

What's new in Mental Health Matters



Newcastle STEP merges with Oasis Café

Newcastle STEP, Mental Health Matters' employment service, has merged with the Oasis Café, which provides work placements and training for people with mental health needs, to become one project.

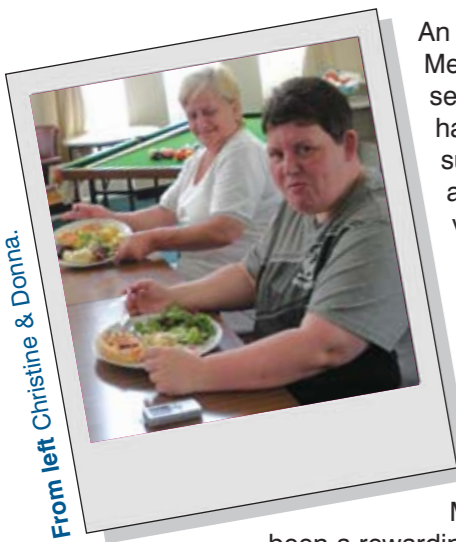
The merger, which has been approved by Newcastle City Council, will give Mental Health Matters (MHM) greater flexibility in budgetary control, cover for absences and increased support for our client group. It will also help us improve clients' success in gaining jobs and qualifications.

The project will be run jointly by a Catering Supervisor and an Employment Coach, who will work together to develop and improve the service we provide to our clients in the Newcastle area.

Newcastle Employment Plus, MHM's new project dealing with people who have low to medium mental health needs and which is based at Newcastle STEP, will continue to work alongside the newly merged STEP/Oasis project. Both services will help us provide a comprehensive employment service to all our clients across Newcastle.

For more information, please contact Service Manager Colin Branthwaite on 0191 226 6803 or 07738 642 613 or email cbranthwaite@mentalhealthmatters.co.uk

Allotment boosts healthy living and eating



From left Christine & Donna.

An allotment set up by Mental Health Matters service users and staff has proved a huge success, producing a wide variety of vegetables in its first 18 months.

Funded by £5,000 from the Community Chest, the allotment on Bankfields Road in Eston,

Middlesbrough has

been a rewarding experience for service users who understand the importance of healthy living and eating.

To date, the allotment has produced tomatoes, courgettes, carrots, beetroot, sprouts, green beans, red and green peppers, and potatoes. And those involved are busy getting the soil ready for the next planting.

"Service users feel a great sense of ownership of the allotment and find the whole experience very rewarding. They have made a wide variety of soups, light lunches and snacks from the produce they have grown, to be served at the drop-in sessions at Jubilee Hall on Bankfields Road in Eston."

Diane Carter, Service Manager, MHM

Mental Health Matters is one of the UK's most innovative organisations working with people with mental health needs. With our dedicated and experienced staff, we work with partner organisations to deliver a comprehensive range of services centred on individual service user's needs.

Mental Health Matters' ultimate aim is to strengthen the voice, rights and independence of service users, and their carers, family and friends.

Everybody's Mental Health Matters

Spring/Summer 2010



Pathways to well-being

In this issue:

- New developments in person-centred assessment
- European mental health research project
- Signpost Kent update
- A great new children's book

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New opportunities

Kathy Roberts Director Strategic Development



Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2010 edition of the Mental Health Matters Newsletter. Each year brings new opportunities and challenges for everyone, and this is certainly the case for Mental Health Matters.

This newsletter focuses on strategic development and partnership working, which we believe are key to delivering person-centred mental health services. Mental Health Matters has recently published a Service Design and Delivery Strategy that reaffirms the values and principles upon which our services have been built. It states that:

“Improving mental health is essential to a person’s well-being. Our fundamental aim is to support and encourage individuals to take control

of their lives by maximising their personal autonomy, individual potential and self-determination.”

Mental Health Matters will continue to champion, design and deliver a self-determined approach, with the aim of enabling everyone using our services to achieve their individual potential. We believe flexibility must be at the core of all our services to ensure we are responsive to the changing needs of the diverse range of people who access them.

In this issue, you will find out how we are working with partners to develop care pathways for people placed out of their area (page 6) as well as the latest progress on our Signpost Kent project, providing support for people to manage their own mental health needs (page 3, opposite).

We also reveal some of the findings from our research with European partners into mental health issues, policies and services across Europe (pages 4-5). And you can read the stories of service users Sophie and Tracey who, thanks to Mental Health Matters’ services, have gained independence and are moving on with their lives (page 7).

Kathy Roberts, Director Strategic Development

Signpost Kent

For many people with mental health needs, support is often focused around managing symptoms and the provision of traditional mental health services.

However, the Signpost Kent project, jointly managed by Mental Health Matters (MHM), along with mcch and Carr-Gomm, provides people with personalised and self-directed support. This enables them to manage their mental health, make choices about what’s right for them and achieve improved mental well-being.

Jo Woollett, project director, MHM, explains: “People tell us they want to make their own decisions and plan what they want to do with their life. With Signpost, people can explore what they feel is important, look at what’s available within their community and plan things so they can live their life the way they wish.”

Signpost Kent has launched a new online resource that provides information and tools to help people take control of their mental health.

The site, www.signpostuk.org, offers

- tips on how to maintain and improve mental well-being

- information on mental health issues and what can help
- details of how the mental health system works and the range of support services available
- stories of recovery, free access to recovery support
- help with issues relating to mental health and the workplace.

Alternatively, people can call Mental Health Matters Kent and Medway’s free helpline on 0800 107 0160 for advice and support. This service is available from 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday and 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.

During 2010, more people with mental health needs will be offered information about their personal budget and get the opportunity to receive direct payments. In Kent and Medway, Signpost Kent is working with people with mental health needs, local authorities and providers to ensure quality brokerage is available. Brokers will be asked to sign up to a code of good practice and quality standards, and they will be supported, trained and guided in their role. People will be able to use a ‘Signpost broker’ knowing they will get a quality service.

For further information, please contact Jo at signpostkent@mcch.co.uk

Ashleigh Ewing – a tribute

In 2006, Ashleigh Ewing, a support worker employed by Mental Health Matters, was killed by a service user during the course of her work. Ashleigh was a very popular colleague within her close-knit team and words can’t express the sorrow we all continue to feel over the tragic event that took her life.

Following Ashleigh’s death, MHM launched an extensive internal inquiry where we identified and immediately addressed procedural and practice failings. These are subject to stringent and on going monitoring.

In February this year, MHM was prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. After careful consideration and on the advice of our legal advisers, MHM pleaded guilty to the charge in that it failed to carry out a formal risk assessment prior to the attack on Ashleigh.

At the hearing, the judge said that one of the important features of the case was that the prosecution did not state that Ashleigh’s death should or could have been foreseen by MHM nor did he suggest a direct link.

During the hearing and in a statement issued after the hearing, on behalf of MHM, I offered our heartfelt sympathy to Ashleigh’s family and apologised unreservedly for the failing that we admitted.

It is important that the voluntary and statutory sectors learn from this tragic event. MHM will be working with the HSE and key statutory and non-statutory bodies to produce and review existing protocols, and guidance for the health and care sector.

Ian Grant
Chief Executive
Mental Health Matters

Our commitments

We will:

- maintain a focus on personal well-being and an awareness of how all aspects of daily living interlink
- design case management processes to support individuals by focusing on their strengths in the area of aspirations, competence and confidence
- enable people to remain within their own communities by designing individual packages of support including: access to home treatment, early intervention crisis resolution and long term rehabilitation

- design and deliver psychosocial models including community-focused access to psychological therapies
- support people to find meaningful occupation that realises their individual potential including training and employment opportunities
- work with partners across sectors to achieve the best possible outcomes.





Mental Health Matters (MHM) has recently undertaken research, along with our European partners, into environmental factors impacting mental health across 23 European regions.

A questionnaire designed by MHM was sent to key stakeholders, including policy makers and service deliverers, across the regions. The questionnaire covered 31 structural indicators of environmental factors impacting mental health (see opposite page).

The research found that there are key differences between post-Communist countries and richer, more economically developed countries, with less rich countries being less able to develop comprehensive mental health promotions.

The lack of a coherent strategy for implementing mental health promotion, or for gathering data to increase understanding of mental health issues, across many regions was also identified. This accounted for the low number of responses to some questions. Analysis of the data that was submitted showed marked differences in the quality and quantity of information.

“The research identified a number of issues, but primarily that there is a need for greater pan-European coordination on mental health and policies,” said Kathy Roberts, Director Strategic Development.

As a result, the European partners have developed a toolkit to improve the coordination of policies, statistics and intelligence across Europe. The toolkit includes a revised questionnaire and guidance from MHM. It will support European stakeholders to:

- promote awareness of mental health issues to governments and regions
- improve public education and awareness about mental health risk and protection factors, and mental well-being
- achieve greater co-ordination of policies and statistics between regions
- monitor the development in mental health promotion activities within the region
- support greater co-ordination of health and well-being policies, and measurement and monitoring of key statistics between the regions.

Structural indicators of environmental factors impacting mental health

The 31 indicators can be grouped into the following eight core themes:

1. **The context of mental health practice**
The national mental health service framework and social care infrastructure.
2. **Pre-school experiences and family support/childcare**
Access to support during pregnancy, programmes promoting positive parent-baby interaction, access to pre-school facilities and services, and the availability of pro-social networks that promote social behaviours in children.
3. **Promotion of mental health through schools and education**
Curriculum-based activities to promote positive mental health, and activities to promote mentally healthy school cultures.
4. **Employment and workplace mental health**
Flexible working practices and mentally healthy working environments.
5. **Social capital and mentally healthy communities**
Positive networking and social inclusion.
6. **Physical environment**
The promotion of safety and security, access to public amenities and housing conditions.
7. **Leisure activities**
The population's involvement in physical and cultural activities.
8. **Mental health and older adults**
Levels of participation in various activities and services for people in later life.

Person-centred assessment care pathways for out-of-area patients

An independent, person-centred care pathways assessment process has been developed for individuals who have been placed away from the area they originally lived in, or would choose to live in.

The move is a positive step forward for MHM and the people we support because it is a person-centred, self-determined approach, which fits with the future direction of mental well-being services.

Annie Whelan, Care Pathway Development Manager, Mental Health Providers Forum, explains: "It acknowledges the service user as a human being with individual needs not merely a patient with a collection of diagnostic labels and perceived problems. And by involving the individual in the assessment process, the assessment will be about them as well as for them."

A training programme for staff has also been developed and was accredited by the Royal Society of Public Health in January 2010. MHM was the first third sector organisation to undertake the training, which covers:

- working towards a balance between need and risk
- what a person needs to feel safe
- to what extent this can be achieved while ensuring collective safety
- what care providers need to do to facilitate the process.

MHM and the Mental Health Provider Forum have worked together to deliver this training to a number of statutory partners in Coventry. Subsequently, MHM has also been involved in developing an integrated assessment tool which is currently being piloted in Coventry.

MHM, Experts by Experience, and the Mental Health Providers Forum have worked together to develop this in Derby. This should create greater equality across the sectors and across any future services.

How we have helped...

Mental Health Matters helps thousands of people each year to manage their mental health needs, increase their confidence and live more independently. Below are just two examples of people we have helped.

Sophie's story

Sophie was diagnosed as having bipolar affective disorder. During a prolonged episode, she was made redundant from her paid job at a local college and lost her voluntary role in a volunteer bureau. It was then that she was referred to Mental Health Matters' Employment Service in Bristol.

When Sophie first came to the service, she found it difficult to think about moving forwards. However, with help from Mental Health Matters, she set the goal of becoming an advice or support worker.

We quickly found Sophie a volunteer placement at a local advice centre, where she currently volunteers two days a week, supporting the debt team. And she has undergone specialist training to help clients with utilities' debts. She has also taken part in a befriending scheme.

Since working with Mental Health Matters, Sophie's confidence has grown immeasurably and she now feels much more positive about going back to paid work.

A Boy That Lost His Smile

Written by Abby Holder at the MHM BME (black and minority ethnic) Community Development Well-being Service in Durham and Darlington.

'A Boy That Lost His Smile' is an illustrated story book that has been developed, with the support of professionals from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, for children of all cultures aged between four and eight.

The book is designed to raise awareness of how to maintain good mental health, and to teach children about early signs of mental health problems and the importance of talking therapy.



Through an easy-to-read story book format, children are introduced to coping strategies and self-help methods.

The book also highlights the importance of early intervention as well as addressing the connection between the body and mind in relation to mental health, so that children are able to make the association.

It is based around the concept of a 'smile', a universal sign of happiness and well-being that children from all cultures can potentially understand. The boy in the story, Bo Li, loses his smile on the day of the school football match as he becomes increasingly unhappy. He looks to people around him for help, and finds ways to get his smile back and keep it forever, discovering along the way the importance of talking to maintaining a healthy body and mind.



Tracey's story

Tracey was referred to Mental Health Matters' supported housing service with a long history of anti-social behaviour, self harm and alcohol dependency. She presented our service with a number of challenges over a sustained period of time. However, through our person-centred support, her situation began to steadily improve.

As a result of her efforts and the relationships she has forged with both Mental Health Matters support workers and partner agencies, she no longer self harms and has not been dependent on alcohol for more than a year. She is now working in an elderly care home on a voluntary placement as she feels she

needs to give something back to the community. The feedback from this placement has been very positive and Tracey is well liked by everyone she has had contact with.

Tracey aims to take the experience and confidence she has gained from this placement, and apply this to her search for paid work in the near future. She is also ready to move on from our services and is looking forward to her independence.