ABSTRACT

Occupational therapists in mental health settings are often faced with conflicting mandates of incorporating evidence-based, externally driven outcomes with values-based, recovery oriented practices, which are supposed to be directed by consumers’ lived experience and appraisal of interventions. As there is great deal of divergence among clinicians and consumers regarding appropriate rehabilitation services, the study seeks to bridge this gap with a dialogical process. The main objectives involve: identifying consumers’ and clinicians’ beliefs about recovery and appropriate rehabilitation services within an institutional setting; making recommendations about shaping rehabilitation services and evaluating the use of a dialogue group as a process for gaining shared understanding. The study will use action research, an iterative process designed to study the nature and impact of change while actively engaging participants. Four consumers will collaborate with clinicians to design and implement the research. A ten week dialogue group involving clinicians and consumers will explore assumptions, tacit beliefs about recovery in order to create aligned action. Data will be collected through ongoing journaling and recorded interviews to capture individual experiences related to the various changes that may have occurred during the process. The content of the interviews will be analysed and reflected back to participants in a follow-up session, where outcomes will be drawn together in order to create a team-based analysis and make recommendations for further dialogue and action. The main contribution of this project will be to cultivate a sustainable process for knowledge exchange with consumers to inform rehabilitation practices and guide research.