

Towards Recovery

Mental Health Services



Mental health problems are very common

Almost half of all Australians will experience a mental health problem at some point in their life.

Recovery is possible for everyone

A mental health problem may occur just once or come and go throughout your life. Mental health problems may impact on the way you live your life in many ways. For some people, the impact of mental health problems might be short and manageable with the right treatment and support. For some, a mental health problem might have a broader impact on life.

Recovery from mental health problems is not just about managing symptoms. Recovery is about being able to live the satisfying, productive and fulfilling life you choose.

For some people this might mean being completely well and symptom free. For others recovery may mean living the best life possible even if it means continuing to live with the symptoms of an ongoing mental health problem.

Recovery is an active process that requires taking personal responsibility for the choices you make. The process of recovery can be hard work and takes courage, and the time recovery takes is unique to everyone. Some people find it useful to think of recovery as a personal journey. Everyone has different life experiences, and a different individual response to a mental health problem, but there are some similarities in how people recover which may be useful.

This information sheet outlines some of the things people who are working towards recovery have found helpful.

The importance of supportive relationships

Creating and sustaining relationships with a range of people who encourage hope and are a source of support is vital. Often people in recovery talk about how important faith and spirituality are in providing support and maintaining relationships. Connecting with friends, families and carers, peers, and health workers is important for well-being and will help the recovery process.

Good physical health

Maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle will help you feel better and support your recovery. Your physical health and mental health are linked. Good physical health can lead to good mental health. Making healthy life choices might mean doing things like giving up smoking, increasing the amount of exercise you do, reducing your alcohol intake or eating more healthy food. It's important to have a regular GP who you can talk to about your health, and to have a regular physical examination.

Working partnerships

It's important to be able to talk openly about your preferences and concerns with your health care worker. Increasing your mental health knowledge by reading and asking questions will help you understand your options and ways to take care of yourself. Your health care worker is there to help you. There are many interventions, like counselling, learning skills, and different medications that can be helpful. Talking about your choices and experiences will help your health care worker understand your perspective and how they can best help you work towards recovery.

Medication

Medication can be one of many tools useful in your recovery process. Everyone's experience of medication is unique, so what works for one person might not work for another. It's helpful to learn as much as you can about medication. A good place to start is regularly going to

appointments with your doctor, asking questions about your medication and how it is affecting your physical and mental health, and talking about possible side effects and how to manage them.

Getting on with life

Most people regard having structured activity planned into your week that is meaningful and satisfying as essential to recovery. This often means returning to work, or gaining a job, even for a few hours a week. You may prefer to study, do training, volunteer, or connect with your community through sport or a social club. These activities are enjoyable, lead to friendships, and can provide an income if you choose to work.

Home

Having a supportive and safe home is important. Stable, safe and affordable accommodation is an essential resource that will support your recovery.

The process of recovery takes many small steps; the right place to start is with what's most important to you.

The Mental Health Line operates 24 hours a day and is staffed by mental health professionals. The Mental Health Line can offer advice and connection to care.

If you need mental health help or support please call 1800 011 511 at any time.