

drws adferiad
o afiechyd
meddwl difrifol

hafal

for recovery
from serious
mental illness



Recovery

*the way ahead for people
with severe mental illness*

About this Guide

This Guide is based on the experience of over 500 people with severe mental illness and their families. The Guide uses this experience to identify the key components of a new approach to severe mental illness focused on progress and recovery. Clients have been using this Guide since April 2005 and have expressed very positive feedback.

What is recovery?

Recovery means regaining mental health and achieving a better quality of life.

Many people with severe mental illness can make a full recovery; others can make far greater progress than has traditionally been thought possible. Too often mental health services have confined their objectives to looking after patients or alleviating some symptoms. Recovery is different. It is focused on enabling people to improve their lives in all areas rather than just maintaining an adequate existence.

Recovery is not just about medication or other therapies which deal directly with symptoms. These can be very important, especially for those who have experienced severe mental illness, but mental health is built on much broader foundations. For any one individual the biggest step to recovery of mental health may be finding a great place to live, getting a job, establishing a good relationship with their family, meeting new friends or identifying a professional who can help them work through their problems. Usually there are a set of different things which are important to an individual's recovery.

Many people achieve good mental health without formal plans but rather by looking after themselves and meeting their own broad needs. But when people experience severe mental illness it can be helpful to be much more methodical in looking at how to improve their lives. This Guide offers that methodical approach to recovery.

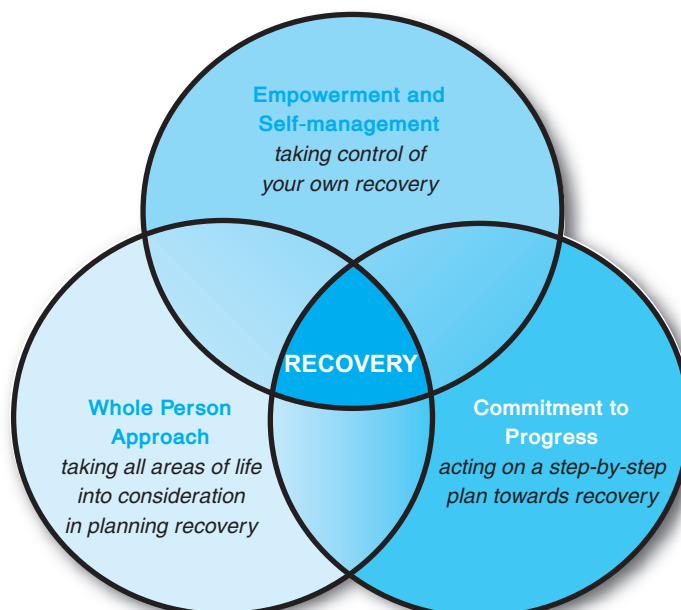
Who is recovery for?

Recovery is for everybody. Everyone can make significant steps to regain or enhance mental health and achieve a better way of living. It is the right of those who experience mental illness – and a duty which they owe to themselves – to make improvements in all areas of their lives which together contribute to mental health.

People with severe mental illness will usually need support in order to make progress towards recovery. Some people have a higher level of need and require a lot of support – for example, people who have lived in hospital for some time – but this does not exclude them from achieving recovery.

What is required for recovery?

There are three components essential to recovery. These are:



Recovery **depends on** these three components being in place: this poses a real challenge but the good news is that all three components are realistic and achievable. On the next pages we will look at each of the components in more detail.

Empowerment and Self-Management

Empowerment and self-management together form the first essential component for recovery.

Empowerment means exercising rights and responsibilities in making choices about life.

Self-management means taking the actions required to lead a life based on those choices.

Most people with a severe mental illness already exercise a significant amount of choice about their lives and take much of the action required to achieve recovery. For example, many people manage the administration of their medication.

The following are different ways in which people can demonstrate empowerment and self-management:

A person is empowered when they:

- recognise that they have the same rights and responsibilities as others
- feel a strong sense of autonomy
- are at the centre of decision-making processes concerning their life
- are able to access information necessary to make choices
- are able to choose from a range of options
- see their right to choice respected
- have the first **and** last word in any discussion about them
- feel equal to others and are treated equally by others
- make “advance directives” – telling people how they want to be treated when they are unwell.

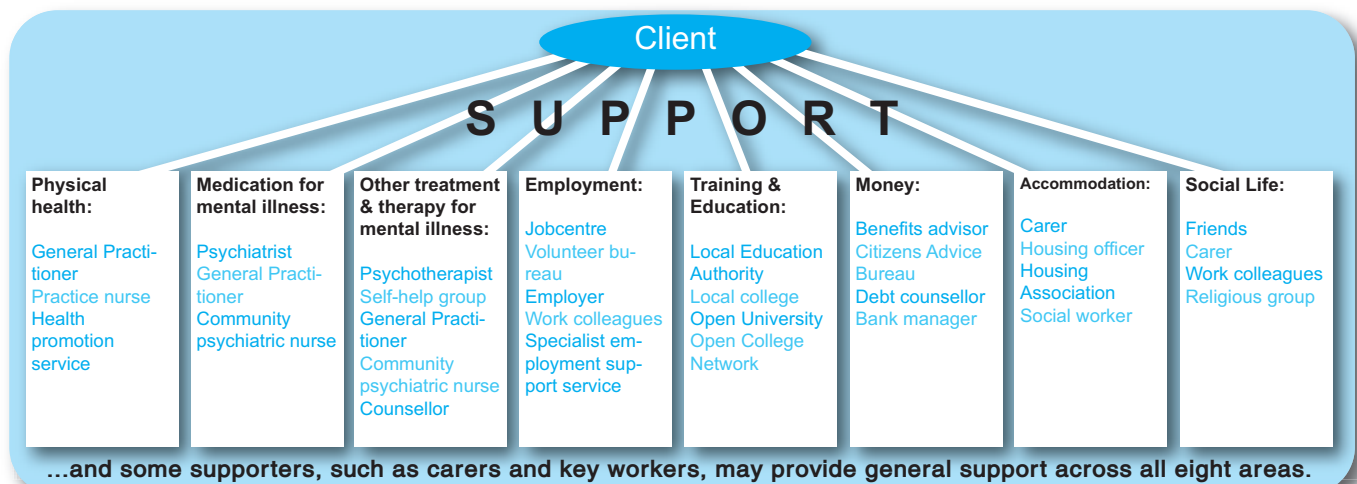
A person is self-managing when they:

- make plans in their own language and using their own words
- make phone calls, write letters and fill in forms themselves to address their needs
- sort out their own problems
- negotiate with people to get their needs met
- accept the support of others on their own terms and without resigning responsibility
- look after themselves, maintaining physical health and addressing mental health problems
- administer their own medication
- exercise self-awareness and act on this – including anticipating the onset of a crisis.

Of course some people, for example people in hospital and possibly under section, have more limited opportunities to exercise choice and manage their life. But there are still important areas where they can make choices and take action – for example in developing social contact, looking after their health, and acquiring skills. Empowerment and self-management are the key to progress for everybody.

Achieving empowerment and self-management does not mean having to make choices and take action alone and without support. When a person takes the lead in making plans and taking action they still often need the help and support of other people. These supporters can be chosen according to their specialist skills and knowledge or because they are friends and family willing to help.

The key challenge is to develop the *right relationship* with supporters, taking care to ensure that they do not take over responsibility. There are exceptions to this: in times of crisis or great need it may be appropriate that supporters intervene and take a degree of control. But this should be exceptional and care should be taken that this does not become routine. **Some examples of supporters are:**



“Whole Person” Approach

Recovery requires a "Whole Person" approach (sometimes called a 'holistic' approach). This means addressing all key aspects of life which together contribute to well-being. By setting goals in all areas of life people can approach recovery more comprehensively. What the Whole Person Approach offers is a methodical way of doing this.

Here we set out the Whole Person Approach along with some options for goals which people might set in the eight areas:

Physical Health

You may choose to:

- Make sure you are registered with a local GP
- Take care of your health – paying attention to your diet, smoking, exercise and drinking
- Take care of your sexual health – paying attention to sexually transmitted diseases and any side-effects of medication
- Avoid taking illegal or street drugs
- Go to the dentist for regular check-ups
- Go to the optician
- Attend well man or well woman clinics

Medication for Mental Illness

(You should consult your doctor before changing your medication regime)

You may choose to:

- Find out about the latest medical treatments for severe mental illness
- Ask your doctor to prescribe the most appropriate medication for you as an individual
- Find out about side effects and management requirements of your medication and talk to your doctor or nurse about them
- Take the right amount of medication which has the most benefit for you with your doctor's advice

Employment

You may choose to:

- Work full or part-time in general employment
- Get specialist support to sustain you in general employment
- Use a specialist supported employment service
- Use occupational therapy services
- Be a volunteer

Other Treatment and Therapy for Mental Illness

You may choose to:

- Find out about the range of non-medical therapies and treatments for severe mental illness
- Ask your doctor about Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – CBT
- Ask your doctor about other psychotherapy/talking therapies
- Find out about other therapies, e.g. art therapy
- Explore alternative therapies
- Join a self-help group

Training & Education

You may choose to:

- Study in full or part-time education
- Get special support to sustain you in training or education
- Use distance learning packages, e.g. Open University
- Follow work-related or interest-related adult education courses
- Take up self-study through reading, internet, etc.

Money

You may choose to:

- Earn a salary or wage
- Apply for a student grant or loan
- Maximise your social security, disability or other benefits
- Enhance your budgeting skills
- Get information about debt or savings management

Accommodation

You may choose to:

- Manage your own accommodation
- Share your home with family or friends
- Live in your own home with support
- Live in shared accommodation with support
- Stay in specialist 24-hour supported accommodation
- Live in hospital when you are seriously ill

Social Life

You may choose to:

- Maintain relationships with your family
- Maintain relationships with your friends
- Live in a personal relationship with a partner
- Engage with a religion of your choice or tradition
- Be supported while using general leisure facilities
- Use specialist supported leisure facilities
- Follow your hobbies or interests individually/ in a group

Commitment to Progress

Recovery depends on actively taking steps to improve life. It is vital to agree and act upon a step-by-step, goal-focused plan. The key plan for people with severe mental illness is the required Care Plan through CPA (the Care Programme Approach).

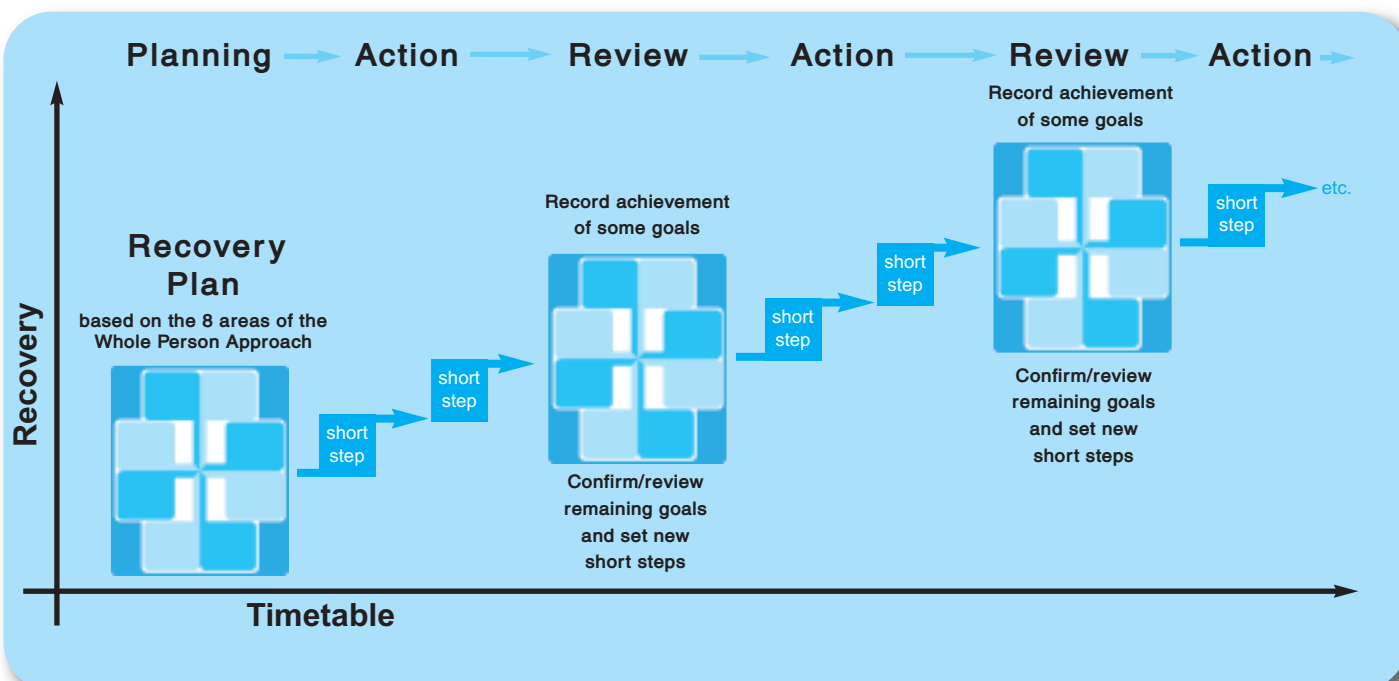
Too often planning concentrates on assessment: in other words it says a lot about where the individual is at a particular point but not about where they want to go. Alternatively plans may include long-term goals but not the simple, short-term steps that need to be taken to achieve them. A good plan needs to hold its focus on long-term goals but include the intermediary, less intimidating steps which allow a person to take action.

To be effective, a Plan must:

1. **Assess current circumstances** – analyse and recognise where the individual is starting from at the planning stage
2. **Identify needs** – practical and personal challenges faced by an individual
3. **Identify long-term goals** – strategic targets which the individual aims to achieve
4. **Identify short-term steps** – simple, manageable actions required to achieve the goals
5. **Identify supporters** – specific people or agencies whose help is needed with the short-term steps
6. **Create a timetable** – target dates to take short-term steps and achieve long-term goals
7. **Timetable regular reviews** – to recognise progress, and confirm or revise short-term steps and long-term goals

Planning for recovery needs to be fully incorporated into conventional or formal planning processes. For example people should plan their recovery through the Care Programme Approach which is a standard requirement for NHS/Social Services clients with severe mental illness (you may find it useful to find out more about this by reading Hafal's leaflet *CPA: A User's Guide*). And there are other formal processes such as referral and hospital discharge which offer important opportunities to plan for recovery. People can also use this Guide at meetings with doctors, psychiatrists, social workers and other professionals.

The process of recovery based on effective planning can be illustrated as follows:



How you can use this Guide

<p>Clients</p>	<p>People with a severe mental illness – and indeed anyone else – can use the Guide as a point of reference to plan improvements in their lives. It can also be used as a checklist before or during planning meetings with case-workers, doctors, etc. We recommend that where appropriate clients show professionals the Guide, particularly if they are using it as their planning tool. Clients could also ask that formal care plans (including plans based on the Care Programme Approach) are focused on the key components in the Guide, and that they systematically address the eight areas in the Whole Person Approach. An important point: if you believe you have a mental illness and you have not yet contacted your doctor about it we advise that you do this as soon as possible and that you do not take any of the steps suggested in this Guide until you have done so.</p>
<p>Carers</p>	<p>Carers, family members and friends can use the Guide to encourage an individual to work towards their recovery. We suggest carers share the Guide with the person being cared for, giving them an opportunity to read it and judge its value for themselves. Carers, family members and friends can also use the Guide for themselves: the principles apply to anyone who wants a methodical approach to making improvements in their life.</p>
<p>Professionals</p>	<p>Health and social care professionals can use this Guide with their clients as part of the process of planning recovery – for example, when working with a client to put together a Care Plan. We suggest that professionals share the Guide with clients, giving them an opportunity to read it and judge its value for themselves. The Guide can also help professionals identify clearly those aspects of recovery they can help with and those which require the help of others. They can also use the Guide for themselves: the principles apply to anyone who wants a methodical approach to making improvements in their life.</p>
<p>hafal Clients</p>	<p>All of Hafal's services are based on a Recovery Programme which follows the principles presented in this Guide. Hafal clients are supported to produce a personal plan using the Guide. Typically Hafal's services provide assistance with goals in one or two of the eight areas of the Whole Person Approach, but we also help by directing people to other sources of support. Hafal encourages carer clients to make use of the Guide from their perspective as a key supporter.</p>

About hafal

Hafal (meaning 'equal') is an organisation managed by the people it supports – individuals with severe mental illness and their families.

Hafal is founded on the belief that people who have direct experience of mental illness know best how services should be delivered. We are committed to empowering people with severe mental illness and their families to:

- achieve a better quality of life
- fulfil their ambitions for recovery
- fight discrimination
- enjoy equal access to health and social care, housing, income, education, and employment.

All Hafal's services are based on the principles for recovery presented in this Guide. To find out more about our services or for more information on recovery please get in touch with us at:

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www.hafal.org (information about Hafal)
www.mentalhealthwales.net (general information about severe mental illness)

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