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The Illness Management and Recovery Program: Rationale, Development, and Preliminary Findings FREE

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Abstract

The Illness Management and Recovery (IMR) program was developed based on a comprehensive review of research on teaching illness self-management strategies to clients with schizophrenia and other severe mental illnesses and “packaged” in a resource kit to facilitate dissemination. Despite growing dissemination of this program, it has not yet been empirically validated. This article describes the development and theoretical underpinnings of the IMR program and presents pilot data from the United States and Australia ($N = 24$, 88% schizophrenia or schizoaffective) on the effects of individual-based and group-based treatment over the 9-month program and over a 3-month follow-up. High satisfaction was reported by participants. Strong improvements over treatment and at follow-up were found in clients' self-reported effectiveness in coping with symptoms and clinicians' reports of global functioning and moderate improvements in knowledge about mental illness, distress related to symptoms, hope, and goal orientation. These findings support the feasibility and promise of the IMR program and point to the need for controlled research to rigorously evaluate its effects.

Keywords: [illness self-management](#), [recovery](#), [schizophrenia](#), [evidence-based practices](#), [psychosocial treatment](#), [psychiatric rehabilitation](#)

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