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# Recovery camp: enhancing the professional learning of future professionals

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# Recovery camp: enhancing the professional learning of future professionals

## **Abstract**

Abstract of a poster presentation.

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## **Recovery Camp: Enhancing the Professional Learning of Future Professionals**

**Authors - D. Perlman, L. Moxham, S. Pegg, S. Liersch, R. Brighton, C. Patterson & E. Taylor**

**Abstract** - Professional placement experiences are key to the development of quality future health professionals. While traditional placements use clinical settings, recent research has identified a need to provide a more immersive therapeutic based placement (Hartigan-Rogers et al., 2007). Immersive therapeutic based placement have the potential to provide learning opportunities that focus on personal recovery that can enhance clinical recovery. While therapeutic experiences have been demonstrated to be helpful for the client/patient, little is known about the benefits to future professionals.

A major objective of this project was to understand how an immersive therapeutic based experience, called Recovery Camp, influenced the professional learning of students working towards a profession in the mental health field.

A participant cohort of university academics, undergraduate students and people with a mental illness engaged in a 5-day experience called Recovery Camp (RC). RC is a therapeutic strengths-based recreation experience that engages everyone in a variety of activities(e.g. tai-chi, challenge course). A major focus of RC is on the personal recovery of people living with mental illness. The collaborative nature and extended period of time engaged in RC allows for rapport building and sense of community.

A case study qualitative methodology was employed to understand the influence of RC on the professional learning of students working towards a profession in the mental health field.

The major outcome from this study was that students enhanced their overall understanding of client needs beyond any other experience within their training. Particularly, students reported a greater understanding of the influence of client symptoms on their life, diverse communication/interaction styles and factors that influence the consumers daily life that are typically undiscovered in a clinical setting. A program, such as RC, can provide professional learning opportunities that are traditionally unseen in clinical settings.