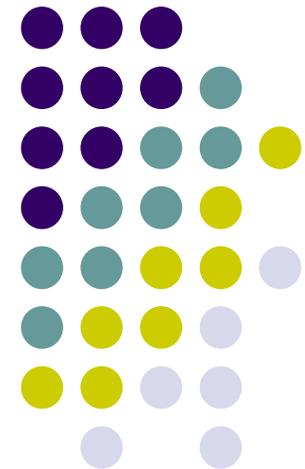


Role of Mental Health in Society: Psychosocial treatments

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Tokyo, June 2013



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Recovery from mental illness: living an “ordinary” life in the community



- Across the world, more people with major mental illnesses are living in the community rather than spending long periods in hospital
- This is humane and consistent with the hopes and aspirations of people with mental illness and their families
- Most want to live as regular citizens - doing things that we all do, such as studying and working – whether or not they are free of the symptoms of their illness

Recovery from mental illness: living an “ordinary” life in the community



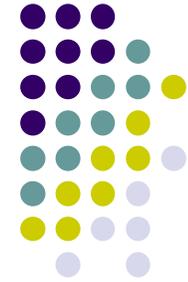
- So, having friends and a job and experiencing a better quality of life & feeling empowered have become important goals for personal recovery
- These aspirations are supported by the development of high-quality & comprehensive community mental health services
- Modern medicines play an important role in reducing symptoms - but people with mental illness need more than this

The second Australian survey of psychosis 2010: challenges faced

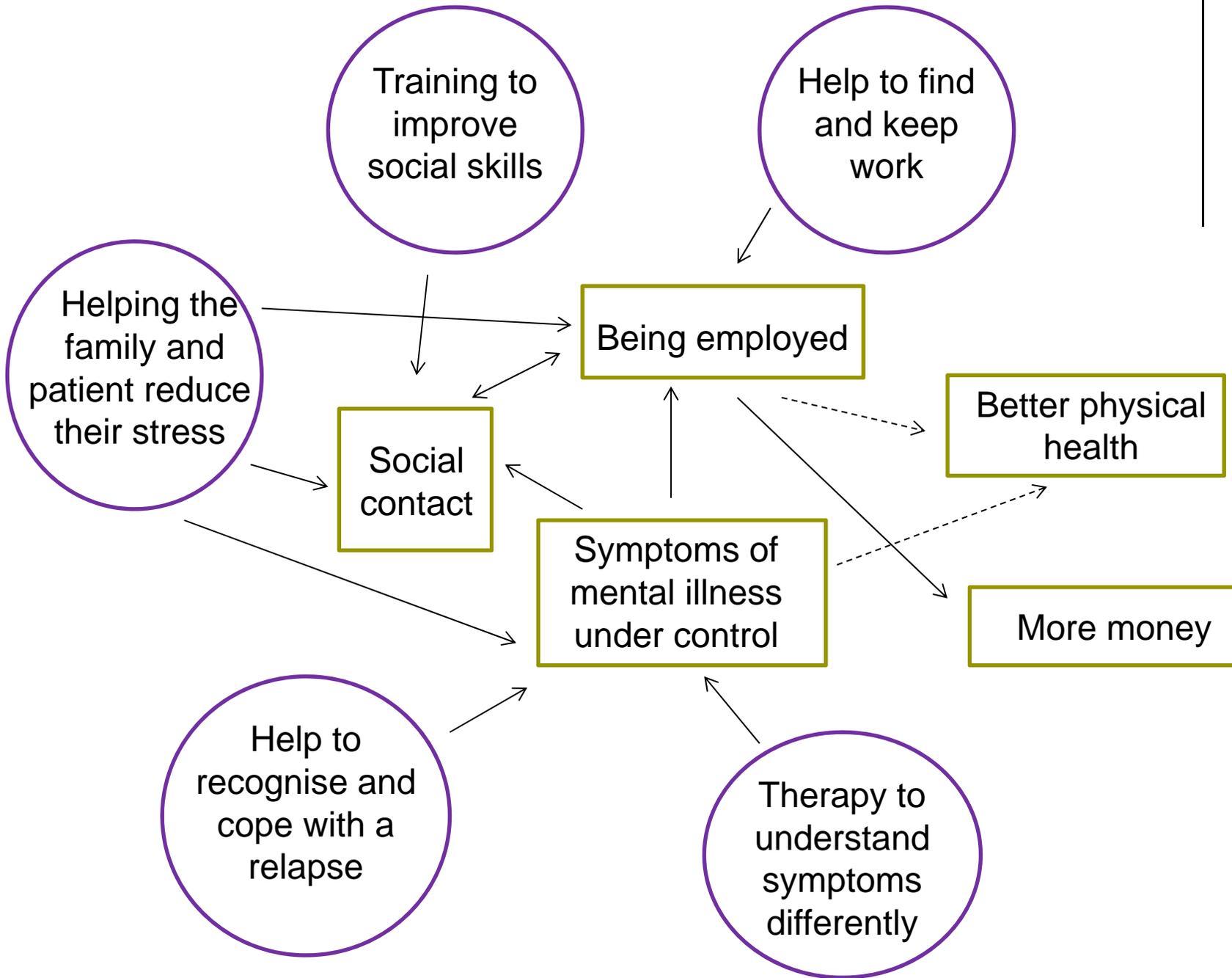
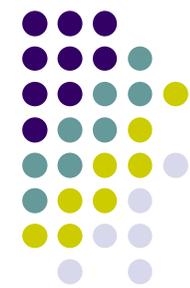


- Survey of almost 2000 Australians with psychotic illnesses e.g. schizophrenia
- Most were living in the community (98%)
- Asked to identify the top challenges they would face in the next 12 months, top 5 were:
 - ❖ Lack of money
 - ❖ Social isolation
 - ❖ Lack of employment
 - ❖ Poor physical health
 - ❖ Uncontrolled symptoms of mental illness

Recovery from mental illness: role of psychosocial treatments

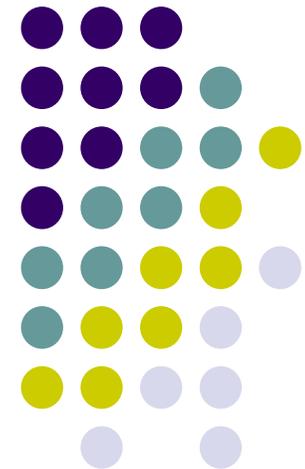


- As well as medicines, psychosocial treatments are necessary therefore
- They are more focussed towards overcoming these challenges and helping achieve personal goals – assisting people with mental illnesses to play a role in society
- A number of psychosocial treatments have been shown to be effective by strong scientific research and are recommended in guidelines for mental health practice



Family psycho-education for people with psychotic disorders and their families

An example of the value of psychosocial treatments for mental illness in society



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Need for family involvement in community mental health care



- Most families want to be involved in the treatment and care of their relative with mental illness and to assist with their recovery
- Effective ways of involving families have been developed and are scientifically proven
- These result in patients experiencing many improvements
- These programs are known as **Family Psycho-Education**

Need for family involvement in community mental health care



- Impacts of mental illness – confusion, grief, guilt, blame – are also experienced by relatives
- In our Australian research, more than 40% of carers of people with severe mental illness were assessed as likely to be diagnosed with depression or anxiety
- These carers were nearly 10 times more likely to be socially isolated than other people

(Hayes, Hawthorne, Farhall, O'Hanlon & Harvey, submitted)

What is Family Psycho-Education and how does it work?



- We know that stress can lead people with mental illnesses to more frequent relapses of their illness
- Family Psycho-Education helps to decrease relapses by reducing stress within the family
- Family stress is decreased by providing education and teaching new skills to all family members
- Families take part in 12 or more Family Psycho-Education sessions, over 6 months to 2 years

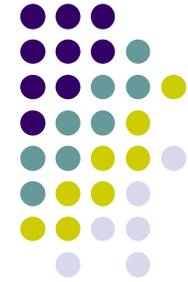
(Fadden, 1998; McFarlane et al, 2003)

What is Family Psycho-Education?



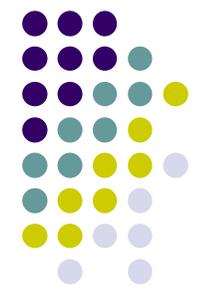
- The patient and family are involved together
 - leads to greater understanding and helps to empower the patient
- Information about the illness is shared & discussed
- The family learns to recognise and cope better with a relapse
- Training is provided to improve how the family talk with each other and solve problems together
- Goal-setting is used to help all family members achieve their personal goals

What is the scientific evidence for Family Psycho-Education?



- In the last 40 years, there were more than 50 strong scientific studies (RCTs) that show that Family Psycho-Education works
 - For people with schizophrenia; also for people with bipolar disorder and major depression
- It can lead to the person with mental illness having half the usual number of relapses & admissions to hospital

(McFarlane et al 2012; Pharoah et al, 2010; Pilling et al, 2002; Pitschel-Walz et al, 2001)



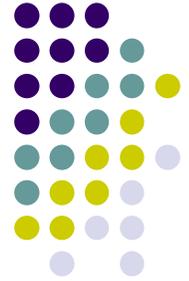
How does Family Psycho-Education help with leading an ordinary life in society?



- For the patient:
 - More able to interact in the usual way in society
 - More likely to get employment
- For the family:
 - Feel less burdened by caring for their loved one
 - Better relationships with the patient
 - More able to get on with their own life

(Pharoah et al, 2010; McFarlane et al, 2003; Cuijpers, 1999)

Availability of Family Psycho-Education



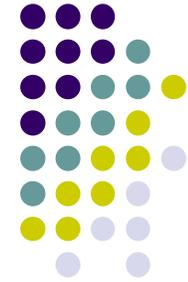
- Family Psycho-Education is still not widely available around the world
- Mental health professionals need special training
- But trained staff only involve a few families (up to 3 or 4) unless other changes happen to support them
- We have learnt about many of the other changes needed in our research in Family Psycho-Education programs in Australia
(*Magliano et al, 2006; Harvey & O'Hanlon, 2013; Hayes et al, 2013*)

What do families need from community mental health services?



- More family-friendly services, e.g.:
 - Services are open outside of office hours
 - Services will meet them in their homes, if preferred
- All families need early contact from the service that is treating their loved one
- Not all families need and want intensive programs like Family Psycho-Education
- But all families need information and discussion about what else could help them

How can we improve our mental health services so they involve families more?



- Psychosocial treatments should be given a higher priority
- Workloads should be low enough for staff to spend their time on involving families
- Each team should have a professional with time allocated to be the “champion for family involvement”:
 - To supervise and mentor other staff
 - To work with them in involving families

Conclusions



- Psychosocial treatments are important because they can help patients live as regular citizens in society
- Staff need training in psychosocial treatments
- But, so that psychosocial treatments are available to all those that need them, we also need to improve:
 - the types and variety of mental health services we offer to patients and their families
 - the way we offer these services



Thank you for listening
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