



What is Recovery?



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One in four people will suffer from a mental health problem at some time in their life.

Being diagnosed with mental illness can be very frightening. Sometimes people can lose confidence in themselves, and feel very alone and scared.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Recovery is possible for everyone.

In mental health, recovery is the process of rebuilding a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life with a diagnosis of mental health problems.

Recovery is a uniquely personal journey and can mean different things to different people.

It involves making sense of and finding meaning in what has happened, becoming an expert in your own self-care, building a new sense of self and purpose and discovering your own resourcefulness.

“When I was diagnosed I felt ‘this is the end of my life’... I felt I was not viable, flawed, defective.”



“The turning point in my life was... where I started to get hope that I could actually make the leap from being sick to being well ... Dr. Charles believed that I could. And Rev. Goodwin believed that I could. Certain people believed that I could make the leap. And held that belief even when I didn't believe in myself.”



# Hope, Control and Opportunity

People who use mental health services have identified three key principles that support recovery: Hope, control and opportunity.

## Hope

Hope is central to recovery. Without the possibility of a decent future for yourself it is not possible to rebuild your life. We also need others, like our friends, relatives, peers and mental health workers to hold on to hope for us and believe in us, particularly when we find it difficult.

## Control

It often feels as if mental health problems are totally beyond your control and that only the experts can sort them out. However, working alongside mental health workers and treatments and therapies, each person can become the real expert in their own self care.

## Opportunity

Having the chance to do the things that you value, that make life worthwhile is critical to recovery. Whether you are trying to go back to something you have previously been doing or starting something new you would like to do, it is important to understand what support is out there for you from mental health workers, friends, relatives, others who have experienced mental health difficulties, employment workers or voluntary agencies.

“I have more control over my illness than I ever realised ... knowing that gives me hope because I know that next time I start to get ill I can turn it around. You don't have to let your illness run your life.”

# The South West London Recovery College: Helping you take an active role in your own recovery

Taking back control of your life is an important part of recovery. Self-management tools can help you to become an expert in your own self-care.

The South West London Recovery College can help you to develop the tools you need to take back control of your life.

The college launched in July 2010, and was the first of its kind to be developed in the U.K.

We use a recovery-based approach to encourage people to become experts in their own self-care and wellbeing, giving students the tools make informed choices and to manage their conditions and for families, friends, carers and staff to better understand mental health conditions and support people in their recovery journey.

Our range of educational courses, workshops and resources are available to people who use our services, their friends, family or carers and Trust staff.



# Supporting you in your recovery

Your recovery is at the heart of all our plans. Your care co-ordinator will work with you to agree your recovery goals, identifying help and support that you might need along the way.

There are lots of courses available at the Recovery College to help you build skills and develop your confidence, supporting you to take control of your recovery. These courses will help you to understand more about what you are experiencing, what can support your recovery, the difficulties you face, how to take back control of your life, identify your goals and ambitions and find and access opportunities.

## To find out more about the Recovery College:

Visit our website

☎ **020 3513 5818**

@ [recoverycollege@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:recoverycollege@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk)

🌐 [www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk)



# About this booklet

**What is Recovery?** – was written by specialists, and reviewed by healthcare professionals and patients.

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## Contacting the Trust

✉ Trust Headquarters, Springfield University Hospital  
Building 15, 2nd Floor, South West London and St George's  
Mental Health NHS Trust, Springfield University Hospital,  
61 Glenburnie Road, London SW17 7DJ

☎ **020 3513 5000**

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**In an emergency** (for existing patients of the Trust)

• **Mental Health Support Line: 0800 028 8000**

(5pm to 9am Monday to Friday, 24 hours Saturday and Sunday).

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## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

You can call our dedicated Patient Experience team and talk to someone about the service you, or the person you care for, has received.

☎ **020 3513 6150** (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

### Disclaimer

We make every effort to ensure that the information we provide is accurate and up to date but it should not be relied upon as a substitute for specialist professional advice tailored to your situation. So far as is permitted by law, South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust does not accept liability in relation to the use of any information contained in this publication, or third-party information or websites included or referred to in it.

We are the leading provider of mental health services across south west London and a beacon of excellence for national mental health specialist services.

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## Help us make our services even better

The views of patients, their carers, friends and families are at the heart of improving the way we deliver our services. We are committed to delivering high quality care. Your feedback will help us understand what we do well and what we can do better.

## If you would like to give us feedback please contact:

- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): **020 3513 6150**
  - Feedback online at: <https://feedback.swlstg-tr.nhs.uk>
  - Patient Opinion: [www.patientopinion.org.uk](http://www.patientopinion.org.uk)
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## Become a member:

To find out about becoming a member  
E-mail: [membership@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:membership@swlstg-tr.nhs.uk)

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NHS Trust

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## Our values



Respectful



Open



Collaborative



Compassionate



Consistent

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If you require this document in an alternative format  
please call: **020 3513 6006**

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