



[Read more about the Recovery to Practice \(RTP\) Initiative](#)

Working definition of “recovery” by SAMHSA:

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Four major dimensions that support a life in recovery:

- **Health:** overcoming or managing one’s disease(s) as well as living in a physically and emotionally healthy way;
- **Home:** a stable and safe place to live;
- **Purpose:** meaningful daily activities, such as a job, school, volunteerism, family caretaking, or creative endeavors, and the independence, income and resources to participate in society; and
- **Community:** relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love and hope.

Definition of “recovery-oriented guiding principles”

- ***Recovery emerges from hope:*** The belief that recovery is real provides the essential and motivating message of a better future – that people can and do overcome the internal and external challenges, barriers, and obstacles that confront them.
- ***Recovery is person-driven:*** Self-determination and self-direction are the foundations for recovery as individuals define their own life goals and design their unique path(s).
- ***Recovery occurs via many pathways:*** Individuals are unique with distinct needs, strengths, preferences, goals, culture and backgrounds, including trauma experiences that affect and determine their pathway(s) to recovery. Abstinence is the safest approach for those with substance use disorders.
- ***Recovery is holistic:*** Recovery encompasses an individual’s whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. The array of services and supports available should be integrated and coordinated.
- ***Recovery is supported by peers and allies:*** Mutual support and mutual aid groups, including the sharing of experiential knowledge and skills, as well as social learning, play an invaluable role in recovery
- ***Recovery is supported through relationship and social networks:*** An important factor in the recovery process is the presence and involvement of people who believe in the person’s ability to recover; who offer hope, support and encouragement; and who also suggest strategies and resources for change.

- ***Recovery is culturally based and influenced:*** Culture and cultural background in all of its diverse representations, including values, traditions, and beliefs, are keys in determining a person's journey and unique pathway to recovery.
- ***Recovery is supported by addressing trauma:*** Services and supports should be trauma-informed to foster safety (physical and emotional) and trust, as well as promote choice, empowerment and collaboration.
- ***Recovery involves individual, family and community strengths and responsibility:*** Individuals, families and communities have strengths and resources that serve as a foundation for recovery.
- ***Recovery is based on respect:*** Community, systems, and societal acceptance and appreciation for people affected by mental health and substance use problems – including protecting their rights and eliminating discrimination – are crucial in achieving recovery.

Definition of “recovery-oriented system of care (ROSC)”

A ROSC provides a network of services and supports to address the full spectrum of substance use problems, from harmful use to chronic conditions. Through education, communities are strengthened by recovery-oriented activities that can prevent inappropriate substance use before it occurs. Education also raises awareness about the disease, dispels myths that foster stigma and discrimination and provides early intervention for those at risk of developing substance use conditions.

Examples of Recovery-Oriented Activities/Services:

Prevention:

- Early screening before onset
- Collaborate with other systems, e.g., Child welfare, VA.
- Stigma reduction activities
- Refer to intervention treatment services

Intervention:

- Screening
- Early intervention
- Pre-treatment
- Recovery support services
- Outreach services

Treatment:

- Menu of treatment services
- Recovery Support services
- Alternative services and therapies
- Prevention for families and siblings of individuals in treatment

Post-treatment:

- Continuing care
- Recovery support services
- Check-ups
- Self-monitoring

