



Dimensions of Wellness to Support Recovery of Postpartum Opioid Use Disorder

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Figure 1. SAMHSA's Dimensions of Wellness

Introduction

- Women with opioid use disorder (OUD) are at increased risk for relapse in the postpartum period.¹
- Objective: to develop nonpharmacological interventions in adjunct to medication assisted therapy.
- Grounded in a social determinants model, our guiding framework for this research is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) dimensions of wellness (**Figure 1**).²

Methods

- We conducted four focus groups with a variety of professionals (n=11), including service providers, at the November 2020 meeting of the Polysubstance Abuse in Pregnancy and Newborn Task Force for Southern Arizona.
- Participants prioritized their top 3 of SAMHSA's 8 dimensions of wellness for addressing adherence to MAT and improving the lives of postpartum women with OUD
- Four facilitators conducted the focus groups and three independent coders performed data analysis.

Emotional

- **Enhancing coping**
- "...Without dealing with the emotional aspect for these families, they can't successfully achieve anything in the other categories...if [about moms with opioid use disorder], their emotional resiliency and ability to overcome stressors is paramount to remaining in recovery."
- **Fostering Healthy Relationships**
- "I think women need strong bonds and connections with people..."
- "...the biggest thing is domestic violence and staying in relationships that are unhealthy"

Social

- **Building Social Support**
- "... [Moms with OUD need] connection and belonging and a well-developed support system. Because I think that's... necessary to maintain and to continue [in recovery]."
- **Addressing loss of Connections**
- "...social belonging and connectedness is a critical need...when people have gone through substance use issues, any kind of issues, they usually lose a lot of that connection and social support....and it's just essential to survival."

Physical

- **Prioritize Mom's Physical Health**
- "particularly new moms they don't take care of themselves. They often just take care of the baby, bring the baby for all their well visits..."

Financial

- **Enhance Financial Stability**
- "The financial component...cuts through all aspects of life, as far as the need for folks being able to get assistance or ...just the day-to-day pressures"

Figure 2. Focus Group's Top Four Dimensions and Emergent Themes

Results

- Across all focus groups, the top-ranked category was emotional, followed by social; physical and financial were tied for third.
- Primary themes and subthemes that emerged during discussion are shown in **Figure 2**.
- Participants noted the interconnectedness of how the domains overlap and affect women with OUD (**Figure 3**).

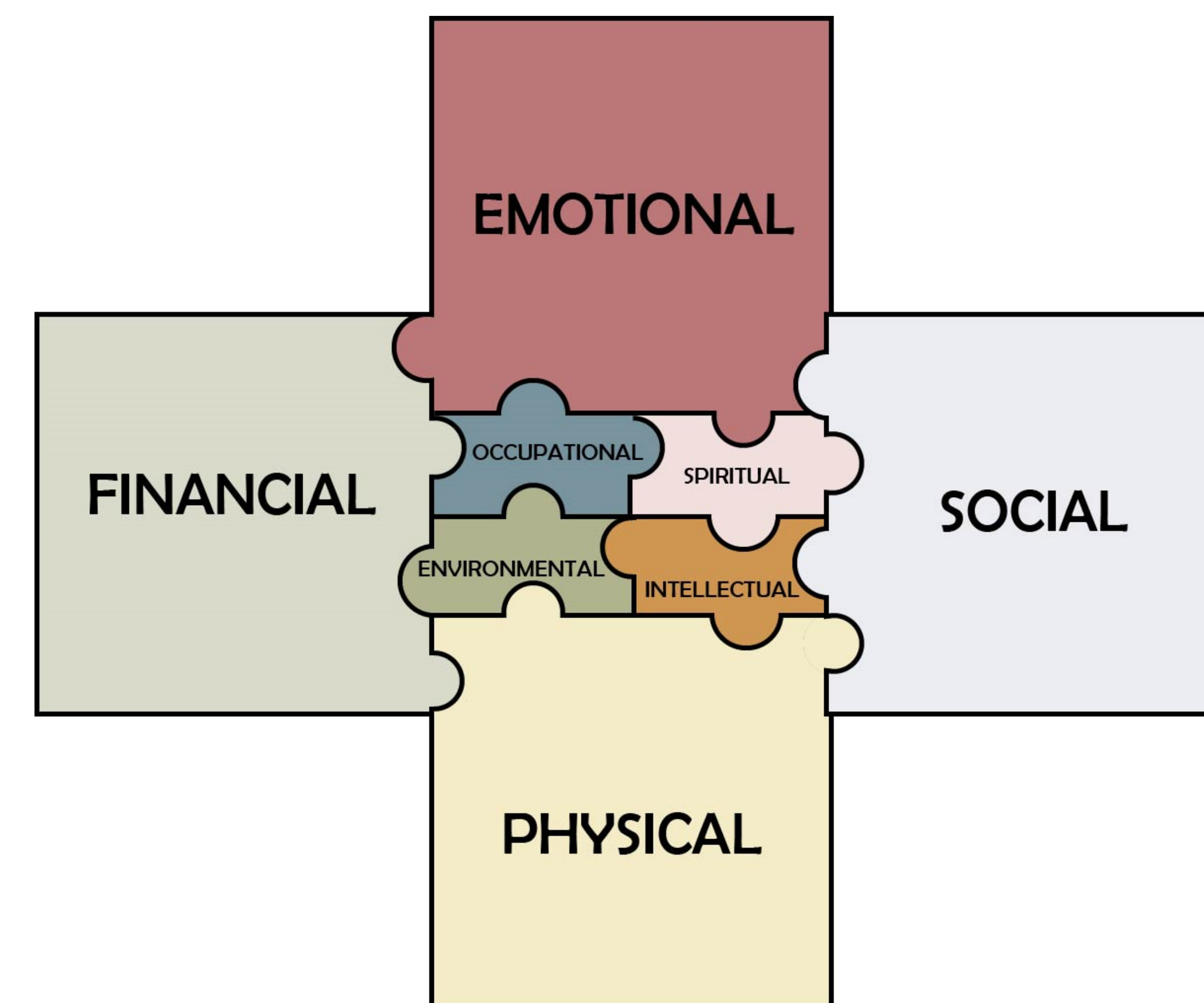


Figure 3: Interconnectedness of domains

Discussion

- Understanding the top SAMSHA dimensions gives insight into the service gaps, facilitators, and barriers to recovery that postpartum women with OUD in Southern Arizona face.
- Based on our results, some of the recommendations from our participants suggest: helping women cope with stressful life events; establishing strong supportive relationships and social connections; prioritizing mom's physical health; and addressing financial challenges.
- Our team's qualitative research is exploring the barriers and facilitators to recovery for postpartum women with OUD, in a pursuit to develop interventions to address unmet needs.
- Additional research is needed to expand generalizability of these results beyond Southern Arizona.

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References

1. Wilder, C., Lewis, D., & Winhusen, T. (2015). Medication assisted treatment discontinuation in pregnant and postpartum women with opioid use disorder. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 149, 225–231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2015.02.012>
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2016). *Creating a healthier life: A step-by-step guide to wellness*. 22. <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma16-4958.pdf>