



**Understanding mental health,
recovery and wellbeing through education,
collaboration and conversation.**

*Hope, Control,
Opportunity*

**Roscommon East Galway
Advancing Recovery in Ireland
- a mental health community based initiative.**





A Word from our Peer Educator

A chairde,

Welcome to REGARI Recovery College, a mental health, wellbeing and recovery education centre. We are very excited about continuing our journey of recovery, learning, sharing and hope and we sincerely hope you will join us. I became involved in the earliest stage of this project, when it was still an idea, when I was only beginning my own personal recovery journey. In fact, I cannot say for sure whether I became involved in REGARI as I was beginning that journey or if I began that journey because I became involved in REGARI.

My involvement was on voluntary basis and I was asked to become the Service User Co-Lead alongside Orla O'Duinn, Occupational Therapy Manager with Galway-Roscommon Mental Health Services. Orla had been my key worker and it was she who did my assessment when I entered the mental health services. I was hesitant at first but supported and encouraged to take on this role. Others saw the abilities and talents within me that I had forgotten were there. As my involvement continued my confidence grew as did my motivation to be involved in something meaningful. I began to think about the future and returning to the workforce became something I saw as a definite in the future, where once I believed I would never again be well enough to work.

Through the work I was doing with REGARI I was working alongside other people on their recovery journey, family members, carers, various staff from the mental health services and others from the wider community. I was always supported, accepted and valued for the lived expertise I brought to REGARI. Finally I was doing something I really enjoyed and saw a future in this line of work.

When we secured our funding to recruit a Peer Educator I knew I wanted to go for this position. And luckily with my previous working background in Social Care and Education it meant I could apply. The Peer Educator role is that of a College Principal. A Peer Educator is someone who has their own lived experience of mental health challenges (for me that is depression and anxiety) along with a professional background in education/health/social care. I have worked in both Social Care and



Education in the past. So, here I am as the Peer Educator of your Recovery College.

REGARI has done for me what I truly hope it will do for you too. It inspired hope within me. It allowed me to discover and rediscover talents and abilities. It grew my confidence and allowed me to take control back of my life and to make better decisions. And of course it brought many opportunities that I never thought possible before. That is what recovery is about HOPE, CONTROL and OPPORTUNITY.

Recovery is also about living a happy and meaningful life whether or not you are experiencing symptoms. I still live with depression and anxiety. I still attend the mental health services and I still take medication. My recovery journey has empowered me with the tools I need to live life in a way that is meaningful to me. All of our courses are designed to support mental health and wellbeing so my hope is that your attendance at REGARI Recovery College will empower you to do the same in a safe and understanding atmosphere. On that note, I hope you will join us at REGARI Recovery College and I look forward to meeting you.

Warmest Wishes,

Ailish Connaughton

Peer Educator



Vision

REGARI Recovery College is a community based initiative that will empower you to become an expert in your own self-care and enhance skills and confidence to manage your own recovery through education in mental health and wellbeing.



Mission

- To promote social inclusion and community involvement.
- To develop and deliver modules through working in partnership with people with lived experience of mental health challenges, family members, carers, people working in mental health and others.
- To make these modules available throughout Roscommon and East Galway.
- To promote a culture of change to ensure an environment of mutual respect, opportunity, control and hope.

Connectedness
Hope
Identity
Meaning
Empowerment

Are you someone who has:

- Lived experience of mental health challenges including: personally, as a family member, friend or carer?
- Professional experience of working in the area of mental health?
- An interest in mental health issues?

If so, then join us at REGARI Recovery College to learn about and/or contribute to modules on mental health and wellbeing.

What is a Recovery College?

Recovery Colleges are relatively new in Ireland. REGARI Recovery College is the second within the Republic of Ireland, with Mayo Recovery College being the first to have opened their doors. Excitingly, there are further Recovery Colleges in development around the country. Recovery Colleges exist around the world including in Northern Ireland and across the UK, Europe, USA, Canada, Australia and Japan.



Recovery Colleges provide:

- Courses
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Groupwork

On topics and themes that come under the following categories:

1. Understanding mental health issues, treatment and options:
E.g. Living with Depression, Understanding Psychosis,
Understanding Medication
2. Building/Rebuilding Your Life
E.g. Let's talk about Recovery, Supporting Personal Recovery and Mental Wellbeing, Exploring Hopes and Dreams, Telling Your Story.
3. Developing Life Skills
E.g. Self-Esteem, Stress Management, Money Management,
Bounce Back – Keep Going
4. Physical Health and Wellbeing
E.g. Introduction to Mindfulness, Learning to Relax, Healthy Eating, Exercising for Health, Living with Diabetes and Emotional Wellbeing.
5. Individual Learning Plan
All Students will have the option of completing an Individual Learning Plan with the support of the Peer Educator. This will support you in setting recovery goals and identifying the steps needed to reach these goals. These goals can be big or small depending on what is important to you in your life.

How Does a Recovery College Work?

A Recovery College is run by a Peer Educator, Ailish Connaughton. Alongside the Peer Educator are Peer Trainers, Mental Health Professional Trainers and others. We



value all participants as having expertise either by personal experience, being a family member/carer/friend or by profession.

No one is more or less important than each other – Everyone is equal.

How Can I get involved?

You can enjoy REGARI Recovery College by:

Registering as a Student

Learn about recovery related themes and topics with other students in a safe and educational environment.

And/or

Volunteering as a Co-Producer

Co-production is the process through which a small group (approx 3 people), experts by experience and experts by profession work together to produce a recovery oriented learning module. We call the people involved in this process Co-producers. All co-produced material is created to support mental health recovery and wellbeing.

And/or

Volunteering as a Co-deliverer/Co-Facilitator

Co-delivery is the method through which the co-produced recovery oriented learning modules are delivered. Again they are delivered jointly by experts by experience and experts by profession. These people are called Co-deliverers. Training will be provided to people interested in becoming a Co-deliverer.

...you can have as many roles within REGARI Recovery College as you want.

Why would I get involved?

If you want to learn about recovery, be a student, partake in something different, then REGARI Recovery College is a good place to start.

The college is about everyone coming together to enhance their learning and their own contributions as to how we can best promote mental health and wellbeing in our own lives. It is also about improving our mental health services within our community.



Contact Details

Ailish Connaughton

Peer Educator

REGARI Recovery College

The Lodge,

Athlone Road,

Roscommon

086 1304869

Email: regarirecoverycollege@gmail.com

Keen Print 090 6625787

Our Partners include:

