

## **Illness Management & Recovery (FAQ's)**

The Illness Management and Recovery (IMR) program strongly emphasizes helping people to set and pursue personal goals and to implement action strategies in their everyday lives. The Illness Management and Recovery Program is a series of weekly sessions in which a specially trained mental health practitioner will help you develop your own personal strategies for coping with mental illness and moving forward in your life. The program can be provided in an individual or group format, and generally lasts between 3 to 6 months.

### **What is provided in the Illness Management and Recovery Program?**

- Consumers receive educational handouts, planning sheets, and checklists.
- A clinician helps consumers to apply the contents of the handouts to develop your own strategies for managing mental illness and setting and achieving goals.
- Consumers have opportunities to practice their own personalized strategies in the sessions and in every day life.

### **What will you learn in the Illness Management and Recovery Program?**

The following subjects are covered in educational handouts:

1. Recovery strategies
2. Practical facts about mental illness
3. The stress-vulnerability model and treatment strategies
4. Building social support
5. Reducing relapses
6. Using medication effectively
7. Coping with stress
8. Coping with problems and symptoms
9. Getting your needs met in the mental health system

### **How can family members and other supporters help?**

With the permission of the person who has experienced psychiatric symptoms, family members can help by:

- Reading the educational handouts used in the program
- Attending some sessions with the practitioner and the person who has experienced psychiatric symptoms
- Reviewing the educational handouts with the person
- Helping the person develop and implement plans for coping with symptoms, reducing relapses, and pursuing recovery goals

### **How do practitioners benefit from the Illness Management and Recovery Program?**

Practitioners benefit by:

- Learning a comprehensive, step-by-step approach to helping people gain skills in managing mental illness
- Saving time by receiving ready-to-use materials for conducting sessions
- Gaining skills in using motivational strategies, cognitive behavioral strategies, and educational strategies
- Experiencing increased job satisfaction from seeing improved outcomes, such as people reducing relapses and hospitalizations and making progress in their goals for recovery

### **How does the program compare to what is currently offered at community mental health centers?**

This program pulls together the main components of effective illness management programs and provides a comprehensive, structured, step-by-step approach. It provides materials that have a recovery orientation and are user friendly both for practitioners and for persons who have experienced psychiatric symptoms. The program also heavily emphasizes helping people put knowledge into practice in their every day life.

### **What resource materials do practitioners receive as part of the Illness Management and Recovery Program?**

- A Practitioners' Guide, with practical tips for teaching people about mental illness and helping them develop strategies for each of the 9 topic areas

- Educational handouts, checklists, and planning sheets for each of the 9 topic areas
- A short introductory video
- Informational brochures
- A fidelity scale to measure whether the program is being implemented as designed
- Outcome measures to assess whether the program is having a positive impact on participants

\*adapted from The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) website