



FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH CARE

EXCELLENCE Core Beliefs

We believe that...

- ✓ People experiencing distress remain people first and foremost and should be viewed and treated with respect (as opposed to being viewed and treated as diagnoses or cases).
- ✓ Recovery involves collaboration between the person in distress and their social and therapeutic network.
- ✓ The wellness model of care should be the norm. The current illness model should be challenged.
- ✓ The paradigm of recovery and well-being is the underpinning of all our initiatives.
- ✓ Individual informed choice and self-determination are critical ingredients for recovery.
- ✓ Children, young Adults and Seniors are particularly vulnerable.
- ✓ People are resilient.
- ✓ There is a global nature to mental health conditions that requires a whole-person, community approach to an individual's wellness.
- ✓ The medical model is not a useful way to understand mental health conditions and our healthcare payment structures are predicated on that model.
- ✓ Honest evaluation of medication risks and benefits should be shared openly.
- ✓ The role that alcohol, prescription medication abuse and illegal drugs play in damaging the lives of those with mental health challenges and their families must be addressed.
- ✓ Social and emotional distress is an essential, if difficult, dimension of human experience.
- ✓ Over the last half-century, there has been an over-medicalization of many forms of distress, which are now being addressed almost exclusively through the use of medications. Despite the limitations of this paradigm, the use of an increasingly narrow biomedical model is now overly influencing mental health practice across the globe.
- ✓ While medications may provide some symptom relief in the short-term, the assumption that their long term use is always effective is not supported by independent research. In fact, new research has found that long term medication use may impede sustained mental health recovery and optimal health.
- ✓ People can and do recover from mental health conditions, at times facilitated by, but at other times in spite of, current mental health services. Long-term disability is not inevitable and should be neither an expected nor an accepted result of mental health conditions.
- ✓ Recovery is primarily the work of the person in distress. EXCELLENCE values individual choice and fosters hope by appreciating the active and substantial involvement of the person in distress in all facets and phases of their own care and recovery, whether or not they choose to use medications.