

# The Client Experience of Psychiatric Medication: A Qualitative Study

**Purpose:** To examine perceptions of psychiatric medication among clients formerly diagnosed as severely mentally ill who have experienced functional recovery.

**Data:** Transcripts from 16 in-depth interviews resulting from a sequential explanatory mixed methods design. Subjects were first administered quantitative screening measures and interviewed if they met eligibility criteria.

**Analysis:** Qualitative coding was performed using NVivo9 data analysis software. To manage research reactivity and bias, an audit trail was maintained and member checking was performed with participants prior to data analysis.

## **Findings:**

- Medication was the primary (and often only) intervention initially offered, even when psychosocial services were available.
- Participants had concerns about informed consent and adverse effects, and many felt that their prescriber did not adequately address these issues within the prescribing process.
- Effective prescribing was associated with good clinical engagement on the part of prescribers.
- Opportunities for improving practice through mezzo-level administrative measures and use of technology (i.e., the Rxisk.org assessment instrument) were evident. Effective clinical engagement could ostensibly be increased through the use technology-based interventions such as Rxisk.org, and further research to examine this issue is presently being pursued.