

CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

TITLE: Why make the effort? Exploring recovery college engagement



This study aims to explore students perceptions of learning in a recovery college, and if this relates to their perceived mental health 'recovery'. The Key Objectives are:

1. To explore students perceptions of what they have learnt in the recovery college
2. To identify factors which may hinder or facilitate student's learning within the recovery college setting
3. To analyse if there is a link between students perceived learning and their self-reported mental health recovery



Background

Recovery colleges offer short educational workshops about mental health conditions and ways to improve mental wellbeing. They are open to service users, carers and staff and aim to give students a better understanding of mental health and how to manage symptoms, day-to-day life and deal with challenges. Meddings and colleagues (2014) suggested that "session content and what students learn was one of the most valued aspects of the Recovery College". It is proposed that this could be a critical element which requires focused analysis. Further, an understanding of factors which could hinder or facilitate an individuals' attendance at recovery colleges is paramount to a greater understanding of their overall impact.

Who was involved?

Service users and staff of Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Central / East Recovery College, academics at University of Central Lancashire.

What did we do?

- Before attending any course participants invited to complete the Recovery Assessment Scale (Gifford et al., 1995) and study-specific questions.
- Three months later Participants complete the final questionnaire pack, including the Recovery Assessment Scale and set of questions regarding student's experiences at the recovery college; specifically focusing on learning experiences.
- All participants Invited to take part in a semi-structured interview about their learning experiences with the college, and their perceptions of what hindered and facilitated engagement.

What we found and what does this mean?

- Participants stated that factors such as anxiety and motivation could prevent them from attending courses at the Recovery College, however two thirds of participants also noted that their motivation may also support their engagement. Support from family and care team were also influencing factors, in addition to wanting to spend time with other people.
- Educational motivations for attending the college were double social motivations
- No participants had any expectations about the Recovery College prior to attending

What next?

- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has implemented recommendations from the author, based on these research findings, at its Central and East Recovery College
- Research has been published in the journal *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*

What is NIHR CLAHRC NWC?

The mission of the NIHR CLAHRC NWC is to work collaboratively with Partner organisations and other stakeholders including members of the public to co-produce and conduct high-quality, leadership enhancing, applied research designed to decrease health inequalities and improve the health of the population of the North West Coast.

Partners / Stakeholders



Cheshire and Wirral Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Find out more

<http://www.clahrc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/index.php>

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