

Realising Recovery

The Framework

The knowledge, skills and values mental health workers require to work in a recovery focused way

The following pages identify the knowledge, skills and values workers need to practice in a recovery focused way.

Appendix 1 contains some learning activities that workers might undertake in order to begin to develop aspects of recovery focused practice. This is followed by a list of some resources to support learning (Appendix 2).

Knowledge

To work in a recovery focused way mental health workers need to have knowledge of:

- factors that enable recovery and an understanding of the recovery process (e.g. the fact that recovery is not a linear process and may involve setbacks as well as successes)
- service users' personal accounts of recovery and factors identified by them as helping or hindering their recovery process
- an understanding of the importance of self determination and ownership of the recovery journey
- the central role of hope in recovery
- the significance of identity in the recovery journey
- a range of person centred planning methods and tools
- methods of involvement including the distinction between 'tokenistic' and 'meaningful' involvement
- the rights of service users and named persons and relevant safeguards in relation to all aspects of compulsory care and treatment
- self help approaches for managing mental health
- the role of self directed care and mechanisms to access support for this, for example, direct payments
- the role, skills and specific contribution of peer specialist support workers
- the impact of stigma, discrimination and social exclusion on peoples' recovery
- good practice in relation to supporting people who want to to access education and employment (paid and unpaid) opportunities
- the impact of inequalities on mental health and recovery
- anti-discrimination legislation and how service users can legally challenge discrimination
- local community resources available (beyond traditional mental health services)

- the role of independent advocacy (individual and collective) in enabling service users to have a say
- recovery audit tools (e.g. Scottish Recovery Indicator) and their role in developing recovery focused practice
- the relationship between traumatic experiences and mental health problems
- the role of strengths in creating resilience in times of adversity
- the role of balance and timing in promoting the recovery of others (knowing when to hold hope and when to encourage action)
- the central role of supportive and therapeutic relationships for promoting recovery
- the potential impact of negative or overly pessimistic messages
- the factors that can influence and support the positive management of risk
- innovative and creative ways of working to support people on their recovery journey

Skills

To work in a recovery focused way mental health workers need to be able to:

- actively and meaningfully involve people in all aspects of their care including shared responsibility for assessment of risk and risk taking
- maximise opportunities for all service users including those subject to compulsory powers, to make choices about how they live their lives and have these choices respected and acted upon wherever possible
- work alongside people to look at the options and potential outcomes of choices
- build positive relationships with individual service users and negotiate the parameters within each relationship
- discuss recovery with services service users and their friends, families and carers and enable them to access resources that will help them learn about recovery
- listen to what service users are actually saying and respect their views
- listen to and support service users when they speak about experiences of trauma e.g. childhood sexual abuse
- work alongside service users to enable them to make sense of their experiences of mental distress and using mental health services
- enable service users to discuss how the use of compulsory powers (past and present) has impacted on them
- support service users to complete an advance statement
- convey hope sensitively at times of distress
- assess strengths and explore service users' skills and interests in order to develop self defined goals
- utilise person-centred planning tools
- enable service users to take a lead in planning care
- provide information in accessible formats as a continuous process rather than a one-off event

- develop links with local community resources beyond traditional mental health services
- support service users to identify and make use of community resources
- explore with service users the options for maximising 'purpose and meaning', for example volunteering, creative projects or expressing spirituality
- negotiate with service users the nature of involvement of independent advocates, friends, family members and carers
- enable service users to envisage and plan for the future (as well as crisis planning there needs also to be planning for success)
- reflect on their own and others practice and interactions with people to examine whether hopeful or pessimistic messages are being conveyed
- use supervision to reflect and explore issues around recovery focused practice

Values

To work in a recovery focused way mental health workers need to reflect:

- a belief that recovery is possible
- awareness that recovery is a uniquely personal journey
- an appreciation of service users' experiences of distress and perspectives as valid
- a commitment to actively listen to what people say and not make assumptions about what they need
- the use of respectful language that is recovery focused
- an awareness of their own values and ability to recognise when these might impact on relationships with others
- an awareness of their own mental health and well-being
- a willingness to share aspects of their own lives to inspire hope and recovery in others
- a hopeful approach when working with service users that conveys positive messages in relation to recovery
- respect for the expertise and unique knowledge gained as a result of having experienced mental health problems
- an appreciation of the benefits of informal and formal peer support
- appreciation of the role of independent advocacy and service user activism as a valuable source of feedback and a significant aspect of the recovery journey for some service users
- the maintenance of professional and personal integrity
- a recognition and appreciation of the potential impact of the power imbalance between mental health workers and service users particularly in situations involving compulsory powers
- a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice, respect for diversity and the need to challenge inequalities

- an appreciation that social and economic factors may impact recovery
- a recognition and appreciation of the role of non-mental health resources in relation to recovery
- resilience and an ability to hold hope, recognising that recovery can be a long process
- a recognition that many factors impact on recovery and each has a unique role, e.g. role of the individual, friends, family and carers, mental health and other services and the community
- an appreciation of the importance of exercising personal responsibility to promote recovery focused practice demonstrated by a willingness to challenge and shape institutional systems and procedures

Future NES/SRN project developments

The joint project between NES and SRN will continue and will focus on raising awareness of the Framework and supporting the implementation of some aspects of the Framework. In particular this work will focus on:

- identifying in partnership with stakeholders areas of the Framework that require the development of national training resources
- commissioning/developing training materials
- expanding the existing national values based practice training preparation initiative to incorporate a recovery focused training course
- further exploration and development of additional training for managers of services in order for services to develop in a recovery focused way

These further actions and the publication of this Framework build on work currently being undertaken in relation to recovery across mental health services in Scotland and provide a foundation for the development of recovery focused practice.

We hope that mental health workers, service users, their friends, families and carers welcome this cultural shift and embrace the opportunities that recovery focused mental health practice offers.