Promoting the well-being of community-residing NCR patients: Developing an understanding of their community circumstances

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BACKGROUND

Not criminally responsible (NCR) patients are provided treatment and recovery-oriented care in the Review Board System. During this rehabilitative process, and based on what is most suitable to address each individual's unique needs, NCR patients may be detained in hospital or permitted to live conditionally in the community.

The purpose of the care NCR patients receive:
• Reduce the risk they pose to the safety of the public
• Support their reintegration back into society

RATIONALE

There is a lack of empirical research specifically examining the socially-derived well-being of community-residing NCR patients. The ways in which community-residing NCR patients’ socially-derived well-being may relate to their unique social location, their reintegrative process, or their attainment of stability, are also topics that have not yet been examined.

Literature review findings suggest that NCR patients experience challenges reintegrating into the community that are related to deficiencies in factors that contribute to their well-being. For example:
• A shortage of high quality and/or supportive housing,5,13-15
• Inadequacies in the availability of substance use treatment groups,2,5,14
• Limited opportunities for engaging in self-affirming occupation,2,5,12,18
• Experiences of stigmatization and acute feelings of the potential of being exposed as persons with mental illness.6,9

PURPOSE

For NCR patients living in the community, the treatment provided by the Review Board System, along with complementary community-based services, support patients in their efforts to re-establish themselves as autonomous, responsible members of society.

However, beyond these provisions, it is unclear whether community-residing NCR patients’ socially-derived well-being sufficiently supports the intentions of this rehabilitative process.

METHODS

This study is using critical ethnography3,10,17 and Powers and Faden’s (2006) social justice theory to uncover and examine the socially-derived well-being of community-residing NCR patients in a large urban centre in southern Ontario, Canada.

This approach is grounded in the critical social paradigm.

Specific attention is being paid to the prevailing social structures and power relationships present in the field.

Collected data is observational and conversational, gathered during go-along interviews,2 conducted in places and during activities that participants have identified as most valuable for illuminating the nature of the their life circumstances.

Data analysis is aiming to disrupt and reinterpret accepted understandings in ways that reveal previously unseen or under-appreciated unifying concepts, put on display the mechanisms of culturally-mediated power and oppression, and present new ways of seeing and understanding reality.17

A process of reflective equilibrium3,16 is also being used to examine the coherence between the assumed theoretical perspectives and the findings.

References

[List of references provided in the document]