner and Rose, 2021).

Methodology

PEL was a two-stage study using thematic analysis.

Stage 1:




Mixed focus groups of Peer Workers, Peer Trainers, Experts by experience (EBE) and Patient and Public advisors (PPI), Peer Leads & non-Peer managers / supervisors of peers.

Stage 2:

A workshop for peers and SPFT leadership, drawing on key themes from focus groups, to determine priorities and recommendations.

Stage 2 Workshop Questions:

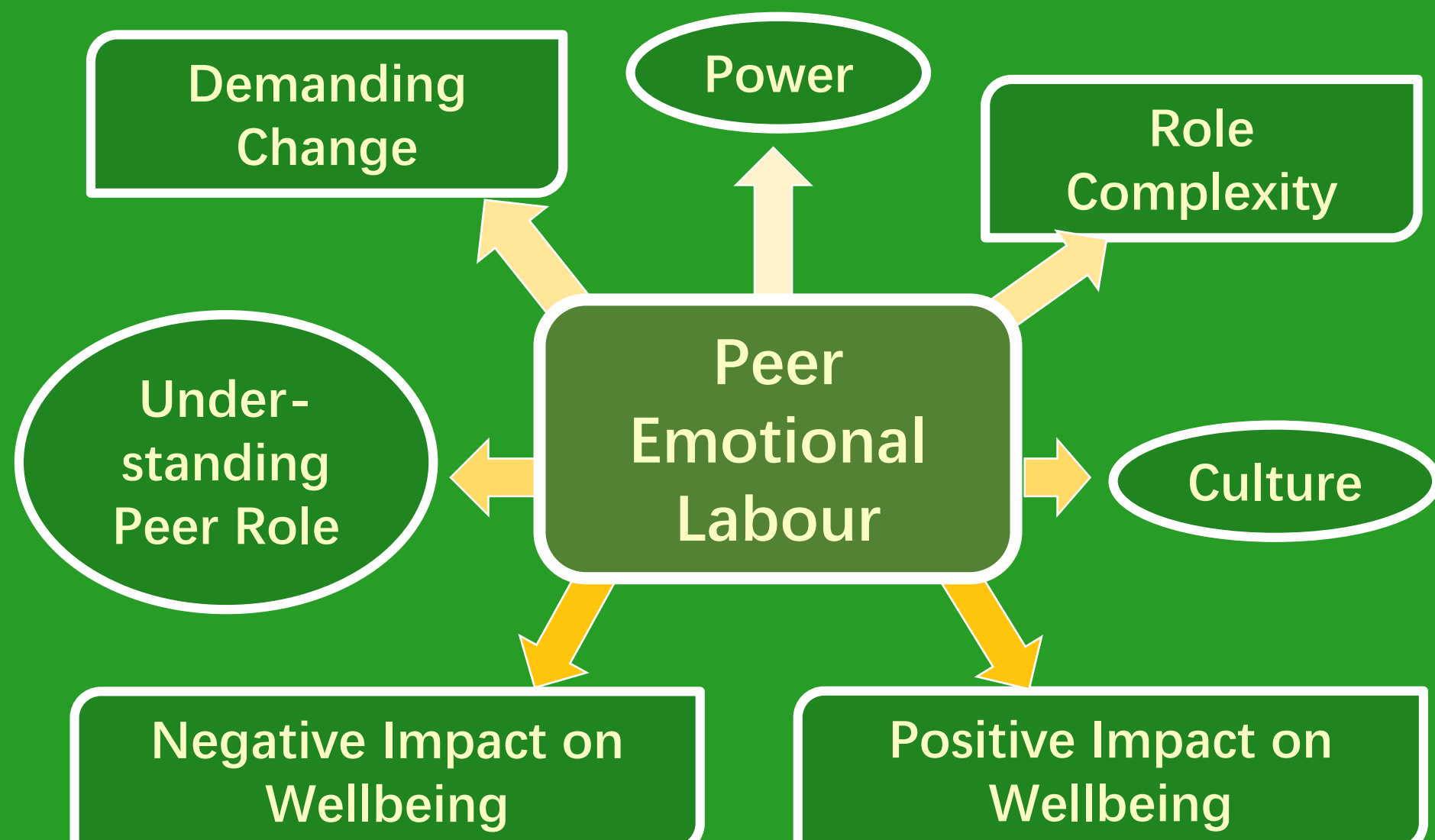
Discuss and determine practical recommendations:

-  What training/development opportunities would help peers and all other staff?
-  What is needed to support initial 'team readiness' and on-going support for peer workers and their teams?
-  What organisational change is needed?

Making Sense of the Data



Key Emergent Themes: Stage 1



Recommendations

- ➔ Introduce **mandatory training** on peer work/roles for all staff. It should incorporate trauma-informed & recovery-oriented approaches; be co-produced/delivered by peers; be both at induction **and** ongoing; and allow for progression for peers.
- ➔ **Clinical supervision & reflective** practice groups should be introduced for peers.
- ➔ Greater **organisational buy-in** on peer roles: to share information; increase awareness of peer support; and strengthen remit to ensure people with lived experience are embedded in organization (at all levels).
- ➔ Establishment of an **independent** equivalent of the speak-up guardian for peer work.

Next Steps

- Co-produce **Guide to Good Practice for Peer Working** with SPFT
- **NIHR RfPB funding application for PEL2:**
 - Explore emotional labour in a range of PSW contexts using:
 - Focus Groups
 - Autoethnography/reflective journals

Authors

Dr Sam Robertson
Chief PEL Investigator
Involvement Lead
Peer Research Fellow
sam.robertson@spft.nhs.uk

Dr Helen Leigh-Phippard
Co-researcher
Expert by Experience
PEL artwork