



It's a WRAP!

Hampshire County Council and Southern Healthcare Trust

The Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) ® is a self-management and recovery system for good mental health.





Background

The WRAP approach to working with people with mental health issues was introduced in Hampshire in 2004. A partnership between Hampshire County Council, Southern Healthcare Trust and people with experiences of mental ill health now supports the development and use of WRAP across teams.

The fundamental principle behind WRAP is that individuals can, with support, identify their own strengths, understand their own triggers to illness and be active participants in their own good mental health.

Aims

WRAP fits in with the personalisation agenda, putting the individual at the centre of their recovery and health by focussing on their experiences and strengths. It is also one of the tools that can be used when adopting a recovery approach to mental well-being. Recovery approaches are defined with a number of key elements, including:

- finding and maintaining hope
- re-establishing a positive identity
- building a meaningful life
- taking responsibility for, and control of, life and mental well-being.

(Shepherd, Boardman and Slade, 2008).

How does it work?

“WRAP is a tool that can aid an individual’s recovery and its underpinning principles support the recovery approach. WRAP is a systematic way of monitoring wellness, times of being less well and times when experiences are uncomfortable and distressing.” Mary Ellen Copeland, creator of WRAP.

WRAP is a self-management tool. In a shift from traditional approaches, the person, not the organisation, leads and controls the process. Individuals choose the level of support they have, and the pace at which they create their plan.

The plan is made up of eight sections:

- wellness
- wellness toolbox
- daily maintenance list
- triggers
- early warning signs
- when things are breaking down
- crisis plan
- post-crisis plan.



The team responsible for the introduction of WRAP in Hampshire Adult Mental Health Services consists of three permanent staff, including a manager, and 10-12 sessional workers. The sessional workers, who are trained mentors, have experience of mental ill health and everyone in the team has their own WRAP. The role of the team is to support other teams to adopt, not only the tool, but the ethos and approach that underpins WRAP.

Outcomes

Approximately 500 staff have been trained to use WRAP, which has been integrated into the Trust's work, both in hospital and in the community.

WRAP is cited in business plans, is included in some job descriptions, and its use is one of the Trust's performance measures.

The original project only worked on WRAP, it has now extended its remit to a broader recovery approach.

There is evidence that training as a WRAP mentor and gaining confidence, new skills and experience also helps in finding paid employment. One WRAP mentor who was looking for work at the time said:

“Since working for the WRAP project my confidence has grown immensely. I have always been treated as part of the team and any suggestions I have made have been considered.... The team has encouraged me to start working without supervision and get involved with other project users of the services. I have now started to look for some part-time work and this is because of having my WRAP plan and the very positive experience of the time I spent at the WRAP project.”

Impact

Research that has been undertaken indicates that there has been a reduction in:

- Accident and Emergency visits
- hospital re-admissions
- unplanned hospital admissions.

In addition, the level of distress experienced by people with WRAPs is lower than it may otherwise have been.



Personal benefits are well documented through people's experiences. The following is an extract from one person's story:

Sunita

Sunita began using WRAP following a period of mental ill-health the previous year. Attending a WRAP course, and completing her own plan gave her techniques to take more control of who she was and what she was feeling. For Sunita, the four most useful of the tools were the Wellness Toolbox, Action Planning, the Daily Maintenance Plan, and the Triggers. This is how she describes it:

“by writing the action plan to counter these triggers, the very process of writing the plan became a significant step in me feeling that I was overcoming the issue for myself. This provided a sense of fulfilment that contributed to strengthening my resolve.”

Sunita was able to use her WRAP to help her to overcome the barriers that were preventing her from regaining her former confidence and going back to the gym.

Learning

The team have discovered that:

- WRAP is a different way of doing things, it is not enough just to use the forms; the principles must also be applied. Introducing WRAP to a team is about a cultural shift away from a traditional, medical model to a more holistic and empowering approach, staff move from being providers to enablers
- a whole systems approach that includes strategy, as well as delivery, is essential if WRAP is to be successfully introduced.
- a balance between bottom up and top down is helpful in ensuring that WRAP is properly embedded
- introducing WRAP is about managing different changes; for some teams, who are ready to adopt the new approaches, this can be relatively quick, but in other longer established settings it is important to allow more time, up to several years
- having an enthusiastic and committed project manager is essential to the ongoing success of the project
- within teams, introduction of WRAP and the associated cultural shifts have been at their strongest where the whole team is trained, and enthusiasts are then able to support and encourage others
- joint training for people with experiences of mental ill health and staff helps to challenge traditional boundaries and adds richness to everyone's experience
- the most important success is the quality of the facilitator, working in partnership with service users, to produce and deliver the WRAP.



Next steps

Southern Healthcare Trust has recently undergone a service redesign that has opened up opportunities for change and development, giving an increased emphasis to recovery approaches. Alongside this, over the past year, the Trust has become part of the national pilot programme 'Implementing Recovery – Organisational Change', including the development of a recovery college.

The recovery college focuses on an educational approach to health. Its main features are that it is a:

- physical centre, that contains resources, such as a library
- centre of learning, like other colleges, not a day centre
- resource for everyone, including people with personal experiences of mental ill health, carers, and professionals

and that:

- people with personal and professional experience of mental health problems work together at all stages in developing, delivering and reviewing learning
- every student has a tutor who guides them in selecting the right courses for their circumstances
- participation at a college complements more traditional assessment and treatment
- it may be a step towards attending a more mainstream college, but it is not a substitute for it
- it reflects the four guiding elements of the recovery approach (hope, being positive, empowerment, responsibility).

The WRAP team will form part of this new college and the training will be a central part of the curriculum.

Work has begun to involve GPs more in the use of WRAP, one WRAP group takes place in a GP surgery.

Due to the success of WRAP in the Trust, the local authority has now funded a post to support the development of WRAP in adult care services, working with people with physical disabilities, particularly people with multiple sclerosis.



References

Shepherd et al, 2008

Shepherd, Geoff; Boardman, Jed; Slade, Mike; Making Recovery a Reality, Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2008.

http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/pdfs/Making_recovery_a_reality_policy_paper.pdf

Contacts

www.southernhealth.nhs.uk

www.hants.gov.uk

Further information

WRAP is a copyrighted model, individuals may use it freely but organisations need to liaise with the Copeland Foundation.

<http://copelandcenter.com>

www.mentalhealthrecovery.com

Links

http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/workforce_strategy/workforce_innovation_programme/protection/NTow137.aspx (includes video)

Further information

For further information about the health and social care integration work between Skills for Health and Skills for Care please contact:

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