

# RECOVERY – My Words, My Way



Based at GMIT Castlebar, the Mayo Recovery College has emerged as a significant social and educational innovation since its inception in 2013.

The Mayo Recovery College vision is to progress a culture of Recovery, to improve quality of life and to promote social inclusion. We do this by empowering people with mental health and addiction challenges, their families, supporters and members of the community through co-produced education and learning together. This unique service aims to support, maintain and promote positive mental health and to foster hopeful positive conversations about human distress. Our mission is to advance personal recovery through vibrant adult Recovery Education.

**Aims & Objectives of poster:** To share the experience of the students who attend the Mayo Recovery College enhancing awareness of the College and to attract a deeper interest from perspective and existing students.

**Description of the topic:** Students of the Mayo Recovery College were asked to anonymously write to the Recovery Educator outlining their experience of the Recovery College and respond to additional questions as set out below using their words in their way.



Dear Mayo Recovery College

Many thanks for an excellent session for me at Mayo Recovery College.

I found the course "Unpacking Diagnosis" brilliant. Very engaging in excellent facilities. I look forward to returning for Summer courses as well as resuming the regular timetable in September. I also look forward to bringing my husband along to the next session on mindfulness and maybe the occasional future sessions too. Also I would like to get involved with co-producing a module (I will wait to attend a few more Summer sessions first though)

Thank you for your time and a warm congratulations to your co-facilitators too.

Yours Sincerely

Dear Mayo Recovery College

I am writing this letter to tell you of my experience in the Recovery College.

I have really enjoyed the past Spring/Summer semester. I especially enjoyed the mindfulness and meditation classes. I have really enjoyed the past Spring/Summer semester. I especially enjoyed the mindfulness and meditation classes. I also enjoyed the CBT module. I found the techniques very useful for my OCD symptoms and I feel like I can control my obsessive behaviour better.

I would like to see some more practical classes in mindfulness and meditation. I found the facilitators are very easy going and good at facilitating the groups.

I am also looking forward to the Summer school.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Dear Mayo Recovery College

My experience of The Recovery College has been invaluable to my own recovery, giving me reason to get up, out and realise other people have similar experiences. My favourite aspect would be the group discussions when everyone feels safe and able to talk honestly about their own experiences and we can share our own coping strategies. Sometimes this could have been good if this could go on all day.

The room itself is ideal for this purpose and is conducive to discussion as it's a more relaxed setting.

All the classes I've attended have given me something of value. The only change I would suggest would be broadcasting the college more. I only found out about it by accident. I want to continue with college in the future as I have truly found it more useful than the likes of other supports. It has also given me a new direction in my life and if it wasn't for Recovery College, I wouldn't have found out about Peer Support Workers and now I want to train as one!

Overall I think The Recovery College is brilliant, well organised, educational, caring and fascinating. I would recommend it to anyone in the services.

Thanks to all the facilitators for their time and compassion.

Dear Mayo Recovery College

I am a 54-year-old man with depression that I have lived with for 50 years. I have lived through lots of deaths, sickness in family and friends and always live in fear of the future and I have attempted suicide 3 times. I loved my experience in The Recovery College but couldn't attend for last 18 months as I was caring for my mum who has since died. I enjoyed the education and meeting others.

I would not change much, only hope for more advertising and make group grow. Most classes are very good and well put together. I would like to see people who attend asking more about the other people who attend, and what they have dealt with and how.

The room in which the talks are held are very nice and a good size. The facilitators are very good, well done to all who work at it and all the work that goes on behind the scenes. It would be good if we could go to the unit some day and interact with staff and patients.

Karen and Billy, thank ye for keeping up the good work that you started and if I can help I will. If I am in a good place at the time, I am interested in doing 2019/2020 course if I can. I am a farmer so special times of the year very busy with that.

Dear Mayo Recovery College

I have got so much from the Mayo Recovery College. I find it hard to put into words. I found identification with others. I am a family member and at times it can be quite challenging in different ways. Knowing that I can attend the MRC has helped me in so many ways.

I get so much from listening to others. The information discussed with facilitators and being signposted to other places and supports. I have also got better understanding of what my family member is going through. MRC has helped me to better communicate with others.

I am delighted that MRC is going on through the summer months. I find the facilitators good and have passion for what modules they are delivering. I like the Recovery College room, it is cosy and comfortable.

I have written in evaluations about the need to simplify the evaluation forms, I find there is too many questions. I know they are needed for feedback on each module but I find them overwhelming. I think a module on Bullying could be included in the prospectus because bullying needs to be discussed more, it has such harmful effects on individuals and the ways to recover from the damaged caused by bullying and tools to prevent bullying.

I keep attending the Recovery College sometimes to help myself and to help others. I would like to be involved in co-producing modules. I would like to co-deliver modules but I don't have the confidence yet.

Some people have commented about my attendance at the MRC wondering why I am still attending. I have questioned myself should I be attending. Maybe some individuals only need to attend for a short time and for me it has helped get me through difficult times by continuing to attend. The Mayo Recovery College has helped me feel less isolated and gave me courage and strength to keep going through tough times. I am very grateful to the Mayo Recovery College.

Kind Regards

