

'Milestone Tweed spoke with our members, volunteers and staff. Here is what our people said about their experiences of recovery and the work of Recovery Cymru.'

## HOW DO RECOVERY CYMRU'S MEMBERS LIVES CHANGE DURING RECOVERY?

The changes funders impact through Recovery Cymru can be categorised in three main themes, with some overlapping elements;

- Members' increased health and wellbeing
- Building recovery capital
- Employment



Many of the changes were highly significant – life saving, life altering and life defining changes. Most members felt that their recovery was strongly attributed to the support from Recovery Cymru.

"It is an organisation that treasures recovery and treats it like a valuable asset that enriches our lives and society. Its philosophy is that we can have a joyful life without alcohol." - Member

## HOW DOES RECOVERY CYMRU SUPPORT THEIR MEMBERS RECOVERY?

For 10 years Recovery Cymru's work has embedded into the communities of Wales and beyond, being the first organisation to partner with treatment services to run aftercare and recovery support in Cardiff and Vale. Through Recovery Cymru people have self-defined their recovery, with support by their own peers. Members know they are safe, accepted and valued. It has been the creation of a recovery family. Through funding, the Recovery Cymru approach has a number of component parts which are essential for the approach to work;

- The members themselves
- The peer support
- The environment

The variety of groups and activities on offer by Recovery Cymru were seen as useful and a good reflection of the different interests and activities enjoyed by members, and the stages that members are at in their recovery journey. One to one support is highly valued by Recovery Cymru members. Particularly during lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this personal support was reported by a number of members as a lifeline and was hugely appreciated. Recovery Cymru volunteers and staff often contact members to check on their welfare, particularly if the member hasn't been in contact for a while or has requested extra support.

## HOW CAN RECOVERY CYMRU DEVELOP IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS?

We are really grateful to our funders who have helped us make tremendous strides within peer support recovery. Now we are looking to delve even deeper into what we can achieve for the community. With your help, our members are asking us to develop:

"I've got another job as a support worker. The experience with Recovery Cymru helped me get the job. Being exposed to that working environment was useful." - Member

- Digital growth
- Geographical growth
- The models
- Visibility and marketing
- Programmes and groups
- Outreach and education
- More space due to increased popularity
- Volunteering

There is ambition from Recovery Cymru's members, volunteers and staff for the organisation to develop and grow. They see a great and growing need for what Recovery Cymru can offer. The need for peer-led mutual aid self-help organisations to partner with:

- Harm reduction
- Medical treatment
- Mental health
- Prevention services

is matched by the ambition for growth of Recovery Cymru's members.



Understanding the gaps in peer-led recovery across Wales, and identifying potential partners to uncover the opportunities for Recovery Cymru's growth, is a recommended next step towards developing treatment in Wales, which equally values peer-led recovery communities and mutual aid in recovery.

## THE VALUE OF RECOVERY

How do we quantify the value of recovery? Recovery has huge value, social and financial, for both the individuals in recovery, those closest to them and also for society.

The positive impact on society for the individual in recovery can be estimated per year via Standard Social Return on Investment (SROI) proxies, such as relief from drug/alcohol problems equating to £26,124; relief from anxiety and depression £36,776, and physical health improvements being approximately £20,141 (IA, 2020).

We are delighted to contribute to these positive impacts and believe Recovery Cymru is vital to the community.

## RECOVERY CYMRU COVID-19 PROVISIONS AND ACTIVITY INSIGHTS



People have talked about the difficulties in staying sober in lockdown. For those shielding due to health issues, isolation and loneliness was particularly prevalent. There were examples of exceptional support given by Recovery Cymru and members' friends and family to make sure members felt safe and supported during the lockdown.

"I live by myself and I have been able to interact with others. This brings an added dimension. The support from the groups online has been even more beneficial for me. It's the sense of community, which an isolated person isn't going to get in real life at the moment. It has more impact in the COVID world." - Member

## THANK YOU

Recovery Cymru would like to thank all of our current funders for their incredibly important, on-going support and to our members who we look to as our inspiration. We look forward to continuing the next part of our journey with you as we look ahead to the next ten years.

Published: January 2021

Words from RC's independent impact assessment by Milestone Tweed (2020)

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