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Transforming Mental Health Policies: Successes and Challenges

Presentation Abstract

This presentation will begin by emphasizing that recovery-oriented system transformation is easier to accomplish in theory and rhetoric than in practice, and by arguing that this difficulty is due primarily to the principle that transformation requires active leadership from persons with lived experience of recovery and their loved ones, as captured in the disability rights motto of “Nothing about us, without us!” Using the State of Connecticut’s almost 20-year history with transformation efforts as evidence, the presentation will highlight the role of the recovery community in promoting a new vision for mental health services and in providing some of the tools and hard work entailed in beginning to make this vision a reality. After describing both successes and challenges encountered in these efforts, the presentation will consider how recovery and recovery-oriented practice might eventually look different when envisioned and embedded within the cultural landscape of Hong Kong.