



# **Psychosocial Rehabilitation Competencies of Practice**

Third Edition, 2025

## **Introduction and Purpose Statement**

This Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Canada competency document defines the essential knowledge, skills, actions, behaviours, and values critical to the competent development, delivery, evaluation, and research of high-quality, recovery-oriented psychosocial rehabilitation services with people and their supports who live with mental health and substance use challenges.

This framework aims to reduce systemic, organizational, and relational barriers that hinder access to PSR practices. By emphasizing collaborative decision-making, self-directed and supported care, and equitable service delivery (see Frances et al., 2024 & Légaré et al., 2023), it fosters a shared understanding among service providers, educators, policymakers, and researchers.

This document serves as a foundation for workforce development, quality assurance, safety, and continuous improvement in PSR practice in Canada and beyond. It supports interdisciplinary collaboration and aligns with national efforts to advance PSR recovery-oriented mental health services and evidence-based practices for substance use challenges, ensuring all individuals receive compassionate, effective, and person-driven support.

## Number of Competencies and Performance Indicators in each domain

Domain	Number of Competencies	Number of Performance Indicators
A. Cultural Safety and Reconciliation	5	15
B. Professional Skills	5	22
C. Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR), Supporting Practices, and Recovery-Oriented Services	8	33
D. Supporting Social Participation for All	3	12
E. Facilitating Change and Providing Leadership	2	6
Total	23	88

# The Competencies and Performance Indicators

## Domain A. Cultural Safety and Reconciliation

### **A.1: Demonstrates knowledge of culture and diversity**

- A.1.1: Has basic knowledge of cultural humility and its application to promote cultural safety for individuals with diverse backgrounds
- A.1.2: Understands the impact of overgeneralization and negative stereotyping within and across cultural groups in healthcare
- A.1.3: Aware of the limitations of PSR and recovery as a Western concept and may not resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds
- A.1.4: Understands how multiple factors, such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, immigration status, and disability, intersect to shape an individual's life experiences, strengths, challenges, and interconnected health and social issues

### **A.2: Demonstrates awareness and respect of individual's values, beliefs, experiences, and preference**

- A.2.1: Learns from individuals about their culture, unique histories, values, needs, preferences, and social circumstances, and the impacts on views of mental health
- A.2.2: Integrates service user perspectives in the therapeutic relationship and co-production of service design and delivery, documentation, evaluation, and research

### **A.3: Demonstrates awareness of own cultural values and biases**

- A.3.1: Recognizes personal limits in working with people from diverse cultures and the potential impact of personal bias on individuals receiving services, their loved ones, and staff
- A.3.2: Engages in learning about knowledge and skills for culturally safer practice

**A.4: Demonstrates practical skills for enhancing cultural safety**

- A.4.1: Applies cultural safety principles, including honoring and advocating for desired protocols and processes, promoting partnerships, and upholding positive purpose
- A.4.2: Maintains awareness of power differences that affect cross-cultural interactions and share power
- A.4.3: Demonstrates the ability to openly discuss racial, ethnic, and cultural issues
- A.4.4: Engages in anti-oppressive practice and advocacy across practice contexts

**A.5: Demonstrates reconciliation and decolonization in practice with Indigenous populations**

- A.5.1: Awareness of historical impacts of colonization on the Indigenous peoples in Canada
- A.5.2: Awareness of Calls to Action and specific Actions of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC)
- A.5.3: Incorporates anti-racist and decolonizing practices outlined by the TRC as relevant and appropriate to practice

## Domain B. Professional Skills

### **B.1: Demonstrates ethical, legal practices, and professional behaviours**

- B.1.1: Demonstrates knowledge of, and provides services by adhering to the current Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR/RPS) Canada Code of Ethics, Principles, Competence, and Standards
- B.1.2: Demonstrates knowledge of, and provides services by adhering to current Canadian and provincial/ territorial laws related to rights, certification, documentation, confidentiality and information sharing, accommodations, and International Human Rights laws along with relevant additional professional and organizational responsibilities, and seek support as needed
- B.1.3: Recognizes and appropriately responds to ethical and legal issues encountered in practice
- B.1.4: Understands professional boundary issues and maintains appropriate boundaries with individuals, families, supporters and communities
- B.1.5: Acts professionally and models professional behaviours for colleagues
- B.1.6: Assures and maintains confidentiality of individual and family information
- B.1.7: Incorporates harm reduction, strength-based, person-centered, and trauma-informed principles in therapeutic relationship

### **B.2: Communicates effectively**

- B.2.1: Awareness of own communication styles and uses effective communication skills such as active listening, empathizing, paraphrasing, validating, and responding to non-verbal cues
- B.2.2: Demonstrates knowledge and abilities to respond to diverse modes of communication in a wide range of service situations, including use of easy and understandable language in both writing and speaking

- B.2.3: Uses appropriate techniques such as interviewing to identify relevant information needed to best serve individuals, families, and their supporters
- B.2.4: Communicates effectively through various written and digital platforms, including video conferencing software, e-mail, and mobile applications
- B.2.5: Communicates and collaborates effectively with government officials, advocates, and natural supports, such as family members or chosen support persons
- B.2.6: Develops/ co-develops and documents rehabilitation plans using plain language, in partnership with individuals to incorporate their preferred language whenever possible
- B.2.7: Demonstrates ability to clearly communicate recovery process to clients, families, and supporters, including roles and expectations of all partners

**B.3: Maintains personal wellness to assure the effective provision of services**

- B.3.1: Demonstrates knowledge of the impacts of stressors on one's own physical and mental health and manages stress
- B.3.2: Recognizes and appropriately responds to ethical and legal issues encountered in practice

**B.4: Assures competence through life-long learning and on-going professional development**

- B.4.1: Identifies personal learning needs and participates in on-going personal and professional development activities
- B.4.2: Critically evaluates new learning and evidence to integrate into culturally adaptive practice
- B.4.3: Actively integrates new evidence-based practice and current competencies, and engages in continuous quality improvement and research efforts whenever possible
- B.4.4: Offers professional development opportunities and mentorship for colleagues

**B.5: Works toward mitigating power differences within relationships**

- B.5.1: Engages in ongoing self-reflection and dialogue with oneself, service users, and their families and supporters regarding power differences, both during and following actions
- B.5.2: Incorporates feedback from clients or colleagues regarding power sharing

## Domain C. Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR), Supporting Practices, and Recovery-Oriented Services

### **C.1: Understands mental illness and its impact on individuals**

- C.1.1: Has a basic knowledge of the signs and symptoms of mental illnesses, including substance use and misuse, as outlined in the updated Diagnostic and Statistics Manual and their unique impacts on daily functioning / participation in activities of choice
- C.1.2: Has a basic knowledge of commonly used psychiatric medications in practice settings, including therapeutic and adverse events, risks and reasons for discontinuation
- C.1.3: Has awareness of the potential for additional and unique cognitive challenges that individuals with severe mental illness or serious mental health concerns may face
- C.1.4: Understands the needs of individuals with mental illness and how complex cognitive, behavioural, substance use/misuse and physical challenges can compound to affect daily life in the context of psychosocial rehabilitation services

### **C.2: Understands social determinants of health**

- C.2.1: Understands the effects of stigma and discrimination on daily life and illness experience, including institutional, systemic, societal, and cultural impacts on the mental health and mental illness management of marginalized and racialized groups
- C.2.2: Demonstrates understanding of the effects of biological, psychological, spiritual, and environmental factors on mental health

### **C.3: Forms effective relationships with individuals and their supporters**

- C.3.1: Effectively establishes and maintains rapport with individuals and their supporters
- C.3.2: Applies trauma informed practice guidelines and approaches with individuals and their supporters in building collaborative trusting relationships

C.3.3: Uses appropriate communication engagement skills when interacting with individuals, families/supporters, and communities including collaborating with partners to develop needed resources and services

C.3.4: Facilitates access to follow-up supports when appropriate and supports individuals when transitioning out of a therapeutic relationship as needed

#### **C.4: Assesses needs and resources of the individual in context**

C.4.1: Applies person-centered approach to collaboratively assess for strengths, needs, and establish goals

C.4.2: Considers the individual's existing resources in their psychosocial environment

C.4.3: Awareness of any additional contextual factors such as developmental delays and dual diagnoses

#### **C.5: Applies effective skills to engage individuals in their recovery process**

C.5.1: Supports individuals to build a hopeful and positive sense of self

C.5.2: Understands and coaches individuals in skill building for personally meaningful activity participation

C.5.3: Understands and coaches individuals in developing resources and support to mitigate the impact of potential risk factors

C.5.4: Understands and coaches individuals and supporters in relapse prevention and illness management, including medication management

C.5.5: Understands and coaches individuals and supporters in crisis management

C.5.6: Understands and coaches individuals and supporters to apply evidence-based family intervention

C.5.7: Emphasizes participation/choice /responsibility of the individual when co-creating and working towards goals

C.5.8: Facilitates discussions and meaningful collaboration between individuals and their supporters throughout the PSR process

**C.6:** Understands and implements evidence-based and evidence-informed PSR practices as essential tools for recovery

C.6.1: Demonstrates critical knowledge of key evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions\* (see index/library on website)

C.6.2: Implements interventions appropriate for the individual and their context

C.6.3: Continuously evaluates efficacy of interventions and adjust as needed

**C.7:** Continuously monitors, evaluates, and improves services

C.7.1: Understands the importance of ongoing quality improvement at both individual and system levels, and adjusts services and programming accordingly

C.7.2: Continuously reflects with the individual to collaboratively evaluate individual progress, including goal achievement, satisfaction, and safety in good ways

C.7.3: Implements high-quality study findings, fidelity scales when applicable, and evidence-based guidelines and protocols plus culturally adaptive practices to assure the implementation of evidence-based practices

C.7.4: Involves partners, including service providers, management, people with lived experience and their family members in conducting Continuous Quality Improvement initiatives

**C.8:** Effectively discharges individuals from service and connects with ongoing supports

C.8.1: Has system navigational knowledge and skills and connects and coordinates with community resources and services

C.8.2: Integrates and coordinates services with and for the individual

C.8.3: Empowers individuals to access community resources and services by providing accessible education, orientation and support

C.8.4: Conveys an understanding of the significant relationship between social inclusion and recovery

C.8.5: Assists in connecting individuals to legal and advocacy resources as required

## Domain D. Supporting Social Participation for All

### **D.1: Works with individuals to maximize engagement in work, leisure, education, and communities of choice**

- D.1.1: Assists individuals to build awareness, skills, and supports to maximize their engagement and natural supports in community life, education, and paid and unpaid work
- D.1.2: Works with individuals to identify and overcome personal and environmental barriers to community life
- D.1.3: Actively supports and encourages individuals to locate, utilize, enhance, or create opportunities in the community that reflect their personal values, interests, and aspirations and leads to self-reliance
- D.1.4: Collaborates and networks with community partners to facilitate access to goods and services within society
- D.1.5: Collaboratively identify and discuss individual's success regarding social inclusion goals

### **D.2: Supports and enables advocacy with individuals**

- D.2.1: Works with individuals to recognize their strengths, self-worth, and potential
- D.2.2: Works with individuals to overcome internalized stigma
- D.2.3: Works with individuals and their supporters to develop navigation and advocacy skills

### **D.3: Assists the community to maximize social inclusion, recovery, well-being, and equity within systems and across the social determinants of health**

- D.3.1: Understands and utilizes evidence-informed approaches to social inclusion, such as education and employment supports, social skills training, and family psycho-education
- D.3.2: Accompanies individuals to engage in social activities as requested
- D.3.3: Advocates against marginalization, ensuring equitable access to

resources and opportunities

D.3.4: Advocates and helps the individual to access culturally-relevant services and supports in the promotion of recovery

## Domain E. Facilitating Change and Providing Leadership

### **E.1: Promotes application of recovery-oriented PSR in practice**

- E.1.1: Facilitates a shared vision and engages partners in the change process to effectively apply recovery principles and competencies
- E.1.2: Engages people with lived experience in all aspects of mental health service delivery
- E.1.3: Advocates for resources, allocation of services and supports
- E.1.4: Participates in outcome evaluations and research efforts to promote wellness and inclusion of people with lived experience in all aspects of the organization
- E.1.5: Takes a leadership role or support others to promote and advance PSR and recovery values in the workplace

### **E.2: Builds effective community partnerships**

- E.2.1: Builds effective partnerships to foster meaningful collaboration with community leaders, governments, and policy makers to promote recovery-orientated communities and systems