

ISSUP GLOBAL &

FACES AND VOICES OF RECOVERY

Webinar on Guiding Principles of Recovery / 8.7.2025



Global Position Paper on Recovery

Boro Goic
RUN – Recovered Users
Network

Dr. David Patton
University of Derby

Mulka Nisic
University of Derby / RUN



RUN – Recovered Users Network



Est. Belgium, 2013, Sweden 2022 / 63 member organizations, experts, researchers

Provides political voice to recovered users and recovery organizations

Contributes to policies by raising the voice of recovery movement/ national, EU, UN levels

Advocacy work towards recovery oriented policies

Evidence based data & lived experience narrative

Global Position Paper on Recovery (GPPR)

FACILITATE A COHESIVE APPROACH

Contribute to the development of a unified approach and global position on addiction recovery

Create an international platform for shared addiction recovery practices and policies

**COMMITMENT TO
WORK
TOGETHER**

UNITE VOICES AND RAISE AWARENESS

Raise awareness about the significance of investing in recovery organisations and systems

Survey



50 experienced organisations/networks purposely chosen

4 themes , 3 statements per theme, cca 600 responses

Governmental bodies also as observers

- What are the main goals of recovery?
- What do you see as the main mechanisms and pathways that help to promote growth in recovery?
- What barriers do you see slowing or preventing growth in recovery?
- How you would improve the recovery system in your country to create better outcomes for those in recovery?

What are the main goals of recovery?



The goal of recovery is to improve people's health and wellbeing and to achieve the greatest possible level of self-reliance and autonomy. Recovery should be understood from a public health lens.

The main objective is returning to be autonomous, responsible and with a balance in all areas of his life. With decision and capacity to live without addictions.

Without the clarity that the goal of abstinence provides, there can be no recovery. Abstinence does not exclude medication assisted treatments or prescriptions legally provided.

Recovery is much more than stopping substance or behavioral abuse. It is seen best when one is fully integrated back into society as a productive individual with an entirely new way of thinking about life.

The ultimate aim is the cultivation of long-term wellness, spanning physical, mental, and social dimensions. This involves nurturing the development of coping mechanisms, self-esteem, and resilience among individuals, while fostering a sense of community and belonging.

Acceptance is one of the keys to recovery. To rebuild relationships, to make amends and to live honestly.

Recovery is much more than stopping substance or behavioral abuse. It is seen best when one is fully integrated back into society as a productive individual with an entirely new way of thinking about life and it's many challenges.

What barriers do you see preventing growth in recovery?



Integration of the recovering drug user requires proactive and accountability mechanisms on behalf of all community stakeholders. The use of anti-stigma protocols should create drug use exiting environments, not victim affirming ones.

Absence of messages encouraging change and recovery.

Competition among organizations and low recovery capital

Harm reduction initiatives should be incorporated into drug strategies and practice as part of recovery-oriented systems of care.

Maintenance services! I would suggest Maintenance services should be no longer than 3–6 month.

The biggest barrier to recovery is the confusion around "safe" use of drugs.

Acceptance of recovery being "anything that people say it is", or define for themselves is nonsense and does a harmful dis-service to those who live in the world of controlled substance use.

Recovery capital is too often seen as a property of an individual rather than a community.

Unbalanced government strategies/funding that only consider treatment rather than recovery – needs a focus on recovery embedded at every level

Scepticism and lack of access to affordable housing and stable employment, and limited availability of community-based support services.

Mechanisms and pathways that help to promote growth in recovery?

Establish a care system that guarantees a continuity of treatment, from harm reduction services, accompaniment in street situations, low-demand centers, detoxification services, outpatient and residential treatment services, social services and socio-labor insertion.

To promote recovery there should be a global campaign on the meaning of recovery capital, types of recovery capital, and strategies for creation of recovery capital.

Addiction affects multiple domains (physical, social, cognitive, spiritual), so pathways/mechanisms that address multiple domains are essential.

Incorporate recovery as an integral part of any public health systems in a logic of continuity of care, and interconnected with all levels of interventions such as prevention, health promotion, treatment, social reintegration and harm reduction.

Addressing the whole person. Spiritual, emotional and physical health

Raise consciousness in society aimed at destigmatizing recovering/recovered populations.

Overcome the commitment to abstinence as the program's established main goal. Although this is the goal for most people entering treatment, it should not be the primary success outcome of the programs per se. Improving people's health and wellbeing should be the main goal in treatment programs.

The Role of People in Recovery and Recovery Support Services

GPPR METHODOLOGY

CND March 2023: Collaborative
proces started

June 2023: Survey made and
distributed

Madrid October 2023: 50
completed surveys, analysed using
a thematic approach, reviewed by
core group of 12 people

November 2023: reviewed and
ratified by a team of senior
academics

December 2023: Disseminated
globally for comments and
amendments

CND March 2024: GPPR
lunched

Ongoing: Sent all over the
world for signature



Identified a global consensus
conceptualized in three
pillars:

- STRENGTHS
- BARRIERS
- SYSTEMS

PILLAR 1: Recovery as a STRENGTH-based concept and its goals

Recovery Capital

Recovery is a personalized process of building strengths over time and creating opportunities that allow individuals to build their own recovery capital

Flexible journey and process of reclaiming life

Recognizing that recovery is a flexible journey and process, aiming to improve health and well-being, promote self-reliance and autonomy, not merely breaking free from addiction itself but transcending where the person was before their addiction.

A public health perspective and continuum of care

Ensuring inclusivity and not leaving anyone behind. Generally for recovery to happen, services and systems must show a commitment to a continuum of care and long-term support to initiate and sustain recovery

Stable recovery

Meaning five years in stable remission, is being 'better than well'.

Recovery is possible for everyone

Involves living self-directed lives, individuals are striving to reach their full potential.

Most individuals seeking recovery aspire to resolve their substance dependency and lead drug-free lives

This however does not exclude people whose goals are not focused only on abstinence.

PILLAR 2: Overcoming BARRIERS to recovery

Do people fit into molds?



PILLAR 2: Overcoming BARRIERS to recovery



Stigma and Discrimination
Access to Treatment and Support
Diversity and Vulnerable Groups
Education and Awareness

PILLAR 2: Overcoming BARRIERS to recovery



ACCEPTED



NEW



CONFIRMED

Stigma and Discrimination:

Communities need to implement anti-stigma protocols to create supportive environments, by promoting access to positive community resources for people at all stages of the recovery process.

Access to Treatment and Support:

Beyond substance use disorders **treatment, securing housing, employment, education, community assets, and health and social support** are critical for building and sustaining recovery capital.

Diversity and Vulnerable Groups:

Special attention should be given to **diverse and vulnerable groups**

Education and Awareness:

Peers, professionals, and community members, in recovery curricula strengthens and enriches the level of support provided.

PILLAR 3: SYSTEMS: Generating structural change

Partnership Models Recognizing the Process:

Holistic system, emphasizing community partnership, must foster personalized pathways to recovery to accommodate these changing needs.

Involvement of Peers and Communities in Pathways:

The role of lived experience expertise need to be at the heart of the recovery-oriented systems of care

Evidence-based recovery:

Recognizing collaboration between academics, practitioners and experts by experience is needed to generate evidence infrastructure for recovery

Funding:

Vital revisions are needed to policy and funding that facilitate long term recovery centered approaches and sustainable resourcing.

Integration of recovery across demand reduction:

Strategies and support are integrated the various stages of the recovery process, encompassing harm reduction, early intervention, treatment, resocialisation, and long-term recovery management.

GPPR STATISTICS (1.5.2025)

66 COUNTRIES
5 CONTINENTS

>650
SIGNATORIES

50
INPUTS

207
ORGANISATIONS

424
INDIVIDUALS

4
OBSERVERS

208

124

138

160

10

AFRICA

ASIA

AMERICA

EUROPE

OCEANIA

RECOMMENDATIONS

Domain 1: Service delivery and recovery support services

Recovery requires establishment of a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach among healthcare professionals, therapists, and counselors with equal status and value given to peers and people with lived experience of recovery.

Education and training / quality standards must be established to ensure individuals benefit from consistent and effective care methods and models.

It is crucial to develop tailored programs that address diverse needs while acknowledging cultural factors and minoritized groups.

Comprehensive and rigorous ongoing research and program evaluation

Domain 2: Public policy

Balanced and comprehensive state and public policies should be created to eliminate stigma and support recovery through early detection, effective treatment, and social reintegration.

Raising awareness initiatives are needed to reduce stigma among the general public and dispel myths and stereotypes about addiction recovery

Policies should be developed to enable successful reintegration back to society by addressing factors like employment, housing, education and health related needs.

Domain 3: Community and lived experience involvement

Recovery representation in the design, delivery, and evaluation of all addiction-related policies and service practices needs to be assured

It is imperative to forge landscapes in local communities in which recovery can flourish

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

SCAN – SIGN – SHARE GPPR



JOIN RECOVERED USERS NETWORK



boro.goic@recovered-users-network.net

D.Patton@derby.ac.uk

M.Nisic@derby.ac.uk