

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING CLINICIANS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOVERY MODEL IN RURAL CALIFORNIA

California's public mental health community-based agencies are being asked to transform from the medical model to the recovery model. This qualitative study seeks to understand the perceptions and attitudes of clinicians employed in a rural public mental health system in regards to the implementation of the recovery model. Through the lens of an empowerment perspective, the complex issues involved in the transition from the medical model to the recovery model are examined. A brief history of the move towards a recovery perspective is provided. A neoliberal critique of the implementation of the recovery model in public mental health systems is also presented. Furthermore, issues of power, including economic, political, and ideological/discursive power, are discussed. Data analysis of the participants' transcribed interviews revealed common themes. Participants perceived the recovery model as "looking at the whole person." Additionally, there was the perception that a transition the recovery model requires a shift in the role of the clinician. There was the perception that the recovery model is not a new concept, that it will not greatly alter the way clinicians practice, and that more training is necessary. Through a discussion of these findings suggestions for future research and considerations for practice and policy are provided.

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