

TOWARDS A MENTALLY FLOURISHING SCOTLAND

THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT IN SCOTLAND 2008-11

Introduction

In October 2007, the Scottish Government launched a discussion paper outlining the proposed future direction for mental health improvement and population mental health for 2008-11. The discussion paper is a part of the Government's health and wellbeing ambitions for a Healthier Scotland and builds on the work of the Scottish Government's National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing. (www.wellscotland.info)

Since the National Programme was launched in 2001, there has been progress in improving mental health and well being, preventing mental health problems and suicide and improving the quality of life, social inclusion, health, equality and recovery of people who experience mental health problems. This work has been supported by a range of national agencies and initiatives such as NHS Health Scotland, 'see me', Breathing Space, the Choose Life National Implementation Support Team, the Scottish Recovery Network, HeadsUp Scotland, ArtFull, Scotland's Mental Health First Aid, the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit, the Centre for Healthy Working Lives, The National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health and others.

There is a desire and a need to build on the momentum generated over the last few years and there is also a recognition that much more needs to be done to achieve the vision of a Scotland where we all understand that there is no health without good mental health, where we know how to support and improve our own and others' mental health and wellbeing, and where flourishing mental health and mental wellbeing contributes to a healthier, wealthier, fairer, smarter, greener and safer Scotland. The discussion document lays out proposed actions to take this forward.

The discussion paper also signals a shift in emphasis and focus from predominately national activity to local actions, to be accompanied by a strengthened cross-Government focus on mental health and wellbeing and supported by a range of national support functions.

The document highlights three main themes for future work, underpinned by a focus on addressing *inequalities* across each theme:

- *Promote* and improve mental health and mental wellbeing.
- *Prevent* mental health problems, mental illness, co-morbidity and suicide.
- *Support* improvements in the quality of life, social inclusion, health, equality, and recovery of people who experience mental health problems or mental illness.

Three key questions are to be addressed during the discussion period:

- What shared objectives and actions for *local delivery* should we make for 2008-11?
- What *national supports* would help local areas meet these objectives and actions?
- How can *progress* (locally and nationally) be monitored and evaluated?

Discussion and dialogue with key stakeholders

A range of activities is taking place to help facilitate input from Local Authorities, NHS Boards and other key partners to the forward planning of mental health improvement in Scotland in response to the proposals set in the discussion document. There are to be two key national events to help learn from the experience of local partners and communities of interest in promoting mental health and well being at population level, and to find out what national and local partners thoughts, views and suggestions are in relation to the three key questions to help inform the mental health improvement forward action plan for 2008 -2011.

National discussion events

Two events will take place in early 2008 to inform the future priorities and actions.

1. Inequalities and mental health improvement

This is an event designed to bring people together who have experience of working to improve the mental health and well being of individuals and communities in the context of disadvantage, deprivation and other inequalities. The event will aim to identify and summarise what has been learnt and locally and nationally and suggest objectives and actions for the 2008-2011 mental health improvement forward plan that build on what we know in achieving real and practical progress in addressing inequalities in mental health and mental health problems, illness and suicide. The outcomes of the event will also be fed into the Scottish Government's Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities.

Who should participate?

The event aims to engage with those sectors that have a remit/responsibility to address inequalities through policy development and service delivery, for example Directors of Public Health; LA Health Improvement Officers; regeneration and economic development; social inclusion; Community Planning Partners; COSLA; SOLACE; Royal College of GPs; and the community and voluntary sector.

An outline programme for the day is attached. The working sessions will be structured around settings and life stages: communities; education and workplace; and public services. Each session will begin with a brief presentation of an example of current work, to catalyse discussion to help identify key practical actions that can be taken.

For more details or to register for the event, please contact Janine Bowie, The Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health. Janine@sdcmh.org.uk Tel: 0131 555 5959.

2. National Dialogue Event

This event will aim to bring together key representatives from local areas with key national stakeholders to highlight and draw together local and national perspectives on the discussion document, focusing on the main themes and the key questions posed in the document. The event will also provide people with the opportunity to share their thoughts at a national level and help in the production of local responses to the discussion document.

Who should participate?

The expectation is that each local area will be asked to bring a nominate a delegation of between 6 and 10 people to participate in the event

An outline programme for the day is attached.

For more details or to register for the event, please contact Janine Bowie, The Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health. Janine@sdcmh.org.uk Tel: 0131 555 5959.