## **Research Digest**



Summary of recent publications by experts from the Center for Social Innovation (C4) center4si.com/publications

## Peer Delivered Recovery Support Services for Addictions: Review of the Research



Health care and addiction services are moving towards a recovery-oriented, continuum of care approach similar to strategies used to treat chronic conditions. As part of this shift, there is a growing emphasis on formally incorporating peer support. This has

been defined as giving and receiving nonprofessional, non-clinical assistance to achieve long-term recovery from substance use disorders by people who have lived experience). However, the literature on the effectiveness of peer-based recovery support services for substance use recovery is limited.

This systematic review uses strict scientific criteria to identify, appraise, and summarize evidence on the effectiveness of peer-delivered support services for people in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. The studies reviewed were assessed for quality and outcomes, including substance use and recovery-related factors. Despite significant methodological limitations, there is evidence that peer support was associated with improvements in a range of substance use and recovery outcomes. Additional research is necessary to determine the effectiveness of different approaches and types of peer support services, including amount, intensity, peer's skills, service context, and effectiveness among different populations. The authors conclude by recommending future research that addresses the methodological limitations and develops an evidence base.

## Lessons Learned: Bringing Recovery Housing to Scale in Ohio



Recovery
housing—also
known as recovery
residences, sober
homes, and sober
living—extends
acute treatment
for substance
use disorders and
supports long-term
recovery. Strategies for
increasing the availability
of recovery housing are not
well known, and state policy

and systems changes are needed to integrate recovery housing into the full range of housing options. This paper identifies barriers and facilitators to expanding recovery housing in Ohio.

The authors conducted interviews with key informants and focus groups as well as site visits with six recovery housing programs in Ohio. A prevailing perception was that the availability of recovery housing to support recovery in Ohio was insufficient, especially housing tailored to the special needs of subpopulations such as families with children, people with cooccurring disorders, and those with criminal justice histories. The authors discuss facilitators (e.g., collaboration with other recovery homes programs and service systems, county and community support) and barriers (e.g. existing regulations, need for funding, common definition). The process described in this paper can be replicated by other states interested in expanding recovery housing.

## Recovery Housing and Choice in Homeless Settings



Gaps within and across services systems limit access to quality recovery-oriented housing options for individuals and families exiting homelessness and seeking recovery from substance use disorders. Recovery housing provides

abstinence-focused, safe, healthy environments that support recovery and foster communities where people are able to improve well-being, build resources, and integrate peer support. Various housing programs exist within the homeless services system, including some housing first models that focus on people with substance use or co-occurring disorders. However, research on substance use outcomes in housing first indicates mixed results.

Recovery housing is typically separate from the homeless services system, and many barriers to integration persist. The authors argue that recovery housing is essential for some homeless individuals and families and should become part of a comprehensive, choice-based homeless services continuum to support housing retention, reduce homelessness, promote recovery, and foster self-determination. The authors explore key barriers that include misperceptions, lack of evidence-based practices, policies, and funding, and make recommendations for research, policy, and practice.



Addictions in the United States: A Systematic Review by C4's Ellen L. Bassuk, Justine Hanson, R. Neil Greene, and Molly K. Richard as well as Alexandre Laudet was published in Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment in January 2016.





Bringing Recovery Housing to Scale in Ohio: Lessons Learned by C4's Laura Panella Winn and Kristen Paquette in Journal of Dual Diagnosis in April 2016.





The Role of Recovery Housing: Prioritizing Choice in Homeless Services by C4's Kristen Paquette and Laura Panella Winn in Journal of Dual Diagnosis in April 2016.









