
Community-Based Supports and Services

One of the recent trends in the field of mental health is to provide community-based supports and services for individuals in rural settings. This is consistent with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's [definition of recovery](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery) (<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery>), which states that recovery from mental health conditions and substance use disorders happens in multiple dimensions, including one's home and community.

When designing community programming for those with mental health conditions, it is essential that the needs of the individuals are supported. These needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Safe and affordable housing
- Access to healthy and affordable food
- Opportunities for physical activity
- Social engagement
- A general feeling of safety and acceptance in communities

A recent [study](https://www.urbandesignmentalhealth.com/journal-3---planning-and-building-healthy-communities.html) (<https://www.urbandesignmentalhealth.com/journal-3---planning-and-building-healthy-communities.html>) published in the *Journal of Urban Design and Mental Health* found that 3 factors to reduce the risk of both physical and mental health problems include physical activity, interaction with other people and nature, and a nutrient-rich diet.

Though community-based supports and services should vary and be guided by the characteristics of a given community, some trends can be observed and noted.

The [Pathways Vermont Housing First Program](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/878) (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/project-examples/878>) addresses the needs of local veterans by providing mental health and substance abuse addiction help. The program is based around the [Housing First](https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/) (<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>) model, which provides housing for the homeless, other basic necessities, and assistance in reaching their personal goals. The goal of the program is to help individuals maintain housing, but the program offers a variety of other services including access to mental health services and computer training.

Another popular community-based supports and services model is the [Clubhouse](https://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1604&context=msw_papers) (https://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1604&context=msw_papers), which is based on the belief that every member has a safe and respected space in the community. Social service organizations who adopt the model can provide structure and meaning to an individual living with a mental health condition. Those who participate also have a chance to enhance their quality of life by participating in social, occupational, and educational opportunities.

This model has proven promising in rural areas like [Ely, Minnesota](https://www.elynlc.org/) (<https://www.elynlc.org/>) because the model addresses one of the challenges of living with a mental health condition in a rural area: isolation or rejection from peers. Through a community-based support system, the Clubhouse model can provide social outlets for individuals living with mental health conditions in rural communities.

Program Clearinghouse Examples

- [Families Plus](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/families-plus) (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/families-plus>)
- [Lac qui Parle Health Network](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/lac-qui-parle-health-network) (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/lac-qui-parle-health-network>)

- [Mariposa Community Health Center \(https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/mariposa-community-health-center\)](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/mariposa-community-health-center)
- [Sinnissippi Centers, Inc. \(https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/sinnissippi-centers\)](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/sinnissippi-centers)
- [Tanner Health System \(https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/tanner-health-system\)](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/tanner-health-system)
- [Valley View Hospital Association \(https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/valley-view-hospital-association\)](https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/mental-health/3/valley-view-hospital-association)

Resources to Learn More

Core Competencies for Peer Workers in Behavioral Health Services

(https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/core-competencies_508_12_13_18.pdf).

Document

Gives background on peer support workers and provides detailed information on the core competencies that they must have to be successful.

Organization(s): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Date: 12/2015

Northern Lights Clubhouse (https://www.elynlc.org/)

Website

Provides an overview a Clubhouse model incorporated into a community in Northern Minnesota.

Planning and Building Healthy Communities for Mental Health

(<https://www.urbandesignmentalhealth.com/journal-3---planning-and-building-healthy-communities.html>).


Document

Highlights aspects of healthy communities. These factors are relevant when considering healthy communities for individuals with mental health conditions.

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