

ALA Forum 2016

Community based adult learning, health and wellbeing at a Recovery College



Angel Nunley, City East Community College
Sam Stott, South Eastern Sydney Recovery College

Recovery College Model Origins

- A new approach to providing education to people with mental health issues, carers and workers
- Originated in the United States in the 1990's; a UK Recovery College established in 2009
- Brings together adult education principles, readiness to change theory, health promotion and psychiatric rehabilitation processes

Defining Characteristics

1. Educational principles
2. Collaborative
3. Strengths-based
4. Person-centred
5. Progressive
6. Community-facing
7. Inclusive

Reference: Julie Repper and Jane McGregor

Co-Production

- Peer and clinical educators working together equitably
- Power is shared from start to finish
- Professional and lived experience are equally valued



Course Development Process

Course Development Agreement

Co-Production by Educators

Co-Delivery by Educators

Co-Learning by Students

Co-Evaluation by Researchers

International Community of Practice

- Members from Recovery Colleges in Australia, Canada, USA, Uganda, UK and Ireland
- A central recovery college ‘hub’ creates a positive atmosphere of learning and connection
- Courses must be recovery-focused and distinct from psycho-education, group therapy or popular education
- Mental health service transformation occurs through co-production and co-learning

SESRC Objectives

Personal Recovery

- Promote self-determination
- Life beyond mental health services

Service Transformation

- Recovery-oriented service delivery through co-produced staff training

Capacity Building

- Skills and knowledge for consumer workforce development

Employment

- Vocational pathways
- Accredited training



Partnerships with Community Colleges

- Both CECC & SGSCC have been partners of the Recovery College since it was established
- Use of educational language e.g. students, enrolments, courses
- Both community colleges are members of Recovery College Expert Advisory Committee
- Courses located in adult education settings
- Pathways / accredited training

SESRC Eligibility and Enrolment

Courses are free for:

- People with mental health issues residing in SESLHD (with whom we develop an individual student learning plan prior to commencement)
- Their families, carers and support people
- Staff and volunteers working for SESLHD
- Staff from our partner organisations

A fee-for-service option is also available.



SESRC Courses

- Courses are delivered across the Local Health District including community colleges, a migrant resource centre and mental health services including Recovery College hub
- 9 terms completed; 772 students; 74 courses
- CALD courses: Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Mandarin, Nepalese, Russian and Spanish
- Nationally accredited courses: Foundation Skills (CECC) & Certificate II Business (SGSCC)

SESRC Key Research Outcomes

- Qualitative and quantitative research including a cost-benefit analysis
- Focus group themes: Breaking down barriers; reducing stigma; empowering; connecting with others; inspiring hope; moving beyond mental illness
- Course evaluations: 100% had expectations met; 100% gained valuable knowledge; 100% would recommend course

Focus Group Comments

- “So different to anything experienced before”
- “Took me to another level in my understanding of recovery”
- “Connecting with others who have successfully recovered gave me hope that I could recover too”
- The Recovery College is “changing lives”, giving back to the consumer “the choice, control, empowerment, strategies and connections to live the life they want”

Conclusion

- For health services: The Recovery College model challenges the traditional way people with a lived experience of mental illness, their carers and clinicians view recovery and provides an opportunity to drive service transformation
- For adult education providers: The Recovery College model promotes lifelong and life-wide learning as an integral part of recovery from mental distress

Questions?

City East Community College

Phone: (02) 9387 7400

Website: www.cityeastcc.com.au

South Eastern Sydney Recovery College

Phone: (02) 9113 2981

Website:

www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Recovery_College