Welcome

Together newsletter is part of a range of support resources being developed by the Mental Health Partnership, to advance mental health improvement across Greater Glasgow and Clyde. This will build on the impetus provided nationally by the publication of Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland (due out 7th May, 2009).

Aimed at our many partners in statutory, voluntary and community sectors who are engaged in this important work, Together will help share good practice, bring you news of local and national developments and provide information on learning and research opportunities.

As you can see, we have had great response to our inaugural edition, and are greatly encouraged by the response from contributors and readers alike in this second edition. Again, we look forward to receiving your reactions and contributions to this and future issues.

Trevor Lakey, Health Improvement and Inequalities Manager, Mental Health Partnership trevor.lakey@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Mental Health First Aid is back!

NHS Health Scotland has recently launched a revised version of Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid Course. The acclaimed training course gives participants skills to help those experiencing mental health difficulties.

New and improved aspects of the course include:
- A fresh new look and accessible language
- New and updated statistics and national policy context
- Alignment with the key suicide prevention messages of Choose Life
- A full, ongoing, Equality and Diversity impact assessment
- Alignment with national alcohol brief interventions key messages.

Instructors have been delivering the revised course across Scotland from April 2009, and details of dates, times and venues can be found on the brand new SMHFA website www.smhfa.com

With mental health problems affecting 1 in 4 people in Scotland at some point in their lives, most of us will know someone who needs help.

During the 12-hour course, participants will:
- Gain an understanding of mental health problems including: depression, anxiety, panic attacks, psychosis, self harm and suicide.
- Learn how to recognise if someone is experiencing a mental health problem.
- Learn skills to help a person developing a difficulty with their mental health.
- Be able to support people to access appropriate help, including both professional support and evidence-based self help strategies.
- Explore the relationship between mental health and alcohol and drugs and other health-related behaviours and lifestyle choices.

“This course can and does save lives. Participants have said they gained confidence in being able to recognise when someone is experiencing a mental health problem and then offering them appropriate help. The improvements we have made should increase the reach of the course and make it even more effective.”

Kirsty Robertson, Learning and Development Officer at Health Scotland
Research & Evaluation

The Research and Evaluation (R&E) team (also referred to as Knowledge Management) is based within the Public Health Resource Unit at Dalian House. The team is tasked with building capacity for research and evaluation within the public health workforce providing the following services:

- Research /evaluation guidelines online (under development)
- Support in designing research/evaluation work (e.g. reviewing questionnaires; planning databases; advising re ethics/research governance etc)
- Support in commissioning research/evaluation (e.g. contributing to writing of brief; attending selection panels; acting as liaison with research company; proof-reading/critically appraising reports; etc)
- Support in dissemination of research/evaluation findings
- Attendance at steering/project group meetings as active member
- Management of databases
- Analysis of research/data
- Delivering training in research/evaluation techniques
- Support in implementing research/evaluation tasks (e.g. interviews/focus groups; reviewing qualitative data; etc)
- Reviewing evidence/literature

Whilst the R&E team can offer these services, we are a small team and the support available is dependent on capacity.

The Public Health Resource Unit (PHRU) has recently drafted a document outlining the wider support available to networks.

Inequalities Sensitive Practice Initiative (ISPI)

ISPI was managed within the Corporate Inequalities Team of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and funded by the Scottish Government as part of their Multiple and Complex Needs (MCN) programme launched in 2006.

Its aim was to find out what would help NHSGG & C and its partners improve the effectiveness and efficiency of front line services in reducing health inequalities and to determine what type of planning and policy arrangements were required to sustain service improvements.

Primary Care Mental Health was one of 4 practice settings in which ISPI focused on in relation to gender and poverty. The initiative worked closely with practitioners who demonstrated a real willingness to learn more about inequalities and sensitive practice.

The Mental Health Partnership is considering funding a resource that will allow the momentum of ISPI to continue. Watch this space!

The initiative is now complete. Key learning is available in report form as well as a number of potential tools for workforce and organisational development, including a DVD which demonstrates routine sensitive enquiry scenarios.

Information and access to ISPI materials can be obtained by visiting the Equalities in Health website at: www.equality.scot.nhs.uk

A Summary Document has been produced outlining the key mental health findings from the Glasgow City schools survey.

You can contact the team at: contactresearch@ggc.scot.nhs.uk
www.phru.net/rande/default.aspx
Applying the Kipling factor to the Special Interest Group

'I Keep Six Honest Serving Men They Taught Me All I Knew Their Names What And Why And When And How And Where And Who'

From the Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling 1902 (The Elephant Boy)

At the inaugural meeting of the GG& C Mental Health Improvement Network, Jan Graham (Health Improvement Lead, Inverclyde CHP) outlined the role of the national mental health improvement Special Interest Group (SIG). She emphasised a clear link between the network and the SIG and expressed her hopes that firm links would be maintained. Jan gave a brief breakdown on the SIG using the '6 Honest serving men' as follows;

What is the Special Interest Group and its remit?
The Special interest group for mental health and wellbeing was set up to provide specialist information on mental health improvement and wellbeing to the (former) national health promotion managers group.

Why is it needed?
The field of mental health improvement is a growing but complex one and often gets confused with mental illness and mental health problems. The coordination of evidence, policy development and practice is therefore necessary to ensure that population based mental health improvement gets the clarity and emphasis it requires.

When does it meet?
There are four meetings of the special interest group a year lasting for approximately 3-4 hours

Where does it meet?
Meetings are generally in Glasgow and Edinburgh but often include a northern venue too. Conferencing facilities are available to assist inclusion.

How does it communicate with others?
Each health board is entitled to send one representative to the SIG to represent its interests. These representatives are expected to commit to regular attendance, be prepared to facilitate/participate in short-life working groups and potentially represent the SIG on other national groups, cascade information to board areas via local networks (such as the GG&CHB mental health improvement network), provide quarterly written updates, provide feedback from conferences, contribute to consultations, provide advice and support to peers and circulate new areas of work.

Who coordinates and who contributes?
Health Scotland support and coordinate the group and members chair the group in turn. Health Scotland also ensures that national information is circulated and document outcomes from SIG meetings ensuring the link with health improvement managers is maintained.

Jan went on to inform the network that while she was the current representative the future rep should come from the network.

For further information about NHS GG&C’s links to this group, please contact Greg Usrey, Health Improvement Lead (Mental Health)
Greg.Usrey@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Mental health indicators for Scotland

NHS Health Scotland previously established a national set of adult mental health indicators for Scotland and has now analysed the available data for these. This first systematic assessment of the mental health (mental health problems and mental wellbeing) and associated contextual factors of the adult population of Scotland was published on 27th February 2009. This report ‘Scotland’s Mental Health and its Context: Adults 2009’ and a briefing paper, covering the key points from the report, are available on the ScotPHO and NHS Health Scotland websites.

The associated data file can also be accessed from the ScotPHO website. Hard copies of the briefing paper are available on request.

Questions about the mental health indicators data report should be directed to martin.taulbut@health.scot.nhs.uk Tel. 0141 354 2946.

A 3-year programme of work to establish children and young people’s mental health indicators for Scotland is now underway. Outputs will be placed on the NHS Health Scotland website.
Branching Out

Branching Out is an innovative service development offering conservation and greenspace on referral for people experiencing mental health problems in the Greater Glasgow area.

A wide range of partners have come together to drive this development including Forestry Commission Scotland, NHS GG&C, Glasgow & Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership, Glasgow Centre for Population Health and Glasgow City Council.

This free service offers a 12-week programme of activities including physical activity, relaxation, environmental art, bushcraft skills and conservation all delivered within the natural environment. A wide variety of services have been accessing Branching Out so far from including inpatient forensic services and recreational therapy services to mental health resource centres and mental health employment services.

During the initial 12 months a full evaluation was carried out to investigate the impact that the service had on those who were referred. The initial literature review that formed part of this has already been published in the Journal of Public Mental Health, Vol 7, no 3, p23-35. The full evaluation report will be available in the next couple of months along with an executive summary.

The main findings of the evaluation include:

• Low attrition rates (70% of people completing the 12 weeks).
• Significant increase in physical activity levels.
• Self reported improvements in confidence and self esteem.
• Strong trends towards improvement in health and wellbeing measures for high severity groups.

For more information about Branching Out please contact Kirsty Cathrine on 01698 368 557 or email kirsty.cathrine@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

New Lifestyle resource for NHS Staff

As part of Health At Work’s ongoing aims to improve employee health and wellbeing by increasing health improvement knowledge and practice in workplaces, the team have launched an online ‘lifestyle check’ tool www.checkmylifestyle.com can assist those employed specifically within the Greater Glasgow & Clyde area to make informed decisions on lifestyle factors that could potentially have negative health consequences.

The site was launched in March 2009 and can allow users to monitor and evaluate their own behaviour in relation to the specific health topics of mental health, physical activity, healthy eating, smoking and alcohol. By answering questions on each of these areas users can gain access to up to date information and support to help them to discover new ways to improve their health and wellbeing.

For further information on this innovation, please contact Graeme Stevenson at Health at Work, 0141 314 0024 or email Graeme.Stevenson@ggc.scot.nhs.uk
Rediscover the lighter side of life - Just for a laugh!

Universal Comedy is a charity and social enterprise based in Glasgow and working across Glasgow, the West of Scotland, Edinburgh and beyond. Founded in 2004 by people with ill health, their core work is in improving the outlook, confidence and aspirations of people deemed ‘hard to reach, hard to help’ within health, social care and employability organisations.

Delivering comedy workshops and longer, developmental training courses for people with, or recovering from ill health, employability problems and mild to moderate mental health issues, typically depression and anxiety, their ‘social comedy prescription’ uses comedy as a tool to enhance the personal development skills, social cohesion, improving psychology and outlook and thereby improving health and well being.

The workshops and courses also encourage creativity and resourcefulness, enhance employment prospects and encourage new ideas to come from people in the community to improve future employment prospects and opportunities.

Professional comedy tutors work closely with participants to engage, motivate and move people on via the ‘universal medium’ of comedy and participants often produce showcase events at the end of a course. However, the work doesn’t end when the workshops finish. They have media partnerships and forums for participants to attend events and publish their work, ensuring they always have a network of friendship and support.

They also work with staff and organisations, delivering comedy workshops to improve team bonding, motivation, presentation skills, and dealing with conflict and stress in the workplace and have excellent experience in providing comedy for any organisational event – this can include themed sketches, routines and interactive pieces for launches, conferences, seminars, road shows and open days.

And the punch-line? Well, any support you provide to Universal Comedy be it through contracts, partnerships, one off workshops or events, ensures that they help more people on their waiting list for a Universal Comedy ‘clinic’ appointment – providing innovative comedy with genuine, positive outcomes that help people rediscover the lighter side of life.

To check in to a comedy clinic please call on 0141 564 1200 or visit www.universalcomedy.co.uk

‘see me’ Photo Competition 2009 - hosts required!

‘see me’ is currently recruiting hosts for the 2009 Photo Competition. Feedback from the 2008 competition has been very positive, and this year, we would like to get more of you on board! We are looking for a spread of organisations throughout Scotland to host a local competition, with the winners going through to the national final, hosted by the ‘see me’ website.

Let us know now if you would like to become a host as we are aiming for a launch date towards the end of May.

Please contact Fiona.Tannock@seemescotland.org

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

www.crusescotland.org.uk

There is a new Cruse Scotland client number!

0845 600 2227
(an answer machine operates at some times)

The first step for anyone looking for support with the pain of bereavement can phone the new Cruse Scotland national number

Cruse Scotland only takes self referrals.
Breathing Space 
Telephone advice line

The Scottish Government recently commissioned an omnibus survey to help gauge awareness and understanding of the Breathing Space service. One thousand and forty adults (aged 16 or over) were interviewed during October 2008. The Survey Results were then published on 1st February 2009:

Breathing Space Telephone Advice Line: Omnibus Survey Evaluation of Public Awareness

See links below:
Report
Research Findings

Breathing Space is operationally managed by NHS 24 and delivered from NHS 24 contact centres in Clydebank and South Queensferry.

See the link below to find out more about this unique service!

www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

Work Positive!

A stress management support pilot has started in the East of Glasgow and is being run by Positive Mental Attitudes, an NHS Mental Health Improvement project as well as Healthy Working Lives and Greater Easterhouse Regeneration Agency.

The aim of this pilot is to provide support for employers to go through the Stress Risk Assessment process. Employers have a legal duty to assess the risks to health, safety and welfare of employees. By tackling stress in the workplaces you can increase staff performance, productivity, attendance levels and staff retention.

This pilot is using a networking approach encouraging workplaces to support each other through the process.

These workplaces are receiving support to work through the Work Positive stress risk assessment process. For more information on Work Positive contact your local Healthy Working Lives team. www.healthscotland.org.uk/workpositive

Thank you

We hope that you have enjoyed this second edition Together newsletter.

Instead of just reading about the work and accomplishments of others why not highlight your own local achievements? We are especially keen to receive reports of good service user involvement, engagement and development, so if there is something in this field that you would like to have included in our Summer 2009 edition, please call me!

Developing the newsletter depends on us receiving your feedback. Your news, views and events are important to networking and informing others, and to informing future developments of the network and the newsletter so please send any and all information to us here at the Together News Team.

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