

SPRING 2005

Riverside Review

Editorial Comment

We are very pleased to bring you our Spring Edition of the Riverside Review. As always, it is a packed edition.

We are focussing this time on the recent developments in *The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003*. The article comes from Stephen French, Project Manager for the Implementation of the Mental Health Act at NHS Forth Valley.

Also in this issue are articles on the SDAMH Christmas Party, a focus on the Home Support Service plus other recent developments.

In February, we were delighted to have Ron Ellis from Breathing Space - the National Telephone Information Service - provide a question and answer session and you can read more about this later.

SDAMH is delighted to welcome another 3 volunteers to our Young Persons' Befriending Service and at the time of writing, we are training another 10 volunteers for our Adult Services. So welcome to SDAMH and happy volunteering to you all.

The *Approaches to Choosing Life Service* co-ordinated a Coffee Morning to mark Self Injury Awareness Day on 1st March, when £43 was raised. This will be donated to two charities - National Self-Harm Network and LifeSIGNS.

As a result of funding coming to an end, over the next four months we will be 'phasing out' the pilot SDAMH Supported Befriending Service. The Adult Befriending Service will continue to be provided as before and appropriate Referrals can to be made through the usual Service criteria.

In the planning stages is 'May Day' - Stay Safe in Stirling, which will be a repeat of the Personal Safety Event, which was held last year. So watch this space!
Editor: Christine Bauer

EASTER HOLIDAYS AT SDAMH

SDAMH will be closed for the Easter Break from Friday 25 March through to Monday 28 March inclusive.

It will be 'Business as Usual' from Tuesday 29 March.

The New Mental Health Act - What Does it Mean for You?

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 will come into effect in October 2005.

The new Act was supposed to come into effect in April 2005, but has been deferred by the Scottish Executive until October 2005, as there are a number of key pieces of work which need to be completed before the Act can be fully implemented.

The new Act is a milestone in mental health law, and should bring real benefits for people with mental health problems in Scotland, and those who care for them. It promises to make a major contribution to achieving the ultimate objective of mental health law - to make sure people with mental health problems can receive effective care and treatment.

The new Act covers a wide range of issues but broadly they can be arranged under four headings:-

- ⇒ Principles, roles and responsibilities: how the Act defines the nature, duties and powers of the organisations and individuals involved in mental health law and how they should give effect to the principles of the Act;
- ⇒ Compulsory powers: how the Act sets out the circumstances in which a person with mental disorder may receive treatment and/or be detained on a compulsory basis, and the procedures which have to be followed;
- ⇒ People with mental disorder within the criminal justice system: what the Act says about how a person with mental disorder may be dealt with by the criminal justice system, and how they are subsequently cared for; and
- ⇒ Rights and safeguards: the additional rights the Act gives to a person with mental disorder, and the safeguards it puts in place.

For more information on the Act, please contact Stephen French, Project Manager for the Implementation of the Mental Health Act in the Forth Valley area, at the following e-mail address:-

stephen.french@fvpc.scot.nhs.uk

CHRISTMAS PARTY AT SDAMH



SDAMH's annual Christmas bash took place on Tuesday 21st December 2004. The 2003 party had been **so** busy that the decision was taken to only invite members and volunteers, giving everyone room to show off their moves on the dance floor!

The party was well attended with approx. 40 people coming along to join in the festive fun. Christmas games were enjoyed including: Pass the Cracker, a Seasonal "What am I?" Quiz and the ever popular and hilarious Balloon Team Relay Race.

A hot buffet was served by a team of Santas with one Mrs Claus, suggesting polygamy is alive and well in Greenland. The day ended with a raffle offering fantastic prizes, kindly donated by members, volunteers and staff from other agencies.

Everyone seemed to have a jolly time. One partygoer quipped "I feel drunk but not on the bucks fizz, on the atmosphere in here."

Hannah Hutchison

Everybody gets depressed
 It helps to get some breathing space
0800 83 85 87

A presentation by the organisation Breathing Space was given, for clients of SDAMH, by Ron Ellis, the National Co-ordinator. He explained that the Service is a free, completely confidential telephone Counselling and Advice line. It was originally targeted at young males, but has now been extended to the general population. Callers can talk to someone about any worries they have about money, work, relationships, exams or even if they are just feeling low.

The headquarters are situated at the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank.

The organisation receives 5000 calls a month and callers can expect to talk to trained counsellors who could be, for example, former CPNs or Psychologists. They have a database of 2000 organisations for signposting to other appropriate agencies.

One of the clients present at the meeting and stated, "I passed on the information and phone number to a family member, who wished they had it a while back. It's handy to carry the promotional key ring as you never know when you may need the phone number on it. Breathing Space will appeal particularly to males who are too macho to confide in friends or family. Without doubt a valuable service. Even if it saves one life it is a success."

Breathing Space Telephone number: 0800 83 85 87 and website:
www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk

FOCUS ON... HOME SUPPORT SERVICE

The SDAMH Home Support Service began as a pilot in 1997. The aims of the Service at that time were to assist people to live independently within their community. This model of the Service was successful and the same model is currently being used under 'Supporting People', via the Scottish Executive throughout Scotland.

The Service aims to assist people experiencing or recovering from mental ill health. The thrust of the support is in maintaining clients' tenancies. This can involve things like - assistance with keeping on top of domestic chores, helping with correspondence like form-filling, assistance to engage with other agencies and professionals, or just talking things through.

As much as possible, the client's independence is sought. The Service endeavours to help individuals remain in the community, to keep out of hospital and retain their tenancies, by assisting with the day-to-day things, through regular and planned support.

Alex Weir

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