

Figure 5: The NIMHE Values Framework

The National Framework of Values for Mental Health

The work of the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) on values in mental health care is guided by three principles of values-based practice:

- 1) **Recognition** – NIMHE recognises the role of values alongside evidence in all areas of mental health policy and practice.
- 2) **Raising Awareness** – NIMHE is committed to raising awareness of the values involved in different contexts, the role/s they play and their impact on practice in mental health.
- 3) **Respect** – NIMHE respects diversity of values and will support ways of working with such diversity that makes the principle of service-user centrality a unifying focus for practice. This means that the values of each individual service user/client and their communities must be the starting point and key determinant for all actions by professionals.

Respect for diversity of values encompasses a number of specific policies and principles concerned with equality of citizenship. In particular, it is anti-discriminatory because discrimination in all its forms is intolerant of diversity. Thus respect for diversity of values has the consequence that it is unacceptable (and unlawful in some instances) to discriminate on grounds such as gender, sexual orientation, class, age, abilities, religion, race, culture or language.

Respect for diversity within mental health is also:

- *user-centred* – it puts respect for the values of individual users at the centre of policy and practice;
- *recovery oriented* – it recognises that building on the personal strengths and resiliencies of individual users, and on their cultural and racial characteristics, there are many diverse routes to recovery;
- *multidisciplinary* – it requires that respect be reciprocal, at a personal level (between service users, their family members, friends, communities and providers), between different provider disciplines (such as nursing, psychology, psychiatry, medicine, social work), and between different organisations (including health, social care, local authority housing, voluntary organisations, community groups, faith communities and other social support services);
- *dynamic* – it is open and responsive to change;
- *reflective* – it combines self monitoring and self management with positive self regard;
- *balanced* – it emphasises positive as well as negative values;
- *relational* – it puts positive working relationships supported by good communication skills at the heart of practice.

NIMHE will encourage educational and research initiatives aimed at developing the capabilities (the awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills) needed to deliver mental health services that will give effect to the principles of values-based practice.

www.connects.org.uk/conferences

(In: NIMHE, The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health & The NHSU, 2004)

(Department of Health. The Ten Essential Shared Capabilities: A Framework for the Whole of the Mental Health Workforce. Developed by the National Institute for Mental Health England and the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health Joint Workforce Support Unit in conjunction with NHSU. London: Department of Health; 2004. Available at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/71/70/04087170.pdf>)