**Title:** Capturing mental health recovery: Photo elicitation study **into service users’ experiences of a Rehabilitation and Recovery Service.**

**Authors:** Dr Penn Smith1, Professor Anna Madill2

**Author’s affiliation:**

1School of Education, Language and Psychology, York St John University, UK

2School of Psychology, University of Leeds, UK

The aim of this research was to **provide an in-depth exploration into staff and service users’ experiences of a Rehabilitation and Recovery Service for individuals with severe and enduring mental health needs.** Fifteen purposefully sampled staff and service users were recruited across the Service. Photo elicitation was used to enrich data collection through one-to-one semi-structured interviews. Interviews were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

This presentation focuses on the service user findings and considers the power of using photo elicitation with vulnerable individuals. The research highlights the importance of building functioning relationships based on trust, respect, and empowerment, as well as promoting and developing a greater awareness of individual mental health issues. Greater transparency regarding different treatment options and approaches to care was also considered key in mental health recovery.

Overall, photographs have facilitated service users to convey their lived experience in a creative format beyond words which involves both literal and metaphorical visual meanings. Service users noted feeling an increased sense of responsibility and value from being involve in the research which improved their sense of self-worth. They appreciated the opportunity to share their opinion and offer constructive feedback regarding the Service as it helped them to feel heard.

**Contact details**:

Dr Penn Smith

York St John University

YO31 7EX

**Email:** p.smith2@yorksj.ac.uk

**Tel:** 01904 876 539

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