

4.1.3: Recovery-oriented care

What is recovery-oriented care? How does it relate to person-centered care and trauma-informed care in HCH? In this section, you will learn how HCH workers describe recovery-oriented care as using person-centered and trauma-informed thinking to respect people's progress, introduce goal-setting behaviors, and provide encouragement for people taking steps toward recovery.

What is recovery?



Community in Ann Arbor, MI. Photo by Alan Pickett

Medicine

...full or partial recovery

Addictions

...life-long process

Mental illness

...restoration of function

...full recovery

Trauma

...regaining safety, control, connection, meaning

The term *recovery* has different meanings depending on the context. For medicine, recovery commonly refers to the process of healing and recuperation from illness or a medical procedure. Patients are sometimes said to achieve full or partial recovery from certain conditions.

In the addictions field, recovery most often refers to the process of gaining and maintaining abstinence from using substances. People with substance use disorders who are abstinent are said to be 'in recovery' which is commonly viewed as a life-long process.

For persons diagnosed with a major mental illness, recovery is commonly viewed as restoration to some optimal level of functioning, if not full and complete recovery altogether.

For people impacted by trauma, recovery is generally viewed as the process of regaining a sense of safety, control, connection, and meaning that has been disrupted as a result of the trauma.

Recovery is not a linear process, and relapse is an expected part of many people's recovery experience.

Recovery from homelessness

...the process of becoming stably housed and restoring one's sense of purpose and meaningful place in the community.



Recovery from homelessness is commonly seen as the process of becoming stably housed and restoring one's sense of purpose and a meaningful place in the community.

Commonalities



- Recovery is a process
- Hope and a belief in recovery is critical
- Recovery is consumer-driven
- People can and do experience recovery

What these various perspectives have in common is that recovery is a process, and in many cases a long-term process, though not necessarily life-long; that hope and a belief in recovery is critical; and that recovery is consumer-driven, not something that can be imposed.

Finally, people can and do experience recovery, thanks to their own determined efforts and the supportive care provided by other people in their lives, clinicians and non-clinicians alike.

Recovery-oriented care



- Is hopeful
- Sees possibilities
- Can be challenging

HCH workers emphasize the importance of a recovery-oriented approach in all aspects of their work. A recovery perspective is hopeful. It sees possibilities. It can be challenging sometimes to see the possibilities of healing and recovery for people we meet. Yet, we need to hold out this hope. It is not unusual for people experiencing homelessness to forsake hope as a means of survival. Hence, it becomes the task of the provider to make hope available for others to borrow until they can reclaim it for themselves.

“Recovery is a personal choice.”



Photo by Shane Bauer

It is not up to the provider to determine when a person is making progress – it is up to the person.”

Shery Mead and Mary Ellen Copeland, “What Recovery Means to Us.”
http://www.mentalhealthrecovery.com/_art_recoverymeans.html

“Recovery is a personal choice,” former consumers remind us. “Some people choose to work at it very intensively ... others more slowly. It is not up to the provider to determine when a person is making progress – it is up to the person.”

In HCH, workers find that the best way to increase understanding of what it means to be recovery-oriented, it is take cues from the people who are recovering themselves.

In the final video of this module, you’ll hear more about how you can be a recovery-oriented caregiver in your own setting.