

# Perceptions of mental health recovery: service users, carers and health professionals' perspectives

Professor Eleanor Bradley<sup>1</sup>, Charlotte Taylor<sup>1</sup> & Sarah Taylor-Robinson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Health & Society, University of Worcester, <sup>2</sup> Worcestershire Health and Care Trust

## Background

- The recovery approach is prominent across mental health services with healthcare organisations increasingly adopting strategic vision and planning underpinned by core recovery principles.
- Despite the widespread implementation of services with a recovery-focus, definitions of recovery remain contested (Aston & Coffey, 2012).
- Research to date has seldom taken into account the perspectives or lived experiences of mental health service users, carers *and* health professionals and no UK research has yet been conducted to consider varying definitions or experiences of recovery in practice across these three groups.

## Objectives

- To explore how 'recovery' is conceptualised amongst and between mental health service users, carers and mental health professionals. Participants will be drawn from a range of adult mental health services.
- To explore whether 'recovery focused' services encourage co-production in relation to decision-making and practice.

## Design and methods

- A grounded theory study utilising a multi-perspective interview design:
  - **Phase 1:** Health professionals
  - **Phase 2:** Service Users
  - **Phase 3:** Carers
- The study sample will be drawn from eight recovery-focused services within Worcestershire Health and Care Trust, including in patient and community services.
- Interviews will be conducted with mental healthcare professionals (n=40), service users (n=32) and carers (n=30). Interviewing service users, carers and health professionals about the same phenomena will enable constant comparison of the data. All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.
- Interviews will be participant-led to encourage the inductive and iterative process of theory development. As analysis progresses, participants may be theoretically sampled for participation, and previous participants may be invited for a second interview to clarify early interpretations.

## Implications for health psychology practice

- Enable a better understanding of the role that mental health professionals play in adopting, promoting and supporting recovery, what they can do to embrace and achieve it and how they see services supporting those who experience mental health difficulties.
- Achieve the 'triangle of care' between service user, carer and health professional in the care planning and treatment of people with mental ill-health (shared decision making).
- Shared Decision Making is linked to increased concordance, so findings from this study may help service users, carers and professionals interpret different understandings of treatment recommendations and the role of recovery, for incorporation into discussion about ongoing self-management and support.

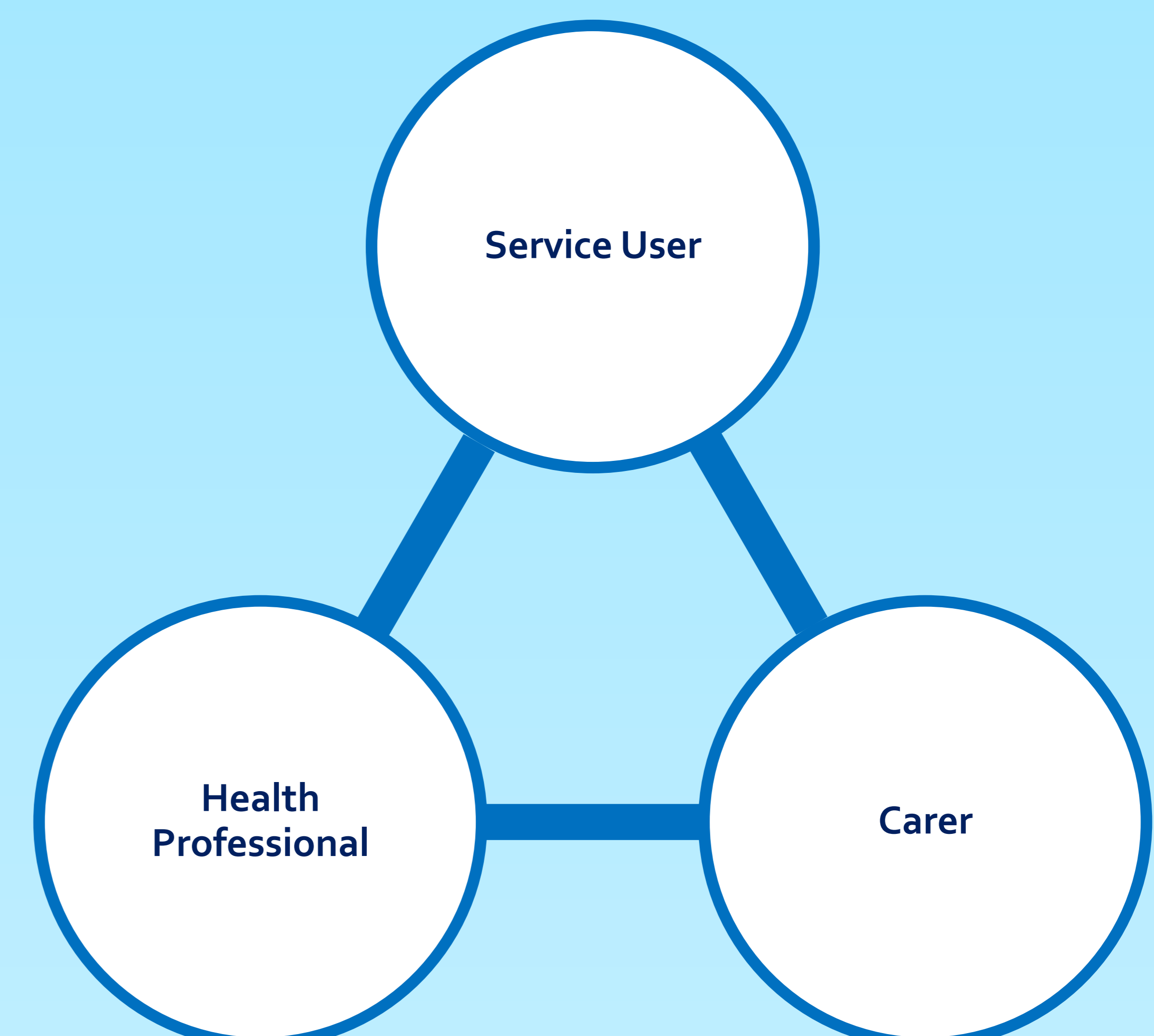


Fig 1. Triangle of Care

## Implications for health psychology research

- This study will support the development of new conceptual and theoretical models to further understandings in relation to experiences of recovery. For example:
  - Explore any relationship between concepts of recovery and self-regulation;
  - The role of illness identity within recovery;
  - The ongoing impact of long-term treatments, e.g. medication.
- **Treatment concordance:** exploration of the content of illness representations with service users and carers and health psychology theory could help to align the needs of these groups with treatment choices (medical and non-medical) to enhance concordance.
- **Achieving wellbeing:** utilisation of self-regulatory theory to help service users, carers and health professionals see the impact of positive achievements despite the presence of ongoing negative symptoms.

