

Press Release

Launch of the Evaluation of Mental Health Recovery and WRAP Education Programme-Report to the Irish Mental Health and Recovery Education Consortium

Wednesday, 12th May 2010 at 11.30 a.m.

Venue: School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin, D'Olier Street, Dublin 2

Summary

Minister John Moloney, T.D., launches an independent evaluation report of a national facilitated learning programme on Mental Health Recovery which was delivered by the Irish Mental Health & Recovery Education Consortium (IMHREC) in 2009. This report was completed by a research team led by Professor Agnes Higgins, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin.

A Vision for Change 2006 and subsequent reports of the Independent Monitoring Group stress the importance of investing in education and training within our mental health services in order to achieve recovery-oriented service provision that respects the rights of service users, their families and supporters and mental health providers.

In launching this evaluation report, Minister Moloney said *“the publication of this report is timely as it highlights the key role and value education will play in achieving the development of a culture of recovery in local communities where families, carers, people with experience of using mental health services and practitioners can work together toward achieving the future as envisaged in A Vision for Change”*.

With funding from POBAL, IMHREC was established in 2008 and developed an innovative facilitated learning programme, representing stakeholders—families, carers, people with experience of using mental health services and practitioners, that focussed on creating opportunities for shared learning about Recovery using Wellness Recovery Action Planning, a self-help approach to recovery pioneered by Mary Ellen Copeland.

Delivered by Piers Allott, the Emeritus NIMHE National Fellow for Recovery in England and an approved Mental Health Recovery Educator with Mary Ellen Copeland, this unique programme included 3 regional conferences in Dublin, Cork and Sligo attended by over 600 people from which 197 people with self-experience, family members and mental health professionals completed a 2-day recovery training programme, 68 of whom went on to complete a 5-day WRAP facilitators training programme.

Professor Agnes Higgins, lead researcher, concluded from the independent evaluation of the programme that *“providing mental health practitioners and people with self-experience of mental health problems with a systematic education and training in recovery principles using the Wellness Recovery Action Planning approach leads to positive changes in people’s knowledge, skills and attitudes towards recovery principles, and their ability to teach and facilitate these changes in others. This education also inspires, invigorates and empowers people, and for many, it is a life changing experience. Mental Health Service Providers and Educators seeking to embed recovery principles into service delivery and education are more likely to do so if they adopt the principles and methods employed in the Recovery and WRAP education programme used in this study”*.

Commenting on the legacy of the project on behalf of IMHREC, Dr. Margaret Webb said that *“a foundation has now been created from which to develop a national learning programme in Ireland which focuses on the development of recovery principles and practices. In communities around Ireland a hope-inspiring dialogue has commenced that must be supported to continue... it’s a conversation that recognises the value of people with mental health difficulties, their families, their supporters and their communities in achieving recovery. This programme demonstrates in a comprehensive manner what can be achieved and offers a model of education that should be embraced”*.

The partner organisations that comprise the Irish Mental Health Recovery Education Consortium are:

- Ballyhoura Development,
- Eastern Vocational Enterprises (EVE),
- Mayo Mental Health Association
- Sli Eile Housing Association
- Support, Training, Education, Employment and Research Ireland (S.T.E.E.R),

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The full report is available at www.imhrec.ie

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For further information on IMHREC please contact:

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