

# Recovery and MDD

## What does recovery mean?

- 2 definitions
  - Biomedical
  - Experiential

# Biomedical recovery

- Illness/disease - treatment - cure
- Acute conditions
- Recovery is an event
- 'I have recovered'

# Experiential recovery

- Adaptation
- Chronic conditions
- Recovery is an experience
- Living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with limitations
- “I am in recovery”

# Sick role

- Relationship between individual and group
- Temporary
- Helpful
- Supports recovery

# Sick role and illness

- Group or society
  - Describes the symptoms which permit a particular sick role
  - Legitimises illness and illness behaviour
  - Defines illness

# Sick role

- Rights and expectations
  - Exempt from normal social role
  - Not responsible for their condition
- Obligations
  - Try to get well
  - Seek help from technically competent professionals and co-operate with them

# Sick role

- In stigmatised illnesses rights do not apply
  - Including self-stigmatisation
- In chronic illnesses
  - Some kind of sick role may need to be incorporated into the experience of living with an illness or functional change/impairment

# Illness as a social construct

- Biomedical (narrow)
  - Emphasis is on the illness/disease
  - Technical solutions/treatment
- Social (broader)
  - The illness/disease
  - The individual
  - The context

# Supporting recovery

- The best treatment and the best chance of symptomatic improvement
- Hope and optimism
- Identity
- Building a life
- Developing efficacy

# Supporting recovery - hope

- Good outcomes are common in psychiatry
  - Even in ‘SMI’
- Optimistic doctors have better outcomes
- Optimistic doctors have higher recovery rates

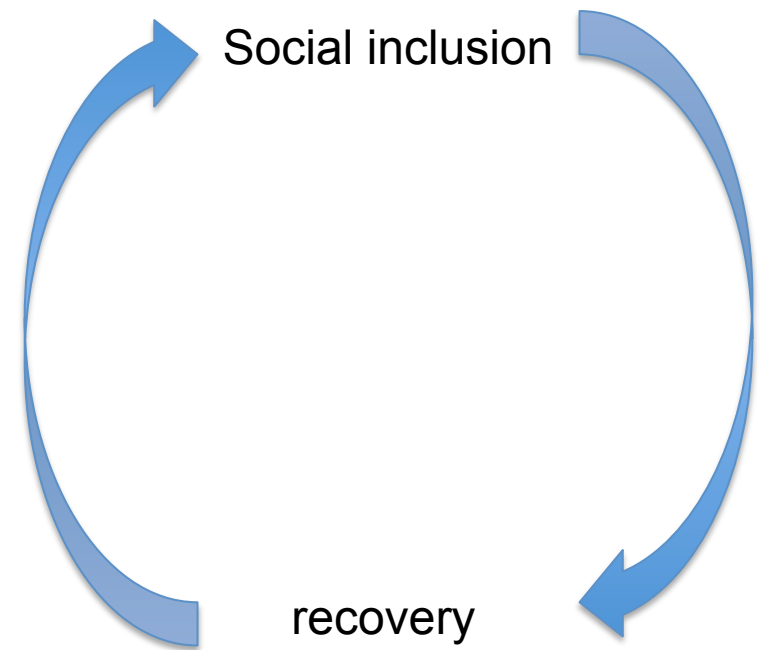
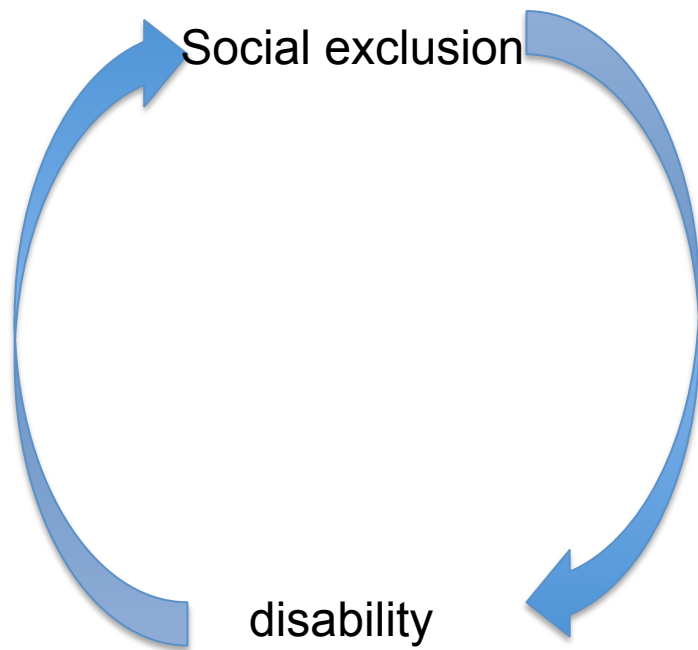
# Supporting recovery - identity

- Re-establishing an identity that incorporates a chronic illness is challenging
- Insight can have good and bad outcomes
  - Internalised stigma mediates low self-worth
- A positive identity
  - Insight
  - Mastery
  - An absence of internalised stigma

# Supporting recovery – building a life

- Social exclusion in mental illness
  - is common
  - is a cause and a consequence of illness
  - has a dynamic relationship with the experience of recovery

# Social inclusion and recovery



# Supporting recovery - efficacy

- Aim for self-management
- Identify goals
  - Especially those that support movement out of a sick role
- Identify strengths
  - Especially those that support these goals
- Expect a lot

Listen. Identify  
treatment goals.

De-stigmatised  
identity

Hope and  
optimism

Build a life. Away  
from sick role.

Technical Expertise.  
Pharmacology and/or  
psychotherapy

Flexibility. Match support  
to the individual. Timing.

Resilience. Stick  
with your patients.

Support and challenge.  
Belief in your patients.

Develop efficacy and  
self-management.

# Depression and recovery

- With respect to the sick role the illness of depression can be
  - Acute – so normal sick roles are applicable
  - Stigmatised – so finding a sick role may be compromised
  - Chronic – so recovery means finding new roles with/beyond the limitations the illness may impose

# Depression and recovery

Working in this space



Take this pill.  
Go to bed. Get up  
when  
you feel better.

There is nothing I  
can do. You will  
need to learn to  
live with this.