

Treatment Plans and consumer participation

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Purpose of treatment plans

- Multiple? They can provide a:
 - Set of instructions for “the patient”
 - A place to identify treatment goals (a simplified ISP or recovery plan)
 - A fully integrated document that includes assessment information, clinical history and recovery plan
 - A record of a conversation about rights, roles and responsibilities, and the treatment plan

Why consumer participation?

- Consumer surveys
 - “I don’t know the name of my doctor”
- Human Rights (Victorian Charter)
- Policy Directions (Mental Health Matters)
- An “Ethical Imperative” (Drake and Deegan, 2009)
- Research
 - Consumers have poor awareness about rights (Rolfe, Sheehan and Davidson, 2008)
 - The long term value of a fair, inclusive process (Rosenman, Korten and Newman, 2000)

The importance of process to reduce the experience of coercion

- The amount of coercion experienced is strongly related to a patient's belief about the justice of the process by which he or she was admitted. That is, a patient's beliefs that others acted out of genuine concern, treated the patient respectfully and in good faith, and afforded the chance to tell his or her side of the story, are associated with low levels of experienced coercion
- (MacArthur Coercion Study, 1999)

A contract?

Consumers can be on CTOs for many different reasons even though poor compliance and lack of insight may be common, central features

Other factors include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing carer burden
- Ensuring continuity of care
- Social issues such as unstable housing
- Risk of harm to self and others
- Ongoing substance use

Consumers expect clarity about why they are on a CTO and what they need to do to be discharged. Research suggests that CTOs are effective when this is a reciprocal arrangement.

A collaboratively developed treatment plan can demonstrate this contractual arrangement between consumer and treating team.

The challenge of consumer participation

- A diverse community of consumers on involuntary orders
- Some relevant factors:
 - Acute symptoms
 - General cognitive functioning
 - Cultural issues
 - Justifiable cynicism
 - Lack of continuity of care and resource pressures

Carer involvement

- Common and divergent themes in Consumer participation and Carer involvement in treatment planning
- Themes for Carers:
 - Timely involvement
 - Quality of treatment
 - Best interests
 - Access to information

Questions for the future

- Can we have statutory treatment plans that are genuinely meaningful for consumers and promote recovery?
- Can we tolerate diverse “types” of treatment plans? From advance directives to letters?
- How can our compliance with consumer involvement be reviewed and measured beyond the expectation of a signature?
 - Advocacy, official visitors, MHRB attendance
- Are our staff well prepared for good practice?