

# Perceptions of community rehabilitation team members towards recovery-oriented practices in mental health care

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## ARTICLE INFO

Published on 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2025.

Doi: 10.54878/a8a6t481

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### KEYWORDS:

*recovery, rehabilitation, mental health services, community mental health*

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### HOW TO CITE:

Perceptions of community rehabilitation team members towards recovery-oriented practices in mental health care. (2025). *2nd European Arab Medical Congress*, 1(1).



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Center Research & Studies

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## ABSTRACT

Introduction: Community mental health services are well known to improve continuity of care, improve adherence and prevent rehospitalization for patients with chronic mental illnesses as they are both evidenced based and rehabilitation focused. Provision of services in individual's own living, learning and work environment are known to strengthen families, social networks and communities. Objectives: Over two years we have qualitatively assessed the understanding of health care professionals, practices, potential barriers and possible solutions for implementing recovery-oriented practices in mental health care. Methods: Semi structured interviews were conducted with 54 health professionals working with users having serious mental illnesses as part of community mental health teams and delivering rehabilitation services to over 1000 service users annually. Qualitative analysis was done for the data. Results: 70% mental health staff reported that recovery approaches were largely directed towards resolution of symptoms of mental illnesses and often did not encompass the bio-psycho-social domains of patient's life. 60% of health care team members had less hope and expectations for users' recovery. Discussion: The most common barrier for rehabilitation includes pharmacological focus of treatment, shortage of multidisciplinary teams, limited intersectoral collaboration and treatment approaches seldom assessing person's strengths, needs, abilities and preferences. Conclusions: Rehabilitation practices are focused on adaptation of individuals and fostering self-efficacy which eventually culminates into regaining independence and community integration. This necessitates health care attitudinal change at policy and strategic level, mobilization of resources, shift of focus to person-centered, strengths-based approaches and respecting users' choices and differences. The model of recovery colleges is cornerstone for establishing rehabilitation practices.