

## **Psychiatric Rehabilitation: On the Way to Becoming a Profession**

*David Roe,<sup>1</sup> Amir Tal,<sup>2</sup> Vered Baloush-Kleinman,<sup>3</sup> Yehiel Shershevski,<sup>4</sup>  
Naomi Hadas-Lidor,<sup>5</sup> Adi Telem,<sup>6</sup> and Max Lachman<sup>7</sup>*

Over the past few decades major changes have been taking place regarding the treatment and rehabilitation of people with serious mental illness. While in the past such people were considered to be “non-rehabilitative,” were socially shunned and spent most of their lives in inpatient facilities, there is now much emphasis to facilitate and assure their rights to become integrated and recognized members of the community of their choice. The notable shift in most western countries from hospital to community-based services emphasized the need to form a network of professional services to assist in the rehabilitation, recovery and social integration processes of people with serious mental illness. These new rehabilitation services were offered by practitioners who came from a wide range of professions such as social work, occupational therapy, psychology, nursing and others. While on the one hand the wide range of professions from which practitioners came was enriching and contributed to its multidisciplinary nature, at times it was confusing. The present article focuses on efforts to identify the competencies of psychiatric rehabilitation practitioners and discuss whether and to what degree the emerging field of psychiatric rehabilitation is similar or different from other closely related professions. Finally, the justification for a certification and an independent profession is discussed.

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- 1 Professor. Department of Community Mental Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa.
  - 2 PhD student, Department of Community Mental Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa.
  - 3 Director of Training, Supervision and Implementation in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Ministry of Health.
  - 4 Director of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Mental Health Field Services, Ministry of Health.
  - 5 Department of Occupational Therapy, School for Health Occupations, Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University.
  - 6 Practicum Coordinator, Department of Community Mental Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa.
  - 7 Department of Community Mental Health, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, University of Haifa.