

DMHAS RECOVERY CORNER

Connecticut Department of Mental Health
and Addiction Services

Evolution of the Connecticut DMHAS Recovery-Oriented System of Care

PAST

2020 celebrates the 25th anniversary of the creation of CT DMHAS as a combined mental health and substance use agency. In addition to the integration of the administration of what had been separate and distinct services, the 1990s saw two other important developments that would inform the work of CT DMHAS for decades to come: "recovery" became identified as the goal of mental health care and a new Recovery Advocacy Movement took hold in substance use, promoting a model of recovery management led by persons in long-term recovery and their allies.

PRESENT

As a result of these and many related efforts, significant progress has been made both in preventing substance use and promoting behavioral health recovery through an increasingly integrated system of mental health, substance use, and medical care services and supports. More Connecticut residents are being cared for and supported in pursuing their own hopes and dreams for full and meaningful lives. Communities are more open and willing to embrace the reality of recovery, which CT DMHAS has defined as: "Recovery is what people experience themselves as they become empowered to achieve a meaningful life and a positive sense of belonging in their community. It is a non-linear process of development and growth."

As suggested in this definition, CT DMHAS has come to the recognition that "it takes a village," or a community as a whole, to prevent behavioral health conditions and promote and support the hard work of recovery undertaken by courageous individuals and their loved ones and allies. This recognition has led to a next step of envisioning a system that not only prevents disorder and promotes recovery, but also sets as its ultimate goal the restoration of citizenship to all residents grappling with a behavioral health condition. Moving from a goal of recovery as a personal journey to recovering full citizenship will involve the following directions as CT DMHAS resumes the work of system transformation under the direction of Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon and Deputy Commissioner Nancy Navarretta.

FUTURE

Efforts will be made to emphasize a clear focus on social inclusion and community participation of CT DMHAS clients, and incorporate awareness of the social determinants of behavioral health—inclusive of poverty, prolonged unemployment, and various forms of discrimination based on behavioral health status, race, ethnicity, religious creed, intellectual, learning and physical disability, gender identity and sexual orientation. The next issue of the DMHAS Recovery Corner will begin to flesh out this new direction.

Volume 1, Issue 1, Feb 2020



dmhas
25th Anniversary

“
The goal of the
recovery process is
not to become normal.
The goal is to embrace
our human vocation
of becoming more
deeply, more fully
human.

”
Pat Deegan, 1995.

MESSAGE FROM COMMISSIONER MIRIAM DELPHIN-RITTMON, PHD

This is the first issue of a series of Infobriefs focusing on how Connecticut DMHAS has been working to ensure a recovery-oriented system of care for persons experiencing mental health and substance use problems.



The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is a health care agency whose mission is to promote the overall health and wellness of persons with behavioral health needs through an integrated network of holistic, comprehensive, effective and efficient services and supports that foster dignity, respect, and self-sufficiency in those we serve.

For more information:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS>