

Hello, my name is Jennifer Sperduto, and I am a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions at Rutgers University. Welcome to this online series on Illness Management and Recovery.

Illness Management and Recovery, or IMR, is an evidence-based, structured program that helps individuals with mental health conditions set meaningful goals for themselves, acquire information and skills to develop more control over their mental health condition, and make progress towards their own personal goals. What makes the IMR program unique is its core values of building hope and optimism, emphasizing personal choice, and the comprehensive content presented in a manualized format.

The series of three modules in this course will introduce you to the basic elements and core components of the IMR program, like how to help individuals manage their mental health conditions. IMR does this by providing psychoeducation and teaching new strategies for managing symptoms, coping with stress, preventing relapse, and improving quality of life. This course will offer practical tools for engagement and meaningful goal setting, and will review the motivational, educational and cognitive behavioral strategies for clinicians to use while facilitating IMR sessions.

I'll be guiding you through this series. I've got a lot of experience working in this area. For over 25 years, I've worked in a variety of community mental health and inpatient settings. I'm very interested in helping people with mental health conditions move on from the hospital and live life in the community. I've developed curricula that focuses on improving discharge readiness and facilitates community re-integration for individuals receiving services in the state psychiatric hospital system. Currently my role is to provide technical assistance, training, and consultation to state psychiatric hospitals, specifically in the implementation of evidence-based and recovery-oriented programming. One of those programs is Illness Management and Recovery that you'll be learning about in this course.

This course has been developed as part of the Northeast and Caribbean Mental Health Technology Transfer Center, or MHTTC, housed at Rutgers School of Health Professions' Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling Professions. The MHTTC is funded by SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, to enhance the capacity of the behavioral health and other related workforces to deliver evidence-based and empirically supported practices to individuals with mental illnesses.

I really hope you enjoy this series on Illness Management and Recovery. This is a great program to help individuals with mental health conditions learn illness management skills, set their own recovery goals and improve their quality of life.