



“let us share our
voices of experience
in mental health”

VOX

NEWSLETTER

SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER: SC040646 COMPANY NUMBER: 361753

Voices Of eXperience



VOX News

New Additions to the VOX Family

We are all delighted and proud that in the early hours of January 4th 2011, our Development Coordinator Wendy McAuslan had twins, a little boy and a little girl, who are both doing very well. Congratulations Wendy and Tom.

New Year Honours List

VOX are extremely proud that one of our members, James McKillop, has been awarded an M.B.E. in the New Year Honours list. James McKillop, former chairperson of the SDWG (The Scottish Dementia Working Group) and founding member of the group, has been



awarded an MBE for his tireless service in campaigning to improve the rights of people with dementia and raising awareness of the illness. The SDWG is an independent

group run by people with dementia and funded by Comic Relief and Alzheimer Scotland. Membership is open to people with dementia. The purpose of the group is to campaign to improve services for people with dementia and to improve attitudes towards people with dementia.



in this issue...

- A SYSTEM WITH TEETH ALRIGHT BUT NO SENSE • OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED
- DIVERSITY UPDATE • SNIPPETS OF WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN VOX
- NEW GUIDANCE TO MOVE TOWARDS BEING SMOKE FREE IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS

VOX Board of Directors

The following Office Bearer appointments have been made:

Dougie Pickering
Secretary

Gordon Johnston
Treasurer

Our grateful thanks and best wishes go to Shaun McNeil, founder member and ex Secretary of VOX who has gone off to pastures new half way across the world in New Zealand; we wish Shaun and his wife Shona every success in their new venture.



Please send us your poems, stories, creative writing on any topic related to mental health that you wish to discuss.

Please send it to VOX C/O Mental Health Foundation, Merchants House, 30 George Square, Glasgow, G2 1EG or e-mail jstee@mhf.org.uk. Remember to mark clearly if you wish to remain anonymous.

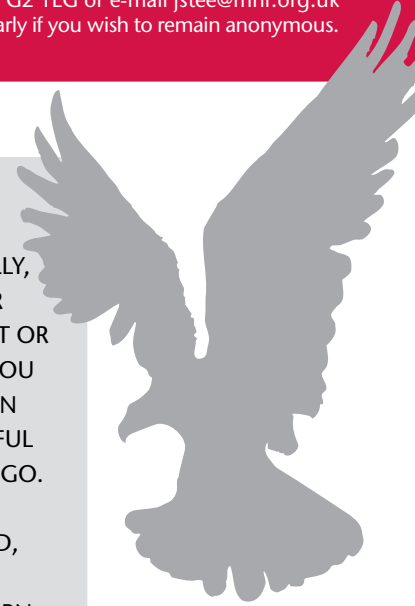
A TRILOGY of verses from and by Tony;

WE ARE ALL CONNECTED YOU AND I BOTH EMOTIONALLY, MENTALLY, PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND PHYSICALLY. NEVER FEEL ALONE, I AM HERE FOR YOU, ANYTHING YOU WANT OR NEED I WILL PROVIDE. WHEN YOU TALK I WILL LISTEN. YOU ARE SAFE, YOU ARE SECURE, EVERYTHING UNDER HEAVEN AND EARTH IS WELL. YOU ARE WELL, YOU ARE A BEAUTIFUL ANGEL WHO GIVES JOY AND HAPPINESS WHEREVER YOU GO.

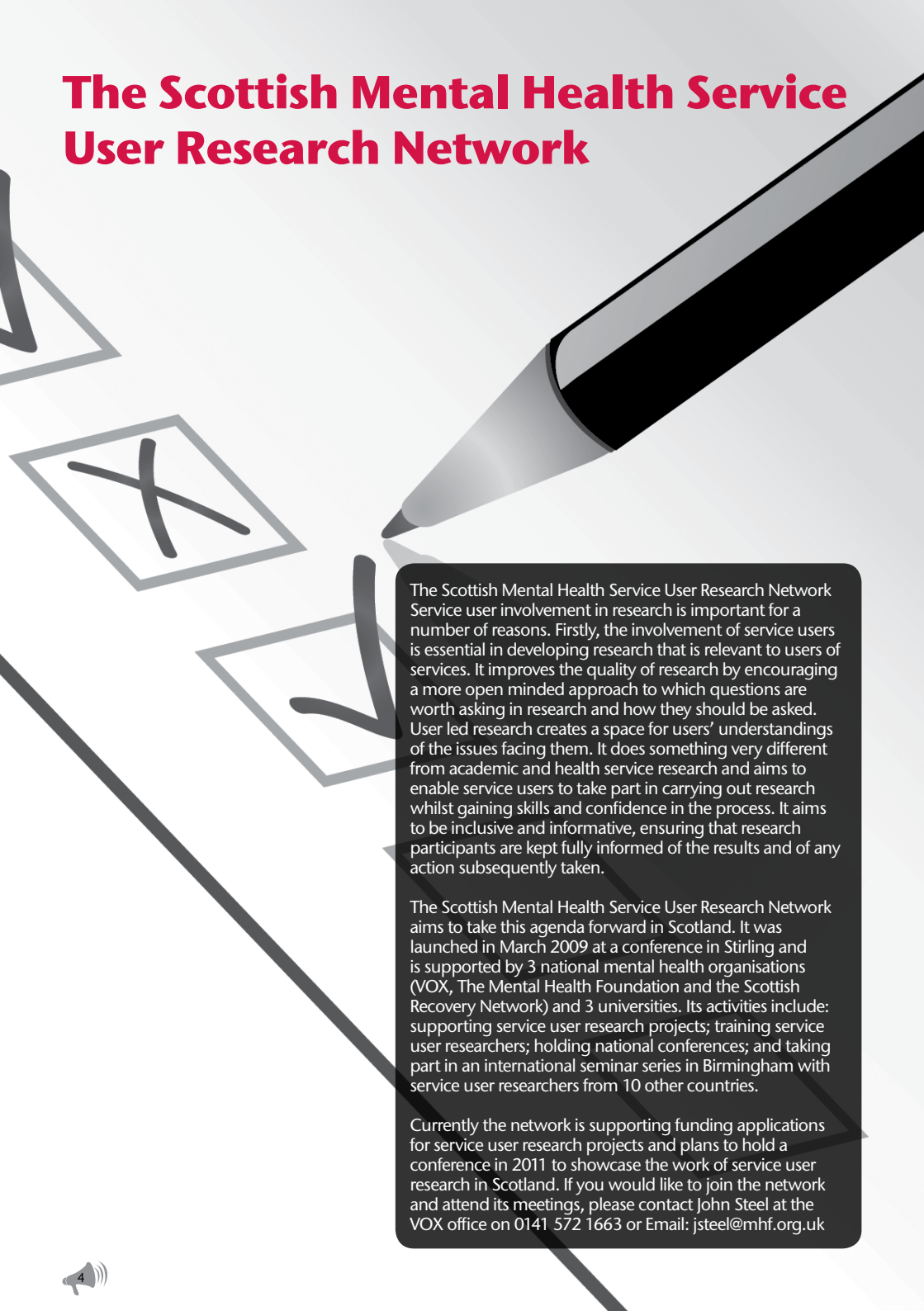
EVERYONE IS LOOKING TO BELONG AND FEEL ACCEPTED, WE ALL FEEL LONELY AND ISOLATED SOMETIMES. HOW DO WE CONNECT, HOW ARE WE ACCEPTED? WE ALL TURN TO TREATS AND COMFORTS, AND EVEN PEOPLE. AND YET SOMETIMES WE ARE STILL NOT FULFILLED?. DEEP INSIDE ALL OF US IS A SOUL AND SPIRIT CRYING OUT AND YEARNING TO BE FILLED AND SATISFIED.

WHEN I SING I FEEL MY SPIRIT AND SOUL SOAR LIKE AN EAGLE TO HEAVEN

WE LIVE IN A WORLD WERE BEAUTY IS EVERYTHING, HOWEVER WHEN YOU PEEL OFF THE LAYERS OF THAT BEAUTY YOU FIND THAT IT'S NOT AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU ONCE THOUGHT. TRUE BEAUTY COMES FROM THE SPIRIT, THE SOUL, YOUR HEART. YOU ARE A BEAUTIFUL CREATION, WE ALL ARE. OUR LIGHT SHINES BRIGHTLY IN THE DARKNESS OF LIFE AND BEYOND.



The Scottish Mental Health Service User Research Network



The Scottish Mental Health Service User Research Network Service user involvement in research is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, the involvement of service users is essential in developing research that is relevant to users of services. It improves the quality of research by encouraging a more open minded approach to which questions are worth asking in research and how they should be asked. User led research creates a space for users' understandings of the issues facing them. It does something very different from academic and health service research and aims to enable service users to take part in carrying out research whilst gaining skills and confidence in the process. It aims to be inclusive and informative, ensuring that research participants are kept fully informed of the results and of any action subsequently taken.

The Scottish Mental Health Service User Research Network aims to take this agenda forward in Scotland. It was launched in March 2009 at a conference in Stirling and is supported by 3 national mental health organisations (VOX, The Mental Health Foundation and the Scottish Recovery Network) and 3 universities. Its activities include: supporting service user research projects; training service user researchers; holding national conferences; and taking part in an international seminar series in Birmingham with service user researchers from 10 other countries.

Currently the network is supporting funding applications for service user research projects and plans to hold a conference in 2011 to showcase the work of service user research in Scotland. If you would like to join the network and attend its meetings, please contact John Steel at the VOX office on 0141 572 1663 or Email: jsteel@mhf.org.uk

VOX Winter Members Meeting

On Saturday 4th December 2010 despite the severe cold and arctic snow conditions that were experienced in December a band of VOX members braved all to attend the winter members meeting at the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow.

Very fruitful discussions took place regarding what the members felt our ongoing priorities for 2011. We explored what was Important to people? And here are the main three points that you highlighted on the day;

STIGMA: - (In its many forms)

WELFARE BENEFITS: - (peoples Rights)
(Communication)
(Fear & Uncertainty)

SOCIAL ISOLATION: - (Information on Groups)
(Activities)
(Isolation)

We also had a discussion and input on Patient Safety.

The Patient Safety in Mental Health programme forms part of a larger programme of work on patient safety across NHS Scotland.

Although many patient safety risk factors that exist in general medical settings also relate to mental health settings, there are also specific patient safety issues within mental health services that are different to those found in general medical care.

The Healthcare Quality Strategy (2010) recognises the significant effect that the Scottish Patient Safety Programme (SPSP) is making to patient safety across the NHS in Scotland.

VOX were involved in facilitating service user focus groups with NHS QIS (Quality Improvement Scotland) to explore peoples' views on patient safety.

For more information and to view the Quality Strategy visit;

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/05/10102307/0>



Weekly Updates

We are aware that our weekly updates only go out to VOX members with an email address so with this in mind we are adding another page to the newsletter called "Updates". Below are some of the items which were included in previous weekly updates:

Relaunch of "Look ok... feel crap" website

A website for young adults providing information about depression and recovery has been relaunched by Depression Alliance Scotland. lookokfeelcrap.org provides access to an online community, forums and monthly chats. It also gives users the opportunity to submit stories, quotes and creative work. www.lookokfeelcrap.org/

CALM Project

VOX is involved with GAMH and the CALM Project. The CALM Project is a partnership between Glasgow Association for Mental Health and Glasgow North Community Health and Care Partnership. The project provides access to complementary therapies and mindfulness for people aged 60 and over who are living with a long term condition. This could be a mental health problem, arthritis, M.E., diabetes, dementia and many other long-term conditions. The project is funded by the Long-Term Conditions Alliance and the Scottish Government for one year. Complementary therapies are therapies that work alongside conventional medicine. They usually adopt a holistic approach whereby the whole person is treated rather than just the symptoms of an illness. The calm project offers a range of complementary therapies including Indian head massage, reflexology, hot stone massage and Reiki. Therapies are offered on a weekly basis for a period of 6 weeks. For a referral please contact 0141 552 5592 or email: calm@gamh.org.uk

Help for People with Multiple Debts

Particularly people with mental health problems or dementia or their carers.

Legal Services Agency's North Glasgow Money Advice and Budgeting Project
Please note that LSA's new Budgeting Project is now available. The Budgeting Service can help you by providing a way to pay your creditors. In order to access the service you must open an account with the Pollok Credit Union in order that payments to your creditors can be made from your account. All clients or referrers need to do is to contact the Budgeting Service either in Shawlands or in Pollok. For further information please contact John L. Robertson at the Shawlands Office, 17 Kilmarnock Road, Glasgow, G41 3YN. Tel: 0141 632 1182, Email jl@pollok.cu.com or Jacqui Wylie at the Pollok Office, Unit 13, Silverburn Centre, 763 Barrhead Road, Glasgow, and G53 6QR. Tel: 0141 880 7888: Potential clients in the North of the city will be visited at home, in hospital or an appointment can be arranged at one of North Glasgow Advice Services' outlets.

Calling the Samaritans

Recently one of our VOX members called the Samaritans on a mobile phone and was shocked at the cost that could have been incurred, so here is what their response was when enquiries were made about being able to keep within a phone budget.

Typical call charges are between 1p and 10p per minute depending on the time of day for landline customers. Calls from mobile phones generally cost between 20p and 40p per minute, this depends on the package and the provider.

Callers worried about the cost of their call, can request that the branch call them back. People can make use of the reverse charge call services, or text on 07725 909090.

There is also a landline number for most areas: 01382 832555 is Dundee. A number that with a BT line is free of charge with some packages 08457 909090.

The following web site will give you links to local numbers in Scotland for the Samaritans:
http://www.samaritans.org/talk_to_someone/find_my_local_branch/scotland.aspx

Information can be found on the website about another number which is free for some mobile networks and being able to obtain support online.



Useful Information for You

Advance Statements

An advance statement is only about the treatment you would prefer to receive, or not receive, for your mental disorder. It must be made while you are well enough to state your treatment preferences, and will only come into force if, in the future, you become too unwell to make decisions about your treatment for yourself.

If you have a mental disorder the Act gives you the right to make a written statement saying how you would like to be treated if you become too unwell in the future to make decisions yourself. It is not the same as a 'living will', which people sometimes use to say how they would like to be treated if they are dying. An advance statement is only about the treatment you would prefer to receive, or not receive, for your mental disorder. It must be made while you are well enough to state your treatment preferences, and will only come into force if, in the future, you become too unwell to make decisions about your treatment for yourself.

To be valid an advance statement must be in writing, signed, and witnessed according to the following criteria:

- i. At the time of making (or withdrawing) an advance statement, the person must have the capacity of properly intending the wishes specified in it;
- ii. the advance statement must be in writing;
- iii. it must be subscribed (signed) by the person making it;
- iv. the person's subscription of it is witnessed by a person (the "witness" see note 8 below) who signs the statement as a witness to that subscription; and
- v. the witness certifies in writing on the document that, in their opinion, the person making the statement has the capacity referred to in paragraph (i) above.
- vi. An advance statement may be withdrawn by the person who made it if-
- vii.
 - i. at the time of making it the person has the capacity properly to intend to withdraw the statement; and
 - ii. it is made by means of a document written document which is signed and witnessed in the same way as the original statement (see the suggested style at the back of this guide).

An advance statement should set out the ways you would like to be treated for mental disorder, including any ways you would not like to be treated. It can include your wishes about medications, therapies and particular treatments, like ECT. It does not need to be typed, but it must be written clearly enough to be read by those who will be caring for you. A suggested style is included at the end of this guide but, as long as your statement meets the criteria listed at note 2 above it will be valid. It should also include

- your full name and address
- the name and full address of the witness, and how they qualify as a witness
- the date it was witnessed.

It will be helpful if you also attach to your advance statement a list containing, if you have them, the name and address of

- your named person
- your carer
- your general practitioner
- your guardian or welfare attorney.

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 came into effect on April 2005. The Act applies to people with a 'mental disorder', which refers to people with mental health problems, personality disorders and learning disabilities.

The Act also contains safeguards which protect the rights of persons with a mental disorder. Every person with a mental disorder has a right of access to independent advocacy and the right to be able to choose someone (a 'named person') to support them and to protect their interests in any proceedings under the Act.

The Act is based on a number of principles:

- 1. Non-discrimination** - People with mental disorder should, wherever possible, retain the same rights and entitlements as those with other health needs.
 - 2. Equality** - All powers under the Act should be exercised without any direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of physical disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion or national or ethnic or social origin.
 - 3. Respect for diversity** - Service users should receive care, treatment and support in a manner that accords respect for their individual qualities, abilities and diverse backgrounds and properly takes into account their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group and social, cultural and religious background.
 - 4. Reciprocity** - Where society imposes an obligation on an individual to comply with a programme of treatment of care, it should impose a parallel obligation on the health and social care authorities to provide safe and appropriate services, including ongoing care following discharge from compulsion.
 - 5. Informal care** - Wherever possible, care, treatment and support should be provided to people with mental disorder without the use of compulsory powers.
 - 6. Participation** - Service users should be fully involved, so far as they are able to be, in all aspects of their assessment, care, treatment and support. Their past and present wishes should be taken into account. They should be provided with all the information and support necessary to enable them to participate fully. Information should be provided in a way which makes it most likely to be understood.
 - 7. Respect for carers** - Those who provide care to service users on an informal basis should receive respect for their role and experience, receive appropriate information and advice, and have their views and needs taken into account.
 - 8. Least restrictive alternative** - Service users should be provided with any necessary care, treatment and support both in the least invasive manner and in the least restrictive manner and environment compatible with the delivery of safe and effective care, taking account where appropriate of the safety of others.
 - 9. Benefit** - Any intervention under the Act should be likely to produce for the service user a benefit that cannot reasonably be achieved other than by the intervention.
 - 10. Child welfare** - The welfare of a child with mental disorder should be paramount in any interventions imposed on the child under the Act.
- The Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland (MHTS) is involved in considering care plans, deciding on compulsory treatment orders and carrying out reviews. Service users and carers are able to challenge compulsory treatment orders if they want to. Service users can make advance statements, setting out how they would wish to be treated if they become unwell and unable to express their views clearly at some point in the future. The Tribunal and any person responsible for giving treatment under the new Act would have to take an advance statement into account.

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Cont...



The Act allows for people to be placed on different kinds of compulsory order according to their needs. There are three main kinds of compulsory powers:

1. Emergency detention - This would allow someone to be detained in hospital for up to 72 hours where hospital admission is required urgently to allow the person's condition to be assessed. It will only take place if recommended by a doctor.

2. Short-term detention - This would allow someone to be detained in hospital for up to 28 days. It will only take place where it is recommended by a specially trained doctor (a psychiatrist) and agreed by a mental health officer (an officer of the local authority).

3. Compulsory Treatment Order (CTO) - A CTO would last for 6 months initially but could then be extended for a further 6 months, and after that could be extended for 12 months at a time. This has to be approved by a Tribunal. A mental health officer would have to apply to the Tribunal. The application would have to include two medical recommendations and a plan of care detailing the care and treatment proposed for the patient. The patient, the patient's named person and the patient's primary carer would be entitled to have any objections that they have heard by the Tribunal. The patient and the named person would be entitled to free legal representation for the Tribunal hearing.

Named Person Role

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 includes measures to improve the rights and representation of those subject to compulsion including; Emergency Detention Orders (EDO) Short Term Detention Orders (STDO) and Long Term Compulsion Orders (CTO), advanced statements the Named Person (NP) and advocacy.

In July 2007 the Scottish Government commissioned a research study into the operation of the Named Person role, Advance Statements, Advocacy and its interaction with forms of patient representation. The University of Stirling were commissioned to carry out this research and in June 2008 produced a summary of initial findings report.

The aims of the project were:

- To determine the extent to which the NP role is being utilised
- To identify factors that has acted as facilitators and barriers to the appointment of a Named Person.
- To provide recommendations for the future development of both Named Persons and other forms of patient representation under the Act.
- Interviews suggested that most NP's are default and are related to the person.
- Should there be no nomination then the default person is normally the carer or nearest relative.
- The focus of involvement for named persons seems to be around Tribunals which can be very stressful.

Recommendations

Summary of key findings

- There is a lack of clarity about the role of named persons and the process of nominating a named person.
- Clarify the role of NP's in codes of practice and information leaflets.
- Publicise and build in support for NP's to take up the role outside Tribunals.
- Improvement of the Tribunal process for NP's



Study on Fundamental Rights of People with Mental Health Problems and People with Intellectual Disabilities

An International study on Fundamental Rights of People with Mental Health Problems and People with Intellectual Disabilities was started in July 2010. This is the first research in this field, carried out under contract with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. ECCL is one of the five organisations represented on the Advisory board to the study.

The first part of the investigation involves collecting information about the laws and policies which affect the lives of people with mental health problems and people with intellectual disabilities in the following areas: Community living, Fundamental rights in institutions, Legal capacity and Access to justice.

The FRA will focus on areas that have been identified together with persons with disabilities, research partners and decision makers as being of particular importance. Four focus areas include:

- **Access to justice** (Article 13 UN CRPD)
- **Accessibility** Article 9 UN CRPD)
- **Independent living** (Article 19 UN CRPD)
- **Involuntary treatment and involuntary placement** (Articles 14 and 15 UNCRPD)
 - **legal capacity** (Article 12 UNCRPD)
 - **political participation** (Article 29 UNCRPD)

Having noticed the lack of NGO materials in these areas the research team calls for local organisations to send information about research, statements, press releases, and other relevant materials. For further information please contact: www.community-living.info



VOX Winter Diversity Update

By Mahmud Al-Gailani

Welcome to this winter's diversity update. We have been involved in a number of projects to strengthen and widen the voice of people with a lived experience of mental health problems. VOX has been supporting several groups and projects as well as building capacity within other organisations.

“Moving Minds Exhibition and Event”

Photo by Chris O’Sullivan



VOX has been working in partnership as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival on the Arts and Mental Health, as this is a priority set by our members. The exhibition opened early in October last year at Kelvingrove museum for six weeks, with the help of several Glasgow partners the exhibition captured works of art and stories of recovery from older people, young people, Muslim women and many other minority ethnic groups.

On the 14th of October 2010 the Moving Minds Day of activities and events was held at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum which reached around 300 people from workers, service users, members of the public, to mental Health and Social Work students.

VOX over 50's group contributed to the exhibition by sharing their stories and objects related to their experiences in Mental Health and growing up. The exhibition also has contributions from young carers, minority ethnic women and a narrative resource from Health Scotland.

It was a celebration of diversity and mental health, and an opportunity for people to participate and learn from each other and challenging stigma in mental health.

We would like to thank Kelvingrove Museum, our partners, VOX members and volunteers who helped make the day the success that it was. Many thanks also to our volunteer photographers.



One of the over 50's group, James McKillop displayed some polished stones and very kindly has allowed us to display his recipe for polishing stones by hand:

“Certain soft stones can be polished by hand.

You will need wet/dry sandpaper grades rough, medium, fine and a well worn piece of fine sandpaper, Duraglit and a soft rag.

- 1) Scour the stone with the rough sandpaper until all the holes and cracks are gone and the stone is smooth. This procedure can be very dusty and it is strongly recommended that it is carried out in a basin of water or under a running water tap.
- 2) Repeat the process with the medium sandpaper, ensuring any blemishes from step 1 (e.g. scratch lines) are now completely eliminated.
- 3) Repeat the process with the fine sandpaper.
- 4) Repeat the process with the piece of worn fine sandpaper.
- 5) Clean the stone with Duraglit and buff off residue with a soft rag.
- 6) The stone should now have a natural shine and can be freshened up from time to time with the Duraglit and a rag.

Notes:

It can be quite easy to get a side of the stone polished from start to finish and you might wish to accomplish this first before going on to finish the whole stone, which requires a lot more time and effort

The stone is fragile but can be cut/sliced (carefully) with a hacksaw and can also be drilled (carefully) with a small steel bit.

The sandpaper can be used a number of times and a worn piece of rough sandpaper can sometimes be used in lieu of the medium sandpaper and similarly worn medium might be used in place of the fine.

Experience will guide you.

I hope you enjoy the exhilaration you will no doubt experience when you see the stone gleam at you and realise that you did it all by yourself. Other soft items may also be shaped and polished: - amber reindeer horn, sea shells etc. Hard coal will also polish but is dirty and oily.

Work with asylum seekers and refugees

The Sanctuary Project

Addressing mental health stigma experienced by asylum seekers and refugees

With Scotland hosting increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees, the mental health needs of this population has become an important issue to address. The Sanctuary programme brought together national, regional and local partners, including VOX, Positive Mental Attitudes, the Scottish Refugee Council, the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture and the NHS. Peer led research was undertaken with over 100 participants, seeking to identify patterns of stigma and discrimination experienced by asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow and to explore how this may be addressed. It found how pre-migration trauma as well as poverty, racism and the stress of the asylum process was impacting negatively upon people's mental health. In addition, significant levels of stigma and discrimination towards mental health issues were found towards asylum seekers with mental health problems, resulting in a reluctance to seek help.

Following the research, two programmes were developed. Awareness workshops, known as 'community conversation', explored mental health and stigma and promoted help seeking, peer support and recovery in safe, supportive workshops. 10 peer educators drawn from asylum seeker and refugee community organisations were recruited to develop and deliver the workshops and 25 workshops were delivered to 328 asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow.

The research had also identified the need to address the lack of awareness of the mental health needs of asylum seekers and refugees amongst key service providers, including NHS staff and housing providers. The group developed a tailored training course, which has been delivered to over 100 NHS staff, with further courses planned. To enhance the training course, a DVD film was produced by the specialist film maker, Diversity Films, to capture the narratives of 6 asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland.

This is being used as a resource to accompany the training and is having a powerful impact on training participants. The film recently won an award at the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival International Film Awards.

Work with Faith Leaders

VOX in partnership with the Mental Health Network (Greater Glasgow), Glasgow Association for Mental Health and South East Glasgow CHCP have been developing a dialogue with faith leaders in the east of Glasgow to raise their awareness of mental health issues as well as looking at some of the cultural myths and stigma that can exist within communities. We have met with Christian, Muslim and Sikh faith leaders and are looking at supporting them to develop faith based messages promoting mental wellness among their congregations.

Over 50's Coffee Morning Group

This group has been meeting every two months as a sort of social gathering with a coffee morning theme. The group is open to people 50 and over but also welcomes people in their 40's if they feel happy to be part of an older peoples group. The group meets to discuss issues related to mental health and being an older person as well as sharing useful information.

If you are interested in meeting up for a coffee morning to discuss mental health issues for people around 50 or over please get in touch to see when our next meeting will be.

Therapeutic gardening

Trellis, established in 2005, works across Scotland with over 125 therapeutic gardening projects. The Network helps projects to support each other through the sharing of expertise, good practice and resources.

Trellis is the national Scottish charity, registered as the Scottish Therapeutic Gardening Network that supports, promotes, and develops the use of horticulture to improve health, well-being and life opportunities for all. Therapeutic gardens have been shown to be a very effective measure in treating depressive illness. They work with some of the most vulnerable members of society, e.g. 23% of projects provide support for those with mental health issues.

Therapeutic garden projects help people improve their fitness, mobility and mental health and gain skills and qualifications. Gardening can be sociable and is an accessible activity for everyone. Projects operate in hospitals, secure units, day centres and community gardens, often with limited resources & little recognition.

For more information contact Trellis at 40 St John Street Perth PH1 5SP.

Tel: 01738 624348 mobile: 07770 724399

Email: info@trellisscotland.org.uk www.trellisscotland.org.uk



Mental Health Quiz

- Q1) How many people will have a mental health problem at some point in their life?
- 1 in 4
 - 1 in 5
 - 1 in 6
 - 1 in 10
- Q2) What proportion of people with mental health problems experience stigma from others?
- 8%
 - 30%
 - 63%
 - 81%
- Q3) How many people will recover from a long term mental health problem?
- one third
 - one quarter
 - two thirds
 - half
- Q4) Which of the following have experienced a mental health problem?
- Jim Carrey, comedian, actor
Eric Clapton, musician, singer
Sheryl Crow, singer, musician
Ludwig van Beethoven, German composer
Kim Basinger, actress
Paula Abdul, singer
- None of the above
 - Jim, Sheryl and Paula
 - all except Paula
 - All of the above
- Q5) The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) only applies to people with physical health problems?
- True
 - False
- Q6) The Disability Discrimination Act aims to end discrimination against disabled people in a range of circumstances, including in employment, education and the provision of goods and services.
- True
 - False
- Q7) The Disability Discrimination Act states that people who have disabilities should have the right to their employer making reasonable adjustments in the workplace e.g. taking extra breaks, adjusting working hours. This counts for people who have mental health problems?
- True
 - False



Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme

A new disclosure scheme to improve the protection of Scotland's most vulnerable groups is to go live on February 28.

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme had been due to commence at the end of November 2010 but Ministers took the decision to postpone its introduction to ensure the new IT system which supports it is fully fit for purpose and as robust as it can be.

Like the current disclosure system, it is designed to ensure that people who have a known history of harmful or abusive behaviour are not put in positions of trust with vulnerable people. However, it will improve those arrangements by reducing the need for people to complete a lengthy application form every time a disclosure is required through a membership scheme that continually updates relevant information.

The current service of enhanced disclosure for people who work with vulnerable groups will no longer be available to the vulnerable groups' workforce after the PVG scheme commences on February 28.

It will also ensure that people who become unsuitable during their employment can be quickly identified and will allow employers to check records more quickly and easily.

For more information visit; <http://www.pvgschemescotland.org/>

PVG Scheme Help Service
Tel: 0870 609 6006
Email: pvg.enquiries@scotland.gsi.go.uk.

Your Views shape the future in mental health and how VOX Develops

VOX makes sure that any projects it develops are initiated by our members, we hold members meetings and a range of focus groups, meetings and activities to make sure that our members are the ones who shape what we do.

Thanks to everyone who sent us their thoughts and contributions and please keep them coming for future newsletters and pieces of work.

ANSWERS

- | | |
|------------|---------------------|
| Question 1 | a. 1 in 4 |
| Question 2 | d. 81% |
| Question 3 | c. two thirds |
| Question 4 | d. All of the above |
| Question 5 | b. False |
| Question 6 | a. True |
| Question 7 | a. True |





If you need to talk to someone call the following numbers

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide.

Breathing Space

0800 83 85 87 (6pm-2am)

Monday to Thursday 6pm-2am
Friday - Monday 6pm-6am

Breathing Space is a free and confidential phonenumber service for any individual, who is experiencing low mood or depression, or who is unusually worried and in need of someone to talk to.

NHS 24

0845 4 24 24 24

An online and telephone-based service which can answer your questions about your health and offer advice.

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

0131 313 8777

Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace,
Edinburgh, EH12 5HE
Fax: 0131 313 8778
Email: mwscot.org.uk

The views expressed by our members in this newsletter are not necessarily the view of VOX.

Become a member of VOX - it's free

There are several benefits to becoming a member of our organisation.

- Our members have a common interest, and we hope to further its cause.
- You will have access to information on mental health issues.
- An opportunity to become involved and an opportunity to influence policy, practice, legislation, services, care, wellbeing and recovery both nationally and internationally.
- You will receive VOX's quarterly magazine.

Membership form

Our membership form can be accessed from the website, or from our office.

For advice or information on any aspect of VOX please contact us at our office at:

VOX - Voices of Experience
c/o Mental Health Foundation (Scotland)
Merchants House,
30 George Square
Glasgow, G2 1EG.

Telephone: VOX: 0141 572 1663

Fax: 0141 572 0246

Email: mal-gailani@mhf.org.uk

or: info@voxscotland.org.uk

Website: www.voxscotland.org.uk

Our next newsletter will be produced in Summer 2011. If you would like information on a particular subject to be included in the next newsletter or would like to contribute to it, please contact Mahmud using the details above.

If you would like a copy of this newsletter in an accessible format, please let us know and we will try to meet your request.