

## **Perspectives of male mental health service users on their community integration**

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**Introduction:** The re-engineering of primary mental health care in South Africa is directed towards providing a continuum of care for mental health service users in order to relieve the cost and resource burden of long-term hospitalisation. In the Western Cape province, residential-based rehabilitation programmes for men have been introduced to enhance their participation and functioning in occupations of daily life. There is little research into mental health service users' perspectives on the residential-based rehabilitation programmes influence on their community integration.

**Research question:** How does participation in a residential-based rehabilitation programme contribute to the community integration of male mental health service users?

**Objectives:** To identify what male mental health service users consider community integration to be; and to describe the key elements within the residential-based rehabilitation programme that influenced their community integration.

**Research design and methodology:** An instrumental case study was conducted with five purposively selected men with serious mental disorders. Observations, semi-structured interviews, community maps and document analysis were used to generate data. An inductive and thematic cross-case analysis was completed.

**Results:** The theme, 'It's a catch-22 situation' emerged from the data. It comprised three categories, namely: 'It's not just what you call it'; 'There's no one size for all'; and 'It's tricky choosing between places to go and things to do'.

**Conclusion:** Male mental health service users who participate in a residential-based rehabilitation programme will be better prepared for community integration if they are involved in co-constructing their recovery plan so that it is more personalised.