



Office for Health
Improvement
& Disparities

Strengthening recovery support services and lived experience initiatives

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What we will cover today

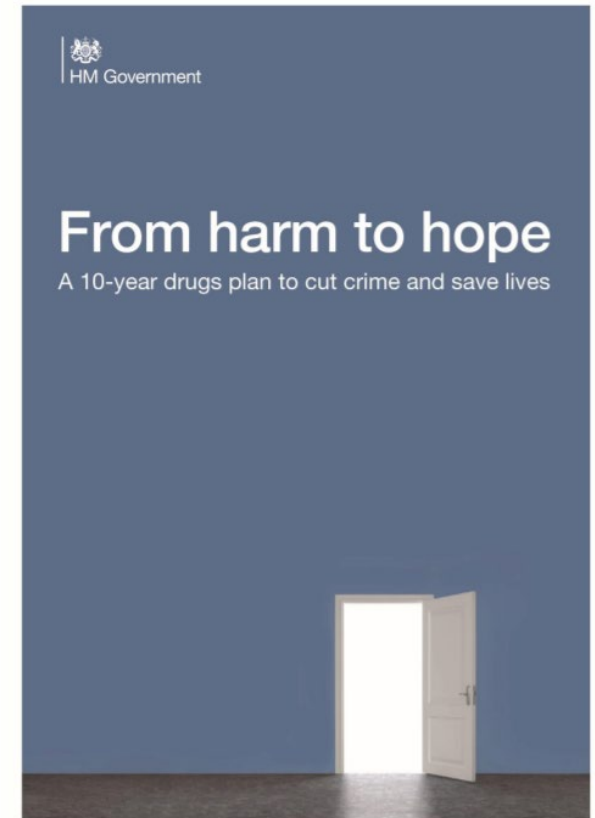
1. Policy context
2. Introducing recovery support services, peer support and lived experience initiatives
3. Overview of recovery support services
4. Evidence for recovery support services
5. Opportunities to develop systems of care that fully integrate recovery support services and lived experience initiatives



Key drug strategy commitments relating to lived experience initiatives and recovery support

The drug strategy [From Harm to Hope](#) committed to:

- working with people with lived experience to develop world-leading systems or treatment and recovery
- supporting local areas to ensure that thriving communities of recovery are linked to every drug treatment system
- **developing standards and guidance for the recovery sector and local areas, working with the government's Recovery Champion, Dr Ed Day**
- at a national level, encouraging the development of a flexible and innovative network of recovery organisations
- supporting local areas to involve people with lived experience of drug dependence as peer supporters and recovery coaches and, at a national level, encourage the development of a flexible and innovative network of recovery organisations
- introducing a Local Outcomes Framework to increase transparency and local authorities' accountability for their treatment and recovery outcomes
- producing a national commissioning quality standard
- ensuring there are 24,000 more people in long-term recovery from substance dependency



Lived experience and recovery support services guidance

1. Introducing recovery, peer support and lived experience initiatives

- what we mean by recovery
- how systems of care can support recovery
- the role of peer support
- the role of lived experience initiatives in systems of care
- principles and standards for lived experience recovery organisations

2. Overview of recovery support services

- about recovery support services
- what we know about recovery support services provision in England
- types of recovery support services

3. Evidence for recovery support services

4. How to develop systems of care that fully integrate recovery support services and lived experience initiatives: a 5-step guide

- lived experience in local partnerships
- asset mapping, linkage and gaps
- building and integrating diverse assets
- safe and effective lived experience initiatives
- funding and growth of lived experience initiatives

- OHID, Dr Day, and the College of Lived Experience Recovery Organisations (CLERO) have worked together to develop new guidance
- This guidance will help alcohol and drug treatment and recovery partnerships to understand the evidence for, value of and ways to foster and support lived experience initiatives and recovery support services
- This guidance is due for publication in Q1 2023/24



“What a person needs to support them in recovery is not very different from what every person needs to feel healthy and safe.

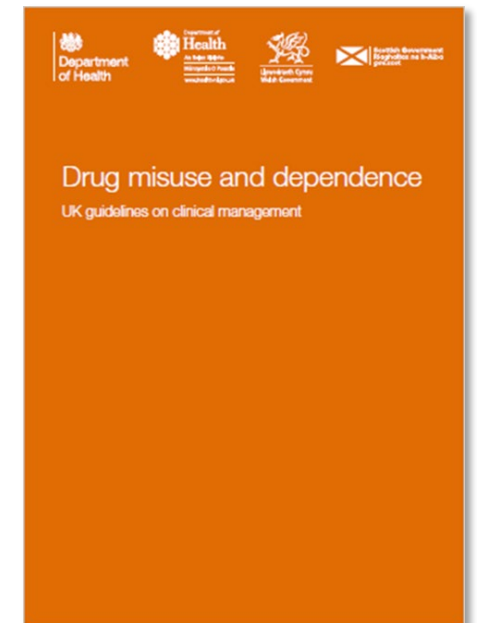
To overcome alcohol or drug dependence, people need to both address their alcohol and drug use and create a life that is no longer built around it. To support people to do this, we need to foster vibrant cultures of recovery that provides alternative communities and activities that can offer potentially lifelong support.”



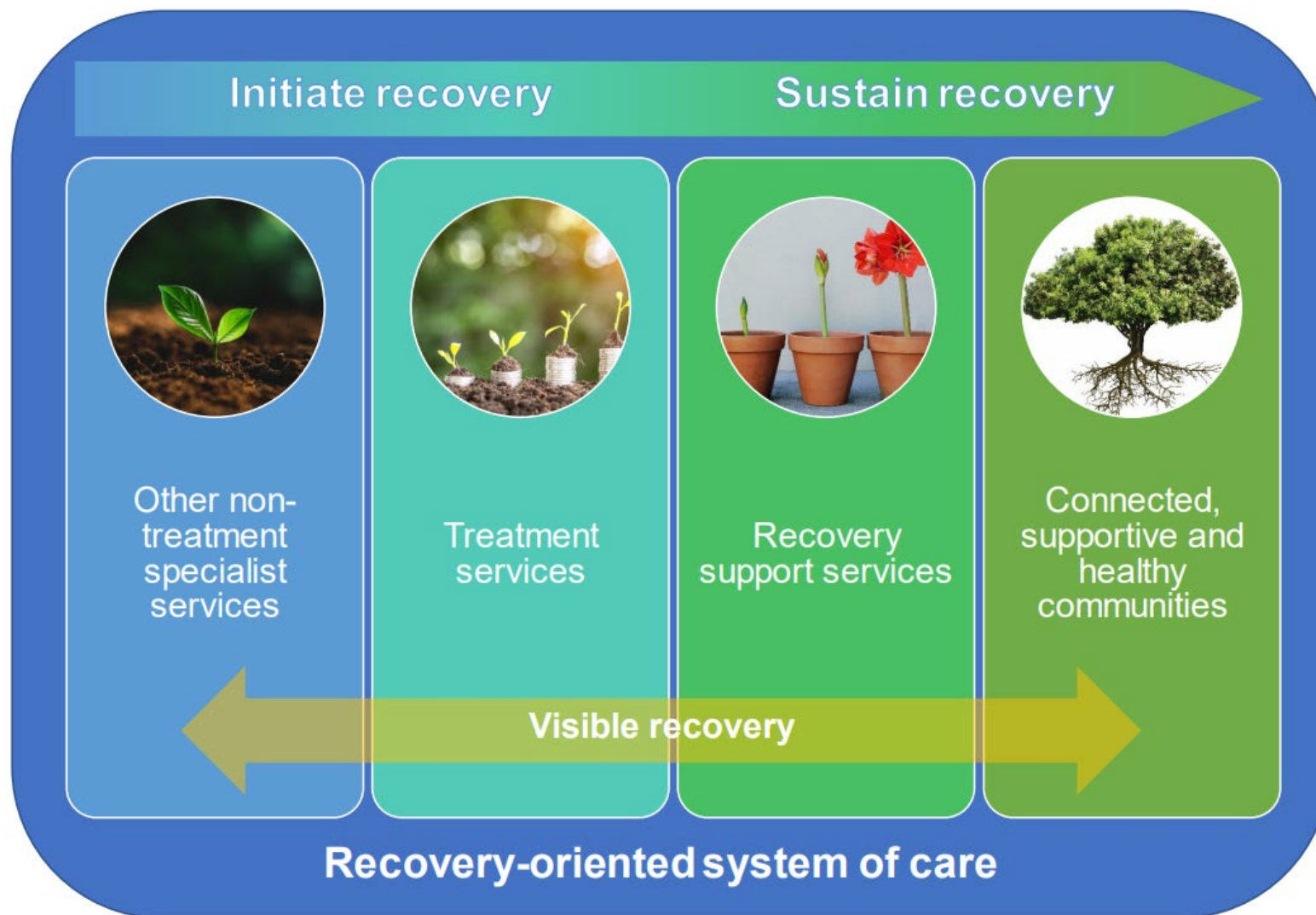
Introducing recovery support services, peer support and lived experience initiatives

Existing guidance on recovery support and lived experience initiatives

Clinical guidance and best practice guidelines have highlighted the evidence for and value of recovery support within treatment systems.



The role of services in in supporting people to initiate and sustain recovery



Key terminology

Key terms	Definitions
Recovery oriented system of care	<p>A network of local services and community groups that help people to initiate and sustain recovery. A recovery oriented system of care incorporates the insight and work of people with lived experience at all levels of planning and delivery to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• offer choice by providing a flexible menu of services, community support and opportunities including lived experience initiatives, recognising that there are many pathways to recovery• provide a range of responsive support and opportunities for people in recovery and their families• build on the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, recovery communities and the wider community
Recovery support services	<p>Services that offer support to people in recovery and their families, and benefit the wider community. They offer practical and emotional support to meet a person's needs and build on their strengths. Recovery support services can be delivered by treatment providers or lived experience recovery organisations</p>
Peer-delivered	<p>People with lived experience involved in delivering (but not leading) activities, groups, events and services</p>
Peer-led	<p>People with lived experience leading activities, groups, events, services or organisations</p>
Lived experience recovery organisation (LERO)	<p>A LERO is an organisation led by people with lived experience. LEROs, and other lived experience initiatives, deliver a range of harm reduction interventions, peer support, and recovery support services and they can help people to access and (re-)engage in treatment and other support services</p>



Overview of recovery support services

Our approach to describing recovery support services in an English context

The descriptions of the types of recovery support services that follow incorporate findings from:

- Professor John Kelly's 2017 systematic review of recovery support services
- more recent evidence identified through a rapid review of the literature from 2017 to February 2022
- responses to the 2022 survey by OHID of English local authority commissioners in May and June 2022
- engagement with the field including lived experience leaders and treatment providers



Overview of recovery support services

Name	Description
Peer-based recovery support services	An umbrella term covering a range of formalised interventions delivered by people with lived experience to people in recovery. This can include peer support, recovery coaching, peer education, assertive linkage, mentoring and navigation
Recovery community centres	A community space open to people (regardless of their treatment status) offering a range of support to help them sustain and strengthen recovery. In the UK, these centres are sometimes public-facing social enterprises such as recovery cafés
Recovery support services in educational settings	A collegiate recovery programme in a university, or recovery high school, formally supported by the educational institution
Mutual aid	Mutual aid is social, emotional and informational support provided by, and to, members of a group at every stage of recovery. Facilitating access to mutual aid (FAMA) is a short, simple and effective 3-stage method for supporting and increasing mutual aid participation
Recovery housing	Structured alcohol and drug-free living environments, often peer-led
Recovery check-ups and continuing care	Recovery check-ups involve post-treatment monitoring and feedback. Continuing care involves both post-treatment monitoring and feedback and supportive interventions



What we learnt from the survey

Service/group	Reported local availability	Qualitative insight
Peer-based recovery support services	95%	Described activity aligned more closely with peer-delivered harm reduction and in-treatment support
Recovery community centres	54%	Often describing a treatment and recovery service focused on delivering treatment, with some provision of peer-delivered and other groups, MA, service-user involvement activities and social opportunities
Recovery support services in educational settings	15%	In all but 1 example respondents described a different intervention
Facilitated access to mutual aid (FAMA)	79%	Responses described activity to widen mutual aid participation but rarely specified structured sessions with a worker
Recovery housing	40%	Unclear how much structured support, active linkage to recovery activities and peer support was available in the schemes described
Recovery check-ups and continuing care	65%	Misalignment to the evidence base and used as a catch-all for other/all types of recovery support



Further insight from the field

- Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery (SSMTR) grant investment in expanding recovery support services and lived experience initiatives is fairly restricted
- Lived experience engagement in partnerships isn't always happening and where it is, it tends to focus on those people who have accessed treatment
- Where looking to further develop lived experience engagement, initiatives or recovery support services, people are sometimes unsure or lack confidence about how to do this



Evidence for recovery support services and lived experience initiatives

The value of lived experience initiatives

A [recent modelling study](#) from the US found that peer-delivered recovery support services have substantial potential for reducing prevalence and overdoses (Stringfellow et al, 2022).

In delivering recovery support they can be fundamental in:

- Sustaining and further building upon the gains made via treatment
- Supporting people regardless of their pathway to recovery
- Offering person-centred and potentially lifelong support
- Offering recovery conducive networks of support and activities
- Integrating into local communities and providing sustainable opportunities to maintain recovery
- Growing and upskilling the treatment and recovery voluntary and paid workforce

In improving treatment access, impact and reducing harm they are able to:

- Provide partnerships unique insight into the experience(s) of affected populations
- Provide assertive (re)engagement with treatment
- Broaden opportunities to access harm reduction, reducing health and social harms and reducing drug-related deaths
- Work alongside and complement treatment in ways that enhance treatment retention and outcomes
- Reduce stigma and inspiring others through visible and thriving recovery communities
- Build and connect community assets that support positive treatment and recovery outcomes



Evidence from the literature: recovery support services

Name	Key findings
Peer-based recovery support services	Potentially effective in reducing alcohol and drug use, reducing relapse rates, increasing treatment initiation and engagement, improving treatment satisfaction, increasing housing stability and increasing recovery capital
Recovery community centres	Evidence is less well developed. Available evidence indicates effectiveness in supporting people to build their recovery capital, maintain abstinence, stabilise accommodation, move into employment, attend mutual aid and report improvements in psychological wellbeing and quality of life
Recovery support services in educational settings	Students who access these services may benefit from reduced alcohol and drug use and improved social and academic outcomes
Mutual aid and facilitated access to mutual aid	High-quality evidence for Alcoholics Anonymous and 12-step facilitation found effectiveness, including increased abstinence rates and strengthened recovery
Recovery housing	Safe and stable accommodation, increased likelihood of sustained abstinence, good return on investment, increased social connectivity with people in recovery, opportunity to strengthen broader recovery capital
Recovery check-ups and continuing care	Better results the longer they last. Potential to increase treatment engagement, reduce treatment need, facilitating early return to treatment and increasing number of abstinent days. Potentially benefiting those with more complex clinical profiles the most



How to develop systems of care that fully integrate recovery support services and lived experience initiatives



Making treatment services accessible



The Alcohol & Drug Service

Places to connect and volunteer



Person-centred: providing choice and recognising non-linearity of people's experiences

Lived experience initiatives within treatment services

Out of hours mutual aid groups



Supported (re-)engagement in treatment and recovery support

Con



Criminal justice services

Reduce harm in all affected populations

People offered treatment and support to reduce harm, stabilise and reduce use, and to initiate recovery



People are supported to sustain and embed their recovery



Level 3 accreditation for people who graduate the volunteer and mentor course

Providing naloxone, needle exchange and BBV testing and vaccinations



Social and physical activities including the Recovery Games

Keep learning



Thriving communities



IN COMMUNITIES



Opportunities to develop and strengthen recovery support services and lived experience initiatives

How visible is recovery within the organisation and service that you work in?

Are you actively training staff and quality assuring treatment-led recovery interventions?

Could you be working more closely with LEROs to provide enhanced support to people accessing your services?

4. How to develop systems of care that fully integrate RSSs and lived experience initiatives: a 5-step guide

- lived experience in local partnerships
- asset mapping, linkage and gaps
- building and integrating diverse assets
- safe and effective lived experience initiatives
- funding and growth of lived experience initiatives

Are your services and partnership actively engaging lived experience voices beyond 'service user involvement'?

Can you identify further opportunities to strengthen your local recovery oriented system of care?

Do you give 'parity' to LEROs that your organisation works in partnership with or sub-contracts?



How we will be supporting implementation

Our 'Recovery communities' programme of work for 2023/24 includes:

- **Implementation support** following the publication of the guidance including through Drug and Alcohol Improvement and Support Team's priority partnership work
- **Evaluating 2023/24 Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery plans** to measure growth in the funding and diversity of lived experience initiatives and recovery support services
- **Ongoing work with the College of Lived Experience Recovery Organisations**
- **Exploring ways to measure the impact of lived experience initiatives** including changes to NDTMS
- **Ongoing stakeholder engagement and communications** including regional presentations by Ed Day and OHID to support implementation of the guidance and Recovery Month (Sept 23).
- **Evaluate the impact of this work to inform SSMTR planning for 2024/25**



THANK YOU!



Map showing CLERO membership

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