



Recovery Science and Harm Reduction Reading Group: November 2021 Summary

Article Summary

The authors of this article provide a review of existing research on Recovery Capital, which is defined as a model describing the internal and external resources that a person can access for support in their recovery process. While the concept of Recovery Capital was coined nearly 20 years ago, the authors noted the limited amount of research exploring this model. The authors provide a review of how Recovery Capital is conceptualized and operationalized and then discuss its theoretical advances, empirical measurement, and application in treatment settings.

The authors identify four areas related to Recovery Capital for addiction science to address: 1) conceptual development, 2) empirical testing, measurement, and analysis, 3) directions for application in treatment and recovery settings, and 4) communication to policy, practice, and lived experience groups. Based on their review, the authors identified a need for systematic conceptual and empirical development of Recovery Capital. They specifically highlighted the importance of research that includes formal collaboration among scholars, practitioners, and experts by experience to facilitate Recovery Capital becoming a more empirical concept. This collaborative research could expand the availability of strengths-based recovery approaches for people in recovery.

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The science of recovery capital: Where do we go from here?

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Abstract

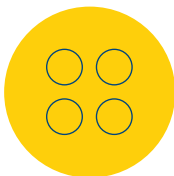
Background

The concept of Recovery Capital (RC) has emerged in studies and discussions of the addiction recovery process, and as a potential metric and marker for recovery gains. Although conceptual and applied development of the concept in the 20 years since the term was coined has increased, there remains insufficient clarity of key domains, factors and best practice research and applications for populations experiencing addiction. We aimed to review progress around the conceptualisation and operationalisation of RC and to consider future directions for a science of recovery capital.

Method

We provided a brief overview of theoretical foundations and advances, empirical measurement, and application in treatment and continuing care settings. We next introduced four primary areas for addiction science to address, namely: (i) conceptual development (e.g., how RC domains are unique but interrelated entities, valence of RC), (ii) empirical testing, adequacy of measurement and analysis, (iii) directions for novel application in treatment and recovery settings, and (iv) dissemination and communication to

Key meeting themes



Different meanings of Recovery Capital



Value of Recovery Capital



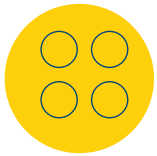
Need for future research



Collaboration is needed

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

The following themes came from the discussion:



Different meanings of Recovery Capital

Group attendees discussed the meaning of Recovery Capital as a concept, and how the concept meant something different between people depending on their own experiences with recovery. For example, some attendees identified social networks, time in recovery, and workplace support as forms of Recovery Capital.



Value of Recovery Capital

The importance and value of Recovery Capital was discussed throughout the meeting. Attendees discussed how their specific forms of Recovery Capital serve as support throughout their own personal recovery journeys.



Need for future research

Attendees agreed with and emphasized the authors' recommendations for further research surrounding Recovery Capital. Attendees noted the value of Recovery Capital through their own lived experiences with recovery, and indicated that Recovery Capital could be further advanced by additional research.



Recovery can be abstinence or non-abstinence-based

In discussing the authors' recommendations, group attendees agreed that collaboration between scholars and experts by experience would be necessary to facilitate research on Recovery Capital.



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New England (HHS Region 1)

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