

Our approach to

RECOVERY

in

MENTAL HEALTH

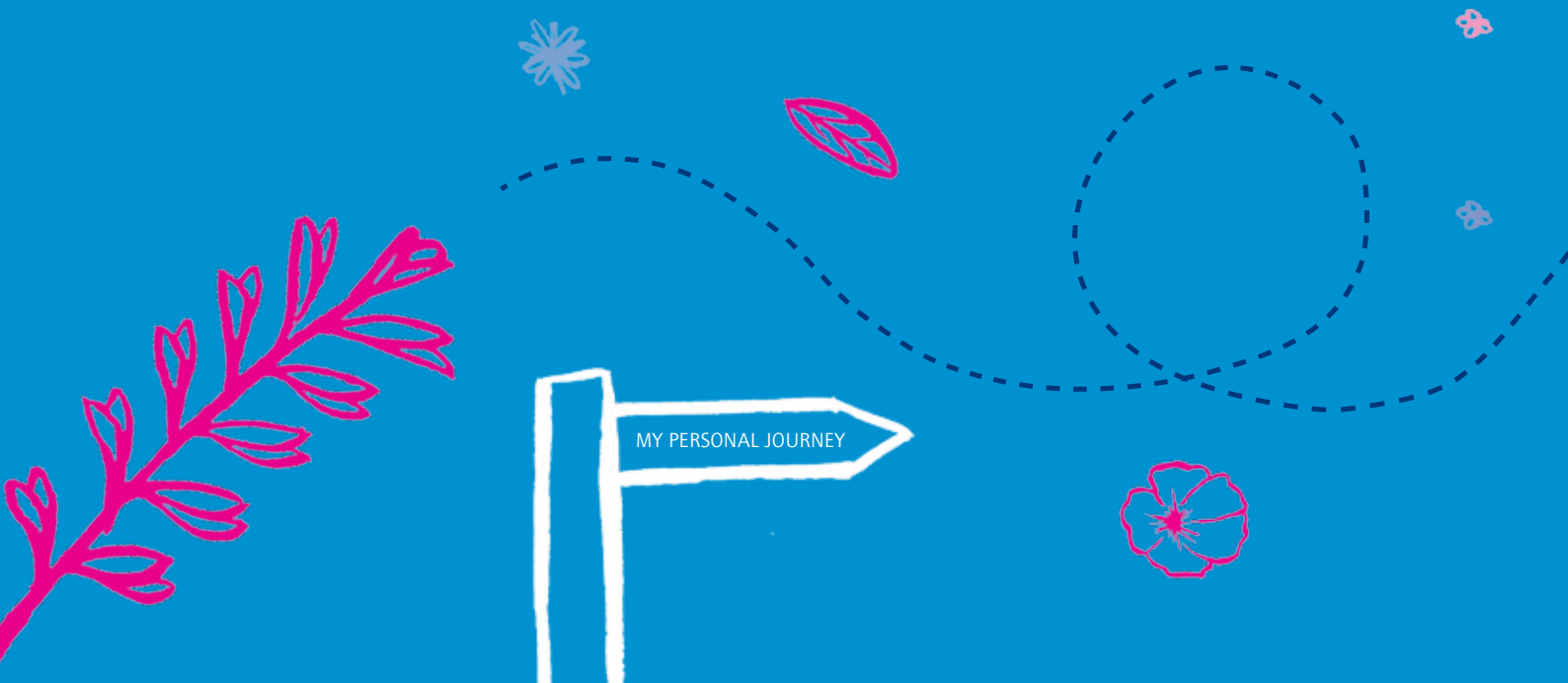


Recovery

 Look Ahead
CARE AND SUPPORT


RECOVERY Statement

Recovery in mental health refers to a personal journey and the steps taken to rebuild a purposeful and satisfying life. The concept of recovery is about exercising choice and staying in control of life despite experiencing a serious mental health condition. Look Ahead recognises that recovery from mental health difficulties is not a linear journey and therefore requires our services to deliver personalised and flexible care and support based on individuals' strengths, needs and aspirations.



INTRODUCTION to Look Ahead's approach to recovery in mental health

Mental ill health affects one in four people at some point in their lives. Recognising that people with different kinds of mental health needs can recover is a crucial part of modern mental health services. Recovery forms one of the six priorities of the government's mental health strategy, *No Health without Mental Health*.



Over recent decades, users of mental health services at Look Ahead have told us that the best 'treatment' is being able to exercise choice and control over their lives and having opportunities to (re)build a life beyond their illness. However, the biggest challenges for many people with a mental health diagnosis remains the stigma and discrimination they experience and the assumption, by professionals, loved ones and members of the public, that they need to follow a prescribed course of medical treatment.

There is no single definition of the concept of recovery for people with mental health needs, but the guiding principle is hope; the belief that it is possible for someone to regain a meaningful life beyond serious mental ill health. Recovery is often described as a process, vision, set of attitudes, a guiding principle.


Many of those who use our mental health services have experienced serious and enduring mental health needs which resulted in them being trapped in a cycle of repeated relapse and admission to psychiatric hospital, which has a detrimental effect on the person's life and recovery.

Our aim in delivering recovery-oriented services is to provide safe and effective support to promote self-management, independence and social inclusion. We do this by putting our customers at the heart of everything we do. We work in partnership with colleagues in health and social care and other stakeholders to ensure we provide flexible and integrated services at every stage of the mental health care pathway.

Recovery to me is...

"Successful management of my condition, i.e. the ability to achieve and maintain a more stable, productive life."

Our PRINCIPLES on recovery in mental health



Putting recovery into action means focusing care and support on building the understanding and resilience of customers who experience mental distress; it is not just about medical treatment to help manage and reduce the impact of symptoms. At Look Ahead we believe that care and support must be built around a person's hopes, wishes and aspirations in order for it to be effective. We also believe people with direct experience of mental ill health can offer just as valuable expertise as support staff and other professionals.

We are committed to following ten key principles underpinning our approach to recovery in mental health. These inform how we work with our customers:


1. We actively listen and draw on customers' experiences in order to help each person make sense of their mental distress and any associated challenges or needs. This is the first step towards supporting each person to find out what recovery means for them;

Recovery to me is...

"Multifaceted – it means self-acceptance, management of my illness, overcoming obstacles."

2. We demonstrate a belief in our customers' existing strengths and abilities and help each person to identify and prioritise their personal goals for recovery;

3. While accepting that the future is uncertain, we continue to express support for the possibility of our customers achieving their goals, thereby maintaining hope and positive expectations;

4. We help customers to feel safe wherever they live and make active use of positive risk-taking to support their recovery;
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5. We help our customers to access peer support and services and amenities in the community to support their recovery and improve their sense of health, wellbeing and belonging.

6. We place equal emphasis on the warm human qualities that customers want from our support staff and the skills and knowledge that they find important to supporting their recovery;

7. We acknowledge customers' concerns about the potentially distressing side effects of psychiatric medication and work actively with the individual and professionals to reduce these to a level that customers find acceptable;

8. We are committed to tackling discrimination towards all our customers on the basis of their mental distress or other grounds, including customers from marginalised or disadvantaged groups;

9. We make sure that customers have involvement, influence and control in relation to their individual support and risk management plans, which are meaningful to both customers and support staff;

10. We provide opportunities for customers to access peer support and to influence the services they receive at a local and organisational level.





Some of the ways we promote a **RECOVERY-ORIENTATED** *approach*

Look Ahead's commitment to co-production and personalisation are central to recovery in mental health. We encourage everybody to use their life experiences and expertise to design their own support and improve our services. This is key to regaining a strong sense of identity, self-esteem, inclusion and recognition.

Look Ahead customers have the opportunity to design their support by developing a Personalised Support Plan and contributing to their risk management plan, and by actively choosing who they would like to support them, as well as how and when. This encourages people to identify

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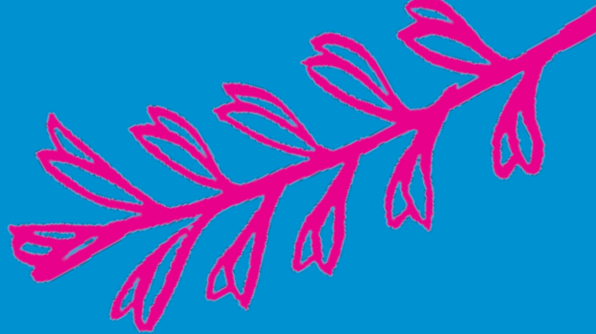
"Having the patience with oneself to begin a journey of truth and aspiration for your own growth and development with others reaching into your life as you wish."

self-management techniques which work for them, and to set goals which are important to them. Our Positive Pathways support and risk management plans have been co-designed by customers and staff to ensure that they meet the needs of individuals as well as those of the organisation and commissioners.

Customers also have the opportunity to improve services across Look Ahead by becoming Experts by Experience trainers, by checking the quality of services and by sitting on our Customer Services Committee, a formal sub-committee of the Look Ahead Board. At a local level, customers take part in staff recruitment and induction, business planning, policy review and events planning in their own services.

Hope in recovery is modelled through our Peer Support Programme, which offers 'real life' examples of people who lead fulfilling lives alongside their mental health diagnosis. Our peer mentors are based in Look Ahead services, and work with groups and individuals to support their recovery.

Look Ahead's Choice and Control Offer to all customers was co-produced by customers and staff, and supports our recovery approach.



As a Look Ahead Care and Support customer,
you have the opportunity to:

Direct your own support

Develop your support plan to achieve your goals

Choose who supports you, how, where and when

Decide with others how to spend relevant budgets

Use your experience and expertise

Recruit and welcome staff

Improve your service

Inspire and support others



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