

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

WHAT ARE THEY & HOW DO THEY HELP MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES?

Community supports are various non-clinical options and services (both formal and non-formal) which respond to mental distress in a community setting. Non-clinical supports offer recovery approaches and help people address the social, relational, and environmental factors in their lives such as trauma, income, relationships, community connection, culture or housing - not just a medical approach. Community services are not generally provided by government but by non-government, community-managed organisations and community groups. Community support options might include grassroots, peer-led, family inclusive or personalised options. They may also include responses to alcohol and other drug issues.

Unique to community supports, they always ensure people can:



Participate in the community



Receive personalised support to achieve their goals



Focus on their recovery journey

WHO ARE THEY FOR?

Mental health community supports are designed to support people with levels of distress or where the impact of their mental health on their life is significant. Community supports are for people who need more specialist mental health supports than can generally be provided by a GP, or need a more holistic or practical and recovery-oriented approach than can be provided by most psychology services under a mental health GP plan. Consumers who access community support may also access other treatment services such as private or public psychology and mental health services.



70,000

People in Western Australia need community support



690,000

People in Australia have a severe mental illness

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES



Accommodation Support & Outreach



Family Support & Carer Programs



Self-help & Peer Support



Helplines, warmlines & online chatlines



Recovery Colleges



Employment & Education



Leisure & Recreation



Information, Advocacy & Promotion

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY?

"...a deeply personal, unique process of changing one's attitude, values, feelings, goals, skills, and / or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life even within the limitations caused by the illness."

- Anthony (1993)

Clinical definition of recovery

Clinical recovery is an idea that has emerged from the expertise of mental health professionals, and involves eliminating symptoms and 'sickness', restoring social functioning, and in other ways 'getting back to normal'. It is primarily directed by a clinician and addresses a medical diagnosis.

Personal definition of recovery

Personal recovery is an idea that has emerged from the expertise of people with lived experience of mental illness, and means something different to clinical recovery. It is being able to create and live a meaningful and contributing life in a community of choice with or without the presence of mental health issues. It is driven by the individual experiencing mental distress, as they navigate the causes, factors and triggers that led to their period of distress and they look to hope, choice and the opportunity to live their best life as the solution.

Social definition of recovery

Social connections and relationships form an important part of conceptualising mental health recovery. Social recovery describes the strong relationships, healthy boundaries and social connection as both protective factors for mental health and wellbeing, and critical elements of recovery.