

The Irwin Foundation

What is the Irwin Foundation? The Irwin Foundation is a nonprofit foundation committed to advancing educational, research, and advocacy initiatives related to recovery from mental illness.

Our Mission: The Irwin Foundation was formed in 2000 to promote the Recovery Vision - a vision of mental health principles and services grounded in the reality that people with mental illnesses can and do recover.

A Vision of Hope: The Irwin Foundation was created in honor of Irwin B., an individual who struggled for years with a chronic mental illness. After being correctly diagnosed with Tourette's Disorder, Irwin finally received definitive treatment which significantly alleviated his symptoms. Nevertheless, although he lived well into his 70's, he continued to struggle with stigma and non-acceptance. Irwin B. always believed that recovery was possible. The Irwin Foundation is designed to validate this belief, to commemorate his courage and determination, and to create a better future for those recovering from mental illness.

The Irwin Foundation Projects



A community based project, "Celebration Recovery" is a festive, educational and advocacy event offering an opportunity to recognize those who participate in the Recovery Vision - individuals in recovery, family, friends, support groups, service providers, businesses, and mental health organizations. Celebrations have been held from coast to coast - from Boston to San Jose - in parks, convention centers, and in the vestibule of the Massachusetts State House. Consumers, family members, and local groups take an active role in contributing to the planning, organization, and program of each event. Planning builds coalitions in communities and expands networking for more informed public awareness and understanding of mental illness. Celebration Recovery receives funding from public and private sources. Celebration Recovery is supported by AstraZeneca.

Building Better Tomorrows - Workshops

An educational project in partnership with the Adult Recovery Network and the Mental Health Association of Summit County, Ohio, "Building Better Tomorrows" provides educational materials, videotapes, and CME/CEU workshops on "Recovery from Mental Illness" and the "Recovery-Oriented Treatment Model." Content focuses on recovery-oriented principles, interventions, assessments, and practice standards; outcome data; and the core issues in recovery: hope; respect; self-determination; personal choice and

responsibility; resiliency; peer support; diversity; individualized treatment; strength-based assessments; supported education, housing, and employment; collaboration with providers; and community involvement.

Training and Consultation

The transformation of mental health services towards recovery requires a commitment to agency change. Trainers and project consultants are available to assist providers, organizations, and facilities shift to a recovery-oriented mental health delivery system. Consultation is available to assess an agency's existing recovery-oriented services; discuss advantages/disadvantages of a recovery model; prioritize tasks appropriate to the agency that are consistent with the recovery mission; implement recovery services; evaluate recovery effects for both consumers and staff; and establish ongoing quality assessment mechanisms. Services range from one day consultations to time-limited, interactive arrangements, and longer term (6 to 12 month) formats.

Research

The Foundation is interested in developing demonstration projects and controlled trials that will contribute to evidence-based practices for recovery-oriented services. Our focus includes: outcomes research; identifying factors that facilitate/hinder transition to recovery-oriented services; and modification of existing psychiatric rehabilitation practices (e.g., social skills training and cognitive rehabilitation) to become more consumer- and recovery-oriented.

The Irwin Foundation: Executive Leadership

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