



Finnish Clubhouse Coalition

Clubhouse communities and their services for people recovering from mental illness



What is a Clubhouse?

A clubhouse is a membership-based community formed by people recovering from mental illnesses and by hired staff. Clubhouses are founded on the realization that recovery from serious mental illness must involve the whole person in a vital and culturally sensitive community. A clubhouse community offers respect, hope, mutuality and unlimited opportunity to access the same worlds of friendship, housing, education and employment as the rest of society.

The daily activity of a clubhouse is organized around a structured system known as the work-ordered day. A work-ordered day gives the clubhouse members an opportunity to learn new skills, participating in building the community and developing interactive social relationships. The members and the staff participate equally in the planning, development, decision-making and realization of the clubhouse activities and programs. The community's goal is to maintain and develop the clubhouse through the sole efforts of the members and the hired staff. While the employees provide coaching, support and guidance, they do not carry out clubhouse tasks on behalf of the members. Additionally, the clubhouse members have the possibility to take part in the activities of the Finnish and the international clubhouse networks.

People who have or have had serious mental health problems are eligible to become clubhouse members. Membership of a clubhouse is voluntary, free of charge and without time limits. Absences, regardless of their duration, do not alter membership but the member can return to the clubhouse at any time. If you are interested in becoming a member and need more information, contact your local or nearest clubhouse. Contact information for Finnish clubhouses is available at www.fh-klubitalot.fi. For more information about clubhouse model and the Clubhouses abroad you can visit the website of the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD) at www.iccd.org.

Finnish Clubhouse Coalition

Finnish clubhouses have a total of 3,000 rehabilitant members. All clubhouses participate in Finnish Clubhouse Coalition, founded for supporting the activities of Finnish clubhouses. The Coalition's mission is to increase awareness of the empowering clubhouse rehabilitation model and to improve the social position of those recovering from a mental illness. To achieve this, the Coalition:

- ◆ Interacts with clubhouses operating in Finland and abroad
- ◆ Provides consulting support for quality assurance in new clubhouses
- ◆ Distributes information on clubhouse rehabilitation and its effectiveness to society's decision-makers
- ◆ Collaborates with other parties performing mental health work
- ◆ Conducts research and development pertaining to the Fountain House clubhouse model
- ◆ Works in cooperation with clubhouse networks in other countries and with the ICCD (International Center for Clubhouse Development).

For more information on the coalition's activities, visit www.fh-klubitalot.fi.

For more information on the International Center for Clubhouse Development, visit www.iccd.org



” When a person suffers from a mental breakdown, problems begin to accumulate. Unemployment, homelessness, poverty, health problems and loneliness often follow.

Next of kin feel powerless when confronting a serious illness.

In such moments, it is important that the mentally ill be treated as equal citizens – as people who are heard and whose rights are respected. Prior to our affluent age, all mental health patients and rehabilitants were dependant on random charity only, and were obliged to demonstrate their gratitude to their benefactors. Fortunately, times have changed, thanks to modern social policy!

Equality is an important principle in clubhouse communities: a person is always encountered on equal terms. This is the principle we stand for and the message we send to the people.

Päivi Lipponen

Member of Parliament, Chair of the Board of Directors of Helsinki Clubhouses registered association



Clubhouse Community Benefits

A clubhouse is a modern and humane rehabilitation option, which is economical to society. Designed to complement other mental health services, a clubhouse:

- ◆ Offers meaningful activities
- ◆ Prevents exclusion and promotes social inclusion
- ◆ Increases the number of important friendships and relationships for rehabilitants
- ◆ According to the evidence available, decreases the need for hospitalization
- ◆ Improves readiness for working life and study
- ◆ Decreases stigmatization and the perceived stigma of those recovering from mental illness
- ◆ Ensures its quality assurance by complying with international quality standards for clubhouse communities
- ◆ Has been proven efficient on an international basis, in over 30 countries.



” For me, the clubhouse meant a new start in life and rehabilitation. It offered me the possibility to test my strengths and abilities and discover new aspects of myself. Establishing relationships was important to me after many years of illness. In other aspects, too, my life had previously been somewhat meaningless and timorous. In general, the clubhouse has increased my self-esteem and confidence. I believe in myself, trusting my thoughts and feelings, and have the courage to express myself and enter new situations. Gradually, the club has shown me that I am a valuable person just as the other club members are.

Ilona, member of the Suvimäki Clubhouse, Finland

Clubhouse Community Services

A clubhouse community offers multi-faceted services in order to respond to rehabilitants' various needs.

- ◆ A work-ordered day, consisting of tasks for maintaining the community, including office work, an edition of clubhouse newsletters, kitchen and cafeteria tasks, cleaning, participating in meetings and decision-making
- ◆ Learning to have social relationships and use interactive skills as part of everyday work and activities within a community
- ◆ Peer support
- ◆ Transitional Employment program, Supported Employment and Independent Employment
- ◆ Supported Training and various education groups and courses (i.e. IT and languages)
- ◆ Case management, including the identification of entitlements and rights
- ◆ Outreach for absent members
- ◆ Housing program
- ◆ Social program
- ◆ Low-cost and healthy meals



Transitional Employment

The Transitional Employment (TE) program provides opportunities for a Clubhouse member to work on part-time job placements in business, industry and the public sector. Generally, Transitional Employment involves operational-level work which can be learned on the job. The employee concludes a fixed-term employment contract with the employer and receives a normal salary. A clubhouse employee is responsible for orientation to TE and will provide support for the rehabilitant during the employment period. If necessary, the employee will also fill in any absences. After the completion of one TE period, another clubhouse member will continue in the same job placement. Thus, more rehabilitants can have the chance to benefit from Transitional Employment.

Participating in working life is an important part of the rehabilitation process, since working contributes to self-esteem and life management. Transitional Employment helps clubhouse members gain work experience, increase their income and obtain an understanding of their working ability. It can also serve as a springboard back into working life.

Collaboration with a clubhouse provides employers with a practical opportunity to fulfill their social responsibilities. Finnish clubhouses are already collaborating with more than 40 employers, including *the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health STAKES*, *the Finnish Parliament*, *Prisma*, *UPM-Kymmene*, *Gigantti Oy*, *Kodin Ykkönen* and *Mehiläinen*.

” Transitional Employment seems to be an efficient contributor to a person’s rehabilitation. According to the respondents’ answers, it often results in improved physical and psychological fitness and higher motivation to return, in some form or another, to working life or resume studies abandoned at an early stage.

Source: *Transitional employment and its effects. Funding activities of RAY (Finland’s Slot Machine Association)*, Report 11. Saloviita & Pirttimaa, 2004.

Quality Assurance

The evaluation and development of service quality are essential concepts in clubhouse communities. Quality assurance provides the clubhouses with information on their own strengths and development needs. As a reference for the quality of clubhouse operations, we use the International Standards for clubhouse Programs approved by ICCD, the International Center for Clubhouse Development. Compliance with these standards is assessed in a certification process consisting of self-evaluation and international peer evaluation. Based on the evaluation reports, a clubhouse can be granted a quality certificate, valid for a period of either one or three years.

Systematic quality assurance guarantees a constantly high level of services. Since the clubhouses are genuinely member-driven communities, their development always begins from the members’ own starting points and needs. Quality standards ensure the presence of the key factors in rehabilitation: respect for the individual, voluntariness and resourcefulness.

International Activities

The clubhouse model was developed in the United States in 1948, on the initiative of mental health patients discharged from hospital. Today, more than 400 clubhouses exist in some 30 countries. The umbrella organization of clubhouses, the International Center for Clubhouse Development ICCD, was established in 1994, in order to coordinate the international clubhouse movement, maintain quality standards and grant quality certificates. Moreover, the ICCD also facilitates the establishment of new clubhouses and their activities.

Certain clubhouses in the world function as international training bases, where clubhouse members and staff can learn about clubhouse operation. Of a total of 11 training bases worldwide, three are located in Europe (London, Malmö and Helsinki). International activities also include clubhouse conferences: the European Clubhouse Conference is organized every other year, likewise the International Clubhouse Seminar which was held in Helsinki in 2005.

The ICCD website: www.iccd.org
Helsinki Clubhouse Training Base:
www.helsinginklubitalo.org

RAY Supports Clubhouse Communities

“ Finland has a total of 19 clubhouses for people recovering from mental illness and, of these, 18 clubhouses receive funding from Finland’s Slot Machine Association RAY. In 2007, these grants amounted to around two million euros, and additional grants from RAY directed at rehabilitative daily and working activities totaled nearly seven million euros. Clubhouse communities are therefore extremely important to RAY funded mental health work.



The core of rehabilitative clubhouse communities comprises a work-ordered day. Each clubhouse member can set their own goals for recovery within a clubhouse community, based on their own abilities, strengths and interests. Rehabilitative goals are highly individual and can relate to studies or work. Coping and being active in a community is another, equally valuable achievement. While the recovery path from mental health problems tends to be very long, returning to working life or studies may not be an option for all rehabilitants. A clubhouse may, however, become ‘exactly the right place’ for them.

For those whose recovery is well underway, clubhouses can propose a Transitional Employment program complying with international quality standards. Within the framework of the program, rehabilitants can participate in working life as competent citizens: with a real job and receiving a real salary. Transitional Employment has particular societal importance in improving the position of persons recovering from mental illness and in shaping generally prevailing attitudes, which RAY helps emphasize through its funding.

Sinikka Mönkäre

Managing Director, Finland’s Slot Machine Association RAY

“ It enables me to keep my spirits up and participate in meaningful activities according to my resources. This is a better way to control depression than staying at home alone. Social relationships are important; it is not good for people to be alone. Everybody should come along, it is no use staying home by yourself.

*Anna Helena Posluszny,
member of Lahti Clubhouse, Finland*

Clubhouse Dream

Persons recovering from mental illness can fulfill themselves according to their own abilities and be appreciated as co-workers, neighbors and friends



www.fh-klubitalot.fi

www.iccd.org