

Summer 2004

Editorial Comment

Welcome to our Summer 2004 edition of the *Riverside Review*.

Since our last Newsletter, we have seen a few changes here at SDAMH.

We now have a new Service called 'Approaches to Choosing Life', thanks to funding from the Scottish Executive's 'Choose Life' initiative. This is the National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Scotland. Brian Young is the Service Co-ordinator.

Other staff changes include Janice Steel, joining in the Home Support Service. This now takes us up to our full complement of staff, working alongside our 65 valuable volunteers.

Presently, we are busily preparing for our 2004 Annual General Meeting. This will be held on Wednesday 1 September at the Stirling Council Chambers, Old Viewforth at 7pm and our guest speaker will be Helen Munro, Director of Community Services, Stirling Council.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the *Riverside Review* and if you would like additional copies, they can be now be downloaded from our website - www.stirlingmentalhealth.org.uk.

**Christine Bauer,
Editor**

Art Competition

During National Depression Week (19 - 25 June, 2004), SDAMH initiated a Competition for visual artists and photographers. The Competition was to encompass digital photography and collage, as well as painting and traditional photography.

The winning entry was Karen Hall's picture of a kitten. This was chosen as it was believed to capture the spirit of the competition - to 'Make Someone Smile' - as well as being a very good photograph.

FOCUS ON... YOUNG PERSONS' BEFRIENDING SERVICE

The Young Persons' Befriending Service is now operational. There are thirteen trained volunteers involved in the Service. Some have already been matched and others are ready to start.

The Service is available to young people aged 14 - 18 years, who are experiencing difficulties due to their mental health. Befriending, through a committed volunteer, offers a young person opportunities to develop their social experience and skills, in a safe setting, at a pace that suits the individual.

Importantly, it also provides an independent non-professional person for the young person to talk to. Young people accessing the Service are given the choice of setting goals to be worked towards in the relationship to assist the individual to develop their confidence and life skills. Goals can be very simple and either short or long term, things such as being able to order in restaurant or trying out a new hobby. However, some young people may be more comfortable having a befriender visit them at home once a week for a chat. The Service is flexible to meet the needs of the young person.

Volunteers and the young persons are supported by SDAMH through regular contact with the Co-ordinator, who can also be contacted for more information and details of the referral process.

Hannah Hutchison

Karen is seen here with SDAMH Chairman, Campbell MacQueen being presented with her prize.



Keeping Stirling Safe!

On Tuesday 18 May, the foyer of Rainbow Slides Leisure Centre in Stirling was transformed into a market place stalls area, where members of the public were able to get advice and information on personal safety, avoidance strategies and self-awareness.



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In addition to the stalls, provided by SDAMH, Stirling Council, Central Scotland Police, Central Scotland Fire Brigade, Victim Support, Women's Aid, Central Scotland Rape Crisis, NHS Forth Valley Health Promotion and the 'see me' National Anti-Stigma Campaign, there were also workshops run on Personal Safety and Self-awareness. The organisers were delighted to say that a significant number of people took advantage of attending the Event, with many saying that this should be held on an annual basis. We are confident that with the assistance of the other partner

Agencies that were in attendance, we can make it happen. So watch this space for May 2005!

Brian Young

Stirling Postnatal Support Group

SDAMH is pleased to report that two pilot 6-week Groups for the Stirling Postnatal Support Group have now taken place. These Groups have been run in partnership with Park Avenue Health Visiting Team, Stirling Council Play Services Crèche & Play Programme Team and SDAMH.

The aim is to set up and provide a weekly 2-hour Group for mothers with babies 8 months old or under and who may be at risk of developing postnatal depression.

The pilots have been extremely successful and there are now plans underway for a third group to start in the late autumn.

Aileen Balkwill

News from the Drop-In & Groups Service

If you wander down to the Drop-In at SDAMH on a Monday afternoon, then you can expect to be asked to "keep on walking". Why you may ask? - Well this is when the Walking Group is taking place. So far, the Group have been enjoying the sites of Cambuskenneth, Wallace Monument, the grounds of Stirling University, the Kings Park and Bridge of Allan. The Group meets each Monday at 1pm and the walks are usually about 2 hours in duration.

Following a keen interest in trying to learn about computers "from scratch", there is a new group that has been formed, aptly called "Computers for the Terrified".

Drop-in members have also been enjoying various trips out. These have included viewing the Royal Yacht Britannia and a day trip to St Andrews, where some managed to dip their toes in the sea and also had a look around the ruins and the old Cathedral.

Towards the end of July, a number of the members took to walking again as part of a Sponsored Walk from Strathyre to Callander. We are still in the process of collecting the money raised and at the walkers' request, this will be donated to Disability Scotland.

Vanessa Imbens

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