Launch of report on the Summary Report on the Evaluation of the Self-advocacy & Personal learning Programme. Collaboration between Peer Advocacy in Mental Health and Dublin North, North-East Recovery College

Advancing Self-Advocacy Through Recovery Education.

Workshop Notes.

Workshop 1. The role of self-advocacy in personal recovery?

What does advocacy mean to you?

Obstacles to advocacy

Spoke up for myself – but got nothing

Had no help from anybody – Didn't know about 'IAN' or 'Peer Advocacy in Mental Health'

GPs need to know of the mental health services available

Mental Health teams operate in silos

Cannot always get into the 'private' and 'public' services for help

MDTs need more patience

MDT changes every six months, so you have to build new relationships

Need to be addressed properly by team – "put the pen down"

Actions/descriptions

Speaking up for yourself

Access to 'self-advocacy skills' training

Helping me to advance my human rights

Be seen, heard and understood

Being able to 'engage'

Being in control of things

What role does it/might it play in your recovery?

Consequences

Having a voice and being heard

Self-confidence

Empowerment

Crystalizes your opinions and become aware of the fact you can question while on your health care journey

Strengthen coping mechanisms

Knowledge to empower others to help both yourself and them

Overcoming stigma

Taking back control – attorney-self determination

To trust others in helping you

Speaking out

To avail of services at critical times and help being aware of what you need

"Knowledge is power"

Being educated

Self-advocacy means you can look ahead to what is coming on your journey

What could be done to develop your ability to self-advocate?

Cover in Recovery College – self-esteem.

Become more assertive

Speak to through practicing public speaking

Role plays/educational drama

Ask more questions

Speaking to your peers

Trying new things

Know your needs. Preparing yourself knowing your needs

Be honest/choice of words

Body language/good posturing/observations

Giving up bad habits

Educate yourself on services

Workshop 2. Self-Advocacy in Recovery College programmes/agendas?

What does advocacy mean to you?

For self

Speaking up

Having more knowledge

Getting your needs met

For self and/with others

Standing with someone and befriending

Someone in your corner

Speaking on behalf of somebody and echoing the person's voice and not diluting it

Relevance of the person's voice and importance of being heard

Supporting someone to self-advocate

Encouragement, kindness, compassion, empathy

That the personal values of the person be heard

Walking the walk with the lived experience

Advocacy support and role needs to be clearly defined and communicated to the person and keep within the role

Is there a need for self-advocacy as part of Recovery College programmes?

There is a need (unfortunately) – why is it like this?

Yes – it is not being taught anywhere else

Fortify the learning and self-development

If so, what could be done to (further) develop self-advocacy programmes? If not, why not?

Throughout/within services

Survey through the service

In primary care there could be Recovery College Hubs

Self-advocacy needs strong definition

Influencing/responsibilities of others

Pressure on politicians to get funding

Courses/training for doctors, psychiatrists, and all health care professionals to learn to listen and treat people with respect

Workshop 3. 'Soft skills' in co-production?

What do we mean by soft skills?

'People skills'

Tending to body language

Tending to pace, pitch, tone of voice

Observation – matching and appropriately responding to the emotional and communication needs of the person

Don't push/pressure individuals to speak – use gentle invites

Helping people to learn words/phrases/sentences to express what they wish to say

Time management

Avoid dominating individuals and/or allowing others dominating

Being assertive

Why are they important?

To remain in line with co-production = "doing things together"

Not being too concerned about taking control

To be a good listener

To be empathetic

Responding appropriately to in the moment response and engagement with participants others

To formally state the equal importance of everyone – being inclusive

Recognize the existence of the power imbalance

Being constant and consistent with facilitation

Highlighting common, human experiences and honoring each contribution

Making connections – normalizing

To support/enable people to learn words/phrases/sentences to express what they wish to say

To be able to deal with conflict

To remain focused and guide others to remain focused on subjects/tasks presented during sessions – avoid straying too far from the topic or bringing every one back to yourself and the topic under discussion

How can these be developed in Recovery College facilitation programmes?

Helping and supporting co-facilitators to learn to deal with negative feedback

Helping and supporting co-facilitators be prepared/skilled up to deal with conflict with instructions/guidelines to have a plan to deal with conflict

Helping/supporting co-facilitators be prepared emotionally, physically where appropriate/reasonable, financially