



February 2011

A Sense of Belonging

At our last meeting Linda Irvine, Strategic Programme Manager for Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Rachel King, Health Promotion Specialist came from NHS Lothian to talk about the Mental Health Strategy for 2011–2016.

The strategy is called 'A Sense of Belonging'. Linda said that there is a focus on individuals and communities because people have said they like to feel connected in their communities.

There have been a number of meetings about different areas of the strategy over the last few years and the focus of the strategy is very different to the one for 2005–2010. There is now a broader view on mental health and the strategy covers things like employment, education, spirituality and transitions to different life stages.

We didn't have a copy of the draft strategy at our last meeting and decided that we would invite Linda back to our February meeting. This would give us a chance to have a look at the strategy in detail.

A summary of the draft strategy is included in this mailing. You can get a full copy by phoning Alison McEwan at NHS Lothian on 0131 465 5545 or emailing alison.mcewan@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk.

There will be a two-month consultation on the strategy and you can contribute your views in different ways, including an online survey. Linda said it is more a conversation than a consultation and the priorities are based on what people have been telling the NHS is important to them.

On 19 January 2011, CAPS organised a Lothian-wide service users event to look at the strategy. Some EUF members went along and Linda gave a presentation. There will be another event on 25 February 2011 for both service users and staff at Norton Park.

There is more information about the strategy on page 2. Come along to our February meeting and tell Linda what you think about the shape of mental health services for the next five years.

Our Next Meeting:

Saturday 6 February 2011

1.30pm - doors open

2.00 - 4.00pm - meeting

McDonald Road Library,
Edinburgh

For more information contact
CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

Hot Topics

'A Sense of Belonging'

The new draft mental health strategy for 2011 to 2016 is called 'A sense of Belonging'. It is a joint strategy for improving the mental health and wellbeing of Lothian's population. The strategy sets out clear views, principles and planned ways of working on mental health and wellbeing in Lothian. Local Councils, NHS Lothian, the voluntary sector, service users and carers will work together to make sure it happens.

The Approach

The strategy takes a 'life stages approach'. This means that instead of seeing things only in terms of age, it also looks at things in terms of life experience and stages. This means for example that there will no longer be an automatic transfer to older people's services when people turn 65.

There are four stages outlined:

- Early Years
- School Age
- Working Age
- Older People

There is a lot in the strategy about the importance of social networks, a sense of belonging to a community. Feeling isolated can have a huge effect on a person's mental health and on people using public services. The strategy is going to focus on key areas such as:

- Helping to support people before problems start or as soon as there are difficulties
- Supporting parents
- Supporting people when they are ill, either at home or in hospital settings

- Using treatments which are not medicines, for example exercise or reading, for some mental health issues
- Activities which encourage good mental health.

Aspirations

The strategy has listed 19 aspirations. Some are very ambitious such as 'NHS Lothian aspires to be one of the world's top 25 healthcare providers' and some may be quicker and easier to achieve, for example 'people should be routinely offered support to manage their finances so their debt is avoided or at least addressed early.'

Areas for Change

The document talks about 'transformational change', which is not just about changing the structures and procedures in an organisation, but changing the culture and attitude. There are four main areas for change:

1. Tackling Health Inequalities: Focusing on specific people and communities

This is about working with specific individuals and communities that are more likely to be vulnerable and experience difficulties. For example veterans, black and minority ethnic communities, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender communities, people who have offended, older people, gypsy and traveller communities and vulnerable families.

2. Embedding Recovery: Making sure all services and spaces have a recovery focus

This is about making sure that people have control over their lives and are

living well despite mental health difficulties.

3. Building Social Capital and Wellbeing: Building involvement and a sense of belonging within communities and increasing wellbeing

Social Capital is an idea that we will be hearing a lot in the future. Here is how NHS Lothian define it:

‘In the same way as physical and economic capital, having a level of wealth, having safe secure surroundings, allows communities to flourish, so too do the ties and relationships between people. These ties allow communities to have positive bonds to each other, to join in with political processes and to build a sense of collective identity’.

The idea is that people have strengths, knowledge and experience that will improve their mental wellbeing and their communities. The strategy wants to look at what people can do to improve their mental health outside NHS or Council services.

4. Improving Services for People

This part is about having excellent services for people when and where they need them. The strategy talks about learning from people who use services about how to improve them.

There is a lot in the strategy about promoting greater participation and engagement. It talks about making sure that service users decide what makes a service successful. There is a focus on continuing to support collective advocacy.

There is also a priority to support service users to deliver training and education programmes. User-led research will be supported and developed especially in

areas of service redesigns and development.

What Next?

The consultation period runs until 4 March 2011. You can give your views in different ways:

Online survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/senseofbelonging>

Twitter or Facebook: Search for NHS Lothian on Twitter and Facebook. You can also post your thoughts on Twitter using the hashtag #senseofbelonging.

Email: senseofbelonging.lothian@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

By post: See attached summary of the Sense of Belonging Strategy for contact details

By phone: 0131 465 5545

Stakeholder Event

There will be a stakeholders event about ‘A Sense of Belonging’ on 25 February 2011 from 10am to 3.30pm at the Forthview Suite, North Stand, Hibernian Football Club, Easter Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QG.

If you would like to come along to this event and give your views on the strategy you can book a place by contacting Alison McEwan on 0131 465 5545 or alison.mcewan@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk by 14th February 2011. Or contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or donna@capsadvocacy.org Donna can also give you more information about the strategy.

Proposed changes to Disability Living Allowance

How would you feel if the Government took away 69% of your income?

The UK Government wants to get rid of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) by 2013/14 and replace it with Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for people of working age.

With PIP, all claimants would need to be assessed by an independent medical officer, claims could be reviewed by the Government at any time. Also, eligibility for the mobility element of the new benefit would not be based only on the ability to walk but on the ability to move more generally (for example in a wheelchair).

The Government thinks PIP will be easier to understand and that it will be more efficient to support disabled people who face the greatest challenges to remaining independent and leading full and active lives.

Currently, DLA measures an individual's 'care' and 'mobility' needs, and these are used to calculate the extra costs that a disabled person is likely to incur. With PIP, priority will be given to supporting people who face the greatest day-to-day challenges.

The Scottish Disability Equality Forum has written a paper on the changes and is looking for your views. Contact Johanna McCulloch on 01786 446456 or email hanna.mcculloch@sdef.org.uk You can also fill in their online survey by at www.surveymonkey.com/s/VHB6VCJ

The full UK Government consultation can be found by clicking on the following link:

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dla-reform-consultation.pdf or you can contact Laetitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 for a printed copy. The consultation runs until 14 February 2011.

Work Capability Assessment

CAPS is doing work on the Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) and the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). We are trying to gather as many views as possible to try and improve the assessment and campaign for the whole process to be reviewed to take into account the needs of people with mental health issues.

Everyone who applies for ESA has to go through an assessment to decide whether they can do some type of work. Many people with mental health issues have found the assessment process very stressful and unfair.

A questionnaire was distributed in 2010. If you have not got a copy, please contact Laetitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177. You can also fill it online until the end of February 2011 at the following address:
www.surveymonkey.com/s/2VYBSR8.

Improving Detention

The Improving Detention report written by EUF in 2010 has kept us busy. In January we met with NHS and Government representatives to discuss the report and what actions can be taken to improve the experience of detention.

In addition in February 2011, some EUF representatives and CAPS staff will meet with a Norwegian delegation interested in looking at the Scottish Mental Health Act and service users' views on it.

At our last meeting...

Advocacy Review

CAPS went to a City of Edinburgh Council meeting in December to hear what the Council had decided to do with advocacy services in Edinburgh.

The Council decided to postpone the decision about the contracts until they had taken legal advice about their plan to take all advocacy services to competitive tender.

We are now expecting them to make a final decision at the next full Council meeting on 3 February 2011. They will announce if advocacy services including CAPS, Advocard, the Patients Council and the Carers Council will have their contracts put out to competitive tender.

CAPS plans to go along to the meeting at the City Chambers with a deputation in the hope that the Council will look again at the option of negotiating the new contract for mental health and carers with the current organisations. The meeting starts at 10am but some CAPS staff and service users will be meeting at reception from 9.30am.

Please come along and give us your support from the public gallery and fight for advocacy services to remain independent services rooted in the communities they serve.

MHAS Review

In December some EUF members met with Kathleen Stewart (Nurse Consultant) and Anne Brownlee (Nurse Team Leader). We discussed how EUF can help with the evaluation of MHAS.

MHAS (Mental Health Assessment Service) provides same-day emergency mental health assessments. They make an assessment of what people need and refer on to the best person to provide that support. The service accepts referrals from GPs, NHS 24, Accident and Emergency and the Police. People can also self-refer to the service.

The service is based at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and there is also an out of hours presence at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.

EUF members have had an interest in the review of IHTT (Intensive Home Treatment Team) and MHAS since it started in 2009. They have often discussed their views and experiences of MHAS and these have often been mixed. They felt it would be a good idea to see if we could contribute to it.

So far the evaluation has been carried out through questionnaires handed out to people using the service. At the meeting with Kathleen and Anne, we talked about finding ways to reach a wider audience and get more feedback.

We will meet again in February 2011 to discuss this. If you have any ideas or comments, please contact Laëtitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email laetitia@capsadvocacy.org.

We also asked to get a document explaining clearly how MHAS works and how it connects with other mental health services. Anne Brownlee kindly prepared a presentation. Contact Laëtitia at CAPS for a copy.

Community Happenings

Bipolar Group

Bipolar Scotland are now available on Facebook. To join their group log on to www.facebook.com and search for Bipolar Scotland.

The Lothian Bipolar Group is a self-help group for those affected with Bipolar Disorder including carers, family and friends. You don't need to be referred, just come along. Group meetings give you an opportunity to discuss any issues that you have around bipolar disorder.

The group meets on the first Thursday of each month between 7pm and 9pm at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. The group does not have a telephone number, but you can always leave a message for them with the staff in the Bipolar Scotland office in Paisley on 0141 560 2050 or email lothianbipolargroup@hotmail.co.uk.

The Lothian group now have a website. The website gives information on the activities of the group and further information on bipolar disorder. You can find it at www.lothianbipolargroup.org.uk.

The speakers and topics for the coming months are:

- 3 February – Claire Ferry (Active Futures co-ordinator) from Edinburgh Leisure will explain what is available in Edinburgh to help us shed a few pounds.
- 3 March – Roz Johnstone, Mindfulness
- 2 June – Laughter Yoga

Welfare Reform: Who benefits?

With the reality of the Coalition welfare reform plans beginning to hit home, Inclusion Scotland is organising a conference which will raise awareness of the most radical overhaul of the benefits system in decades....What does it mean for you?

There will be speakers from Disability Alliance, Edinburgh University, the Scottish Trade Union Council and the Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform.

The conference will take place at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow on 4 February 2011 from 10am to 3.30pm.

To register for a place contact Angela Marshall on 0141 887 7058 or email angelam@inclusionscotland.org.

Prozac and Prayer

Prozac & Prayer: a brief memoir of madness is a young woman's memoir of dealing with a type of bipolar disorder.

The book was written by Sharon Jones who is also an Oor Mad History volunteer at CAPS. Sharon is passionate about helping to change society's attitudes to mental health and will be writing more on this issue.

Starting in 2007 just before she was diagnosed, Sharon uses poetry and photos as well as prose to tell her story

which includes a suicide bid and subsequent arrest on the Forth Road Bridge.

It is a collection of thoughts, experiences and reflections of madness written specifically for other 'Madfolk', to encourage and inspire. It will make you think and provoke questions about the very real stigma of mental health in Scotland.

The book is currently only available as an e-book but a paper version will be available later.

More information, and the opportunity to buy the book, go to http://chipmunkpublishing.co.uk/shop/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=3&products_id=1764.

Fundraising Concert

The ex-Stepping Stones service users, volunteers, staff and supporters have set up a new constituted group, The Alma Project after Stepping Stones very suddenly closed down in 2010.

The aim of the project is to promote good mental health through the arts.

They are applying for grants to run groups but are also having a fundraising gig on Saturday 5 February 2011 at 8pm at the Pleasance (doors open at 7.15pm).

Artists will include Stairheid Gossip with friends, Gillie MacKenzie, Karine Polwart, Mae Shaw & Stevie Palmer.

Tickets cost £5 and £7 and can be bought from members of the group or reserved by emailing stairheid@live.co.uk or by calling 0131 332 3591.

Before it's a crisis...

Here is a list of numbers you can phone for support when most services are closed. It is a good idea to keep these numbers where you can find them when you need support or help. Services such as Breathing Space and the Samaritans offer a listening service. Social Work and the NHS are more appropriate if you need more than this.

Breathing Space

0800 83 85 87 (6.00pm-2.00am)

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90 (24 hours)

NHS 24

08454 24 24 24 (24 hours)

Emergency Social Work Service

0800 731 6969 (out of hours only)

Crisis Centre

Free phone 0808 801 0414 (24 hours)

Text phone 0808 801 0415 (24 hours)

If you get support at home, you may have an 'on-call' number to contact staff. If you have contact with a Community Mental Health Team, they may also have a number for you to contact staff.

If you require individual advocacy you may contact:

Advocard 0131 554 5307

(Monday to Friday 9-5pm)

Royal Edinburgh Hospital Advocacy Service

0131 537 6004

About Edinburgh Users Forum

The Edinburgh Users Forum (EUF) is an independent collective advocacy group. Our members are people who use, or have used mental health services. We were set up to give people who use mental health services a say in the services that are provided, and how services are run.

We have monthly meetings where we discuss issues and invite speakers along. We campaign on issues like services, benefits, housing, advocacy, crisis services and transport. If you would like any more information about EUF please contact us.

Contact us

Write to:

Edinburgh Users Forum
c/o CAPS
5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh
EH7 5SN

Phone: 0131 538 7177
Fax: 0131 538 7215

Email:

info@edinburghusersforum.org
Or visit our website:
www.edinburghusersforum.org

EUF Meetings 2011

Saturday 5 February

Saturday 5 March

Saturday 2 April

Saturday 7 May

Saturday 4 June

Saturday 2 July

Monthly meetings

On the first Saturday of each month we meet at the McDonald Road Library, Edinburgh (on the corner of McDonald Road and Leith Walk). Come along from

1.30pm for a cuppa and a chat.

Meeting starts at **2.00pm**.