How to measure addiction recovery: Incorporating perspectives of people with lived experience

December 11, 2019

camh
AGENDA

1. Setting the context
2. About the study
3. Implications & next steps
4. Let’s hear from you!
The **Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)** is the largest mental health hospital in Canada, and a world leader in mental health and addiction research.

The **Provincial System Support Program (PSSP)** at CAMH works with communities, service providers and other partners across Ontario to move evidence to action to create sustainable, system-level change.
We connect people with evidence.

Evidence Exchange Network is helping to create a more collaborative and evidence-informed mental health, addictions, and substance use system that meets the needs of all Ontarians.

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Our partner:

Homewood Research Institute is an independent charitable organization dedicated to research designed to evaluate and transform mental health and addiction services in Canada and beyond.
Mary Jean Costello is Research and Evaluation Scientist at Homewood Research Institute, in Guelph.

Brian Rush is a senior scientist at Homewood Research Institute, as well as scientist emeritus with the Institute for Mental Health Policy Research at CAMH, and a professor in the departments of Psychiatry and Public Health Sciences at University of Toronto.

Andrew R.F. Berthelet is a peer group facilitator and volunteer at the Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA). Andrew, who describes himself as "affable fellow", was a member of the Board of Directors of CAPSA from June 2017 to November 2019.
1

Setting the context
The chronic disease paradigm

Addiction recovery is considered a lifelong process.
Similar to how recovery is viewed for mental illness and chronic diseases.
Measuring recovery largely focuses on indicators of ongoing management and improvements in quality of life.
Ongoing recovery monitoring is becoming an important element of performance measurement and an extension of addiction treatment.
But...

There is no clear definition of the phenomenon.
This might hinder advancement of recovery-oriented practice and research.
About the study
What were the study methods?

Five focus groups.
Semi-structured interviews.
Questions focused on how they define “successful” recovery and what they believe was harmful or helpful to their recovery.
What were the study methods?

26 participants.

Average 3 months into an aftercare program (range: 1 week to 8 months).

80% reported not using alcohol or drugs during that period.
Dominant recovery process themes

Lifelong and ongoing

Continuous and productive change
- Goals/milestones
- Pace

Non-linear
- Challenges/set-backs
- Relapse

Individual and shared experiences
Dominant recovery-oriented outcome themes
Implications & next steps
Implications

Findings can enhance how we think about recovery and how we begin to monitor people early on in the recovery process.

For organizations and systems, the findings insights on the breadth of recovery-oriented outcomes that we may need to measure and monitor.

There may be a need to measure recovery outcomes at multiple time points as part of ongoing program- and system-level performance evaluations.
Let’s hear from you!
Thank You