

Medi-Cal Peer Certification Stakeholder Advisory Council Member

Kristen Gmerek / Los Angeles

Kristen has been a beneficiary of the mental health system for most of their life and continues to seek intentional, intersectional, and empathetic spaces to contribute to the mental health field for the better. Born in Hong Kong, and slowly making their way across the United States after moving back in the early 2000s with their family, Kristen has found a home within the Long Beach community. They are currently working within the mental health field as an advocate and activist as they prepare to begin a Master's program in Social Work in 2024. For Kristen, this position on the Advisory Council goes beyond a title and is an important role that allows them to intentionally observe and contribute to the positive impacts that the peer support initiative has on the mental health community within California and beyond. Not only does Kristen believe that mental health care is a human right, but requires safe spaces for people to explore their own healing.