Mental Health and Addiction Services

Our care is: person-centred, recovery oriented, evidenced-based and inclusive of family and carers.

Carer factsheet
Recovery from mental illness

Recovery from mental illness can and does occur for the individual and also for the family and friends of the person experiencing mental illness.

As the family and friends of someone who is experiencing mental illness you are highly likely to feel traumatised and distressed during an acute episode of mental illness. This may be an even more difficult time for the whole family, including the person experiencing acute mental illness, due to stereotypes, stigmas and discrimination about mental illness that are still evident in our community.

Many people who experience mental illness recover, and issues regarding stigma and discrimination against people who have experienced mental illness are being tackled in our community by individuals, their families and friends, health professionals and organisations such as Beyond Blue and local, state and national government agencies.

As a family member or friend you may be affected mentally, emotionally, physically, financially and socially by your role in supporting and caring for the person recovering from mental illness.

Caring for yourself at this time is essential!!!

Recovery from a mental illness, like any other illness, requires time for recuperation, professional advice, treatments and therapies as well as the positive input and efforts of the person recovering and of those supporting the person on their recovery journey.

Recovery from mental illness does not necessarily mean cure, or a return to a pre-illness state. Rather, recovery is the journey toward a new and valued sense of identity, role and purpose outside the parameters of mental illness; living well despite any limitations resulting from the illness, its treatment, and personal and environmental conditions.

The concept of recovery is embedded in the unique and personal journey of the individual. As a result it is not possible to identify a standard path. Nonetheless, common elements of each individual’s experience provide some consistent themes. These include:

- Hope
- Equality and respect
- Social inclusion and connectedness

- Meaning, purpose and direction
- Empowerment

‘Sharing Responsibility for Recovery- creating and sustaining recovery orientated systems of care for mental health’ (QLD Government 2005)

Information, education, counselling and support are available for the carers, families and friends of people recovering from mental illness. Financial support (Centrelink) may also be possible for carers.