

INTRODUCTION

MENTAL ILLNESS AND RECOVERY

Mental Illness

Like cancer, asthma or heart disease, mental illness is a medical condition. It is a condition shared by one in four Americans. Mental illness can strike without regard to age, race, gender or income status. Most important, it can be treated successfully and people who experience mental illness can, and do, lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Research has shown that mental illness is often caused by complex chemical imbalances in the brain. These imbalances can be aggravated by environmental factors.

Today, mental illness is being treated successfully. With the right combination of therapies and medications, combined with the creation of healthy environments, good habits and positive routines, effective treatment is within reach and can accelerate the process of recovery.

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Recovery

Recovery itself is a continuous process. It involves the consumer attending to chosen areas of need, building success in these areas, then moving on to other areas of need. *TOOLS FOR RECOVERY* is designed to help consumers with this process. In organizing this Handbook, an effort has been made to anticipate what needs might arise and to provide resources that may allow consumers to achieve a series of successes to create the momentum to experience recovery.

New and improved therapies and medications are being introduced and attitudes regarding mental illness are changing. There is much more awareness and understanding of what mental illness is and how it can be treated. There are also laws regarding civil rights that protect people experiencing mental illness and help them on the road to recovery.

There are many personal stories that recount how individuals have experienced recovery from mental illness. These stories can inspire hope for others who are suffering from mental illness and help start the process of recovery.

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The Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health System

The Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health System is a network of resources designed to provide outreach, treatment and support services to individuals experiencing mental health issues.

In Cuyahoga County, 170,000 people need treatment for some type of mental illness each year. Approximately 8,500 of those individuals experience severe mental illness. The impact of their mental illness interferes with their ability to live their lives without treatment and support. This may involve hardship in meeting basic needs.

We hope that this Handbook will be helpful in providing guidance and assistance to consumers on the road to wellness and recovery. Should you need help navigating through the mental health system, using this Handbook, you can call the

CCCMHB's Client Rights Officer 216-241-3400

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KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

What are your rights as a consumer?

As a mental health consumer you have the right to:

- Be treated with consideration and respect for personal dignity, autonomy and privacy.
- Be served in a humane setting.
- Be informed of one's condition and current services that are available.
- Be able to consent to or refuse treatment.
- Have a current, written, individualized service plan.
- Actively participate in the development of one's individual service plan.
- Have freedom from unnecessary/excessive medication.
- Have freedom from unnecessary seclusion and restraint.
- Participate in appropriate/available services.
- Be informed of unusually hazardous treatment.

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KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

What are your rights as a consumer ?
Continued

- Be informed of or refuse observation.
- Consult with specialists or consul.
- Have confidentiality of communication.
- Have access to one's own records.
- Be informed of service termination.
- Receive explanation for denial of service.
- Know the cost of service.
- Not be discriminated against for any reason.
- Be informed of one's rights.
- Exercise rights without reprisal.
- Have instructions on how to file a grievance.
- File a grievance.

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KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

Every public mental health agency has a Client Rights Officer (CRO). The CRO is the individual who is designated by a mental health agency or board with the responsibility of assuring compliance with client rights and grievance procedures are implemented within each agency or board.

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KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

If you feel that your rights have been violated, you may contact your agency’s Client Rights Officer to report that violation or one of the following:

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| The Cuyahoga County
Community Mental Board’s
Client Rights Officer | 216-241-3400 |
| Ohio Department of Mental
Health’s Client Advocacy
Coordinator | 614-466-2333 |
| Ohio Legal Rights Service | 800-282-9181 |

MY RECOVERY NOTES



TOOLS FOR RECOVERY



***Hope is
perhaps the most
fundamental factor
in recovery.***

~Andy Blanch

TOOLS FOR RECOVERY