Recovery Advocacy

Change Attitudes, Change Actions, and Champion Recovery in Healthcare

University of New England April 11, 2018 Alison Jones Webb, MPH



Disclosure

No commercial relationships to disclose

Recovery Allies

are people who share an interest in supporting people in recovery.

- Family members and friends
- Treatment providers
- Professionals
- Community groups
- Concerned citizens

Do what you can, where you are, with what you have.
--Theodore Roosevelt

Champions and Change Agents

are interested in new ways of doing things and are determined to make change happen.

- Champions are people within an organization who believe in and want change.
- *Change Agents* are people in positions of authority who are responsible for implementing change.

Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

--George Bernard Shaw

Recovery Advocates

are people who publicly support people in recovery and policies that improve their lives.

- Education: Help educate the general public, family members, and professionals about drug and alcohol use, and about recovery
- *Public policy:* Help shape public policy at the local, state, and federal levels that improves the lives of people in recovery
- Stigma: Help smash stigma and work against policies and practices that discriminate against people in recovery

If you want to go quickly, go alone.

If you want to go far, go together.

--African Proverb

What can you do? Stay informed.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has identified four major dimensions that support life in recovery:

- *Home* safe housing, recovery residences, homeless shelters, housing vouchers
- *Health* special health concerns (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C), primary care, mental health care, dental care
- Purpose employment, volunteer opportunities, education
- Community peer support, recovery coaches, communitybuilding activities

What can you do? Stay informed.

The Recovery Research Institute

https://www.recoveryanswers.org/

Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health

https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/

Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide

https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/preface

What can you do? Spread the word.

Use your personal and professional networks to speak out. Help spread SAMHSA's message:

Behavioral Health Is Essential To Health
Prevention Works
Treatment Is Effective
People Recover

Stigma

Relationship between an attribute (substance user) and a stereotype that assigns undesirable labels, qualities and behaviors to a person (e.g. liar, thief, loser)

Stigma = stereotype

Social stigma

Negative attitudes, beliefs and behaviors about a group of people based on stereotypes and misinformation

Social stigma = social exclusion

Structural stigma

Societal level conditions, cultural norms, and institutional practices that constrain the opportunities, resources, and wellbeing for stigmatized populations

Structural stigma = discrimination

Self stigma

Internalized public stigma

Self stigma = shame

What can you do?

Smash stigma.

Stigma = stereotype

Social stigma = social exclusion

Structural stigma = discrimination

Self stigma = shame

- Evidence for people with mental illness
- Evidence for people living with HIV/AIDS
- Emerging evidence for people with substance use disorder
- Promising practices

Ending Discrimination for People with Mental and Substance Use Disorders

https://www.nap.edu/catalog/23442/ending-discrimination-against-people-with-mental-and-substance-use-disorders

What can you do?

Learn about local resources to support people in recovery.

What local resources support the four dimensions of recovery?

- Home
- Health
- Purpose
- Community

Portland Recovery Community Center

https://www.portlandrecovery.org/

Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery

http://www.maineallianceforaddictionrecovery.org/

Maine Association of Recovery Residences

http://www.mainerecoveryresidences.com/

What can you do?

Change the conversation, create a new way of thinking.

Change

- Language
- Policies and procedures
- Systems
- Community culture

Create

- Recovery ready communities
- Recovery oriented systems of care

EMPLOYMENT

Job-readiness training for those in recovery combined with opportunities to gain stable and gainful employment to further support those in recovery

RECOVERY SUPPORT

Access to supportive environments and the many pathways to enhance recovery for both individuals and communities

PREVENTION

Utilization of evidencebased prevention and early intervention strategies to ensure youth and the public understand the dangers of substance use and where to find help if struggling

EDUCATION

Ensure equitable and fair access to educational opportunities, including recovery high schools and collegiate recovery



Recovery Ready Community



TREATMENT

Equitable and affordable access to evidence-based treatment as indicated for the individual, not the masses



Increased opportunities to meet the need for supportive, safe and accountable housing for those entering recovery and sustaining long-term recovery



JUDICIAL/LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sustaining programs like problem-solving courts, law enforcement-assisted diversion, jail-based SUD treatment, and oversight to ensure best-practice adherence

HARM REDUCTION

Increased and open access to harm reduction services like syringe access programs, safe consumption facilities and "standing orders" for naloxone training and access to the drug

> Adapted from YPR http://youngpeopleinrecovery.org /recovery-ready-communities/

Recovery Advocacy means speaking out.

I am a recovery advocate, and for me that means.....

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Recovery Advocacy

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