



Moving Toward Recovery after Discharge with OARS



MCES has found that some patients benefit from a framework to help them work towards recovery on a day-to-day basis. This led to the development of the Ongoing Achievement Recovery Schedule (OARS), a voluntary program offered by our Allied Therapy (AT) Department to guide patients in preparing a personal daily/weekly recovery schedule to follow discharge. The “A” in OARS emphasizes achievement and conveys that recovery involves work.

For several years, the OARS Program specifically targeted COD patients who were typically involuntary admissions and who were frequently readmitted the same way within 30 days because of noncompliance with discharge plans and recurrence of acute psychiatric symptoms, often triggered by substance use. OARS is now offered to all patients.

MCES’s AT staff decided the best way to deal with this was to enable patients to take the recovery support structure provided by their inpatient stay home. This is accomplished by patients completing an individualized OARS covering triggers and how to deal with them, socialization and recreational options, and how to plan spiritual and quiet times as needed.

Both in groups and individually, patients develop a personal schedule to follow at home organizing their day covering medication times, outpatient treatment times, and peer support times. Also included are family time, meals, sleep hours, work hours, childcare, shopping, and other activities. OARS reinforces social connections, minimizes downtime and keeps a recovery enhancing focus on necessary tasks and obligations.

During the inpatient phase of OARS, a critical thinking exercise is used to help patients look deeper into what helps or hinders their recovery. Patients complete a worksheet listing a set of potential risks to achieving recovery and outline how they would deal with them.

OARS graduates have fewer readmissions in general, fewer involuntary re-hospitalizations and longer intervals between readmissions, which are more often voluntary when necessary. OARS is incorporated in discharge plans. Patients are encouraged to share their OARS with outpatient providers and, in particular, with their peer specialists and recovery coaches.

For more information about OARS and MCES’s innovative Allied Therapy Program, contact Rebecca Belding, MA, CAADC, CS, Director of Allied Therapy, at 484-754-2443 or rbelding@mc.es.org.