

Launch of the new Equality and Human Rights Commission

On 1st October the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) was launched and takes on the work of the former Equality Commissions (the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC)).

In addition the EHRC assumed responsibility for promoting equality and combating unlawful discrimination in three new strands, namely sexual orientation, religion or belief, and age.

The EHRC will also have the main responsibility for the promotion of human rights.

The Commission's remit will cover England, Scotland and Wales and there will be three statutory committees with delegated powers for Disability, Wales and Scotland.

The remit in Scotland, however, will include only non-devolved human rights issues as a matter of course.

Devolved matters invoking human rights will be the responsibility of a separate Scottish Commission for Human Rights.

The three former statutory equality commissions, the CRE, DRC, and EOC all had specific Scottish offices with distinctive Scottish work programmes and

structures.

These commissions along with representatives of the three new equality strands have now formed a group called the Equalities Coordinating Group (ECG).

Meeting once a month, this Group discusses equality issues in Scotland with a focus on enhancing legislation and good practice, often meeting with and lobbying Ministers and MSPs and MPs in order to move the equalities agenda in Scotland forward.

The aim of the Group is to discuss approaches towards equality in Scotland and promoting anti-discrimination in a devolved Scotland through appraising policy and legislation for its impact on equality, as well as acting as a forum for information and communications exchange.

ECG members comprise:

- ◆ CRE
- ◆ DRC
- ◆ EOC
- ◆ Equality Network (sexual orientation)
- ◆ Age Concern Scotland
- ◆ Scottish Inter Faith Council (SIFC)
- ◆ Scotland Office
- ◆ Equality Unit, Scottish

Government

- ◆ Equal Opportunities Committee, Scottish Parliament
- ◆ Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA)

Morag Alexander has been appointed as the EHRC Commissioner for Scotland, with her

remit including chairing the Scotland Committee; development and strategic oversight of the EHRC's annual report and business plan for Scotland and development of policy and strategic priorities; liaison with the Scottish Government and members of the Scottish Parliament and other bodies.

Meantime, the preceding Equality Commissions published a series of interesting reports highlighting:

- ◆ Investment in physical regeneration programmes in deprived areas where a large percentage of Britain's ethnic minority population live
- ◆ Scotland's current housing strategy in relation to disability and race
- ◆ A vision for an integrated Britain with ambitious goals for those entrusted with the job of promoting racial equality in the future.

These reports are available on the VHS website at:

http://www.vhscotland.org.uk/librariy/misc/misc_pub.html



EHRC Commissioner for Scotland, Morag Alexander

The VHS Discussion Forum is now available at www.vhscotland.org.uk/bb



Promoting the voluntary and community sector role in CHPs

The Association of Community Health Partnerships held their Annual Conference in Aviemore over 13th and 14th September.

Nearly 240 delegates heard numerous references in every speaker's presentation to partnership working with the voluntary and community sector

In her keynote address, Nicola Sturgeon, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, also made much reference to the importance of genuine partnerships between the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector.

It was notable then that there were no speakers or exhibition stands provided by voluntary or community organisations themselves to complement this strong endorsement and VHS is seeking ways to overcome some of the challenges to participation at a national level.

This would allow more organisations to be active and engaged at strategic level, making the most of

opportunities to showcase their work and highlight the benefits which partnership working can bring, especially in the areas of health improvement and reduction of health inequalities.

VHS is currently engaged in two pieces of research which will give us a greater understanding of voluntary and community sector involvement in CHPs, which in turn will allow us to promote that involvement more effectively.



The results of the research will be made public at the forthcoming national conference, **CHPs three years on: taking stock and moving forward** (working title), which VHS is holding in partnership with the Councils for Voluntary Service Network (CVS Network) on 20th February 2008 at the Hilton Hotel, Edinburgh Airport.

The conference will focus on four central themes:

- ◆ The engagement of the voluntary and community sector in health improvement in CHPs

- ◆ Achieving public involvement in CHPs through the voluntary and community sector

- ◆ The role of Councils of Voluntary Service in CHPs

- ◆ Stories from the field - showcasing success

There will be a mixture of plenary sessions, workshops and a Question Time style panel session, as well as a marketplace, where organisations from the voluntary and community sector, NHS and local authorities can showcase their partnership work.

The conference will be of value and interest to anyone with an interest in health improvement and the reduction of health inequalities, especially through involvement of the voluntary and community sector, and to those with an interest in promoting greater public involvement.

The venue and the programme for the conference will combine to provide delegates with the ideal opportunity to share experiences, information and knowledge with colleagues from other organisations, sectors and from other parts of the country ... opportunities which can be too few and far between but which are very valuable in themselves.

For further details on how to secure your place at this event, either as a delegate or to exhibit your work, please contact Bill Weir on 0131 652 5993, email bill.weir@vhscotland.org.uk, or email mail@vhscotland.org.uk



Invitation to 2008 *No Smoking Day* Campaign Launch

Presentations will include the **new** campaign for 2008, tips and advice on how to run a **great event** and how to use *No Smoking Day* for your public health work.

All **launches** will be held in **November 2007** at various locations in the UK.

RSVP by Monday **22 October 2007** to mail@nosmokingday.org.uk

Next year's *No Smoking Day* is on Wednesday 12 March 2008

Supporting community-led health improvement

The work of the Task Group on community-led approaches to health improvement and its final report *Healthy Communities: a shared challenge* (2006) gave validity to this approach for public health policy in Scotland.

Now, the Scottish Government Health Improvement Strategy Division has commissioned an integrated programme of multi-agency, multi-level action to implement the Task Group's recommendations and support community-led action at national and local level.

The 12 recommendations in *Healthy Communities* centred on building evidence of effectiveness, improving sustainability and building capacity within the community sector and increasing opportunities for community engagement in local planning partnerships.

As part of the implementation arrangements, CHEX, NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) have undertaken to build an extensive support programme for local community-led health improvement on which CHPs were briefed at their annual conference on 13th and 14th September.

The briefing describes a national capacity-building support programme aimed at helping CHPs and other bodies to support community-led initiatives. The programme will be led by SCDC and CHEX.

The programme will aim to:

- ◆ Achieve common agreement on the purpose of

community-led health improvement

- ◆ Support local communities in assessing local needs
- ◆ Improve partnership working between agencies and sectors
- ◆ Enhance community influence by building skills and confidence
- ◆ Improve solutions through empowerment of practitioners
- ◆ Assemble evidence on the value of community-led health improvement

The support programme will be in three phases:

Phase 1 - September 2007 to March 2008 - Focus groups with potential participants; the creation of community-led health forums in 12 programme areas; development of appropriate training materials

Phase 2 - April to July 2008 - A series of briefing events in the 12 areas to address the issues identified and the materials prepared in the first phase

Phase 3 - August 2008 onwards - Ongoing development support in the 12 areas based on the needs and priorities addressed in the first phases

Accompanying this phased programme will be measures to build the evidence base for the effectiveness of community-led approaches to health improvement and a briefing paper produced by Health Scotland by January 2008 on the ongoing key challenges for community-led health improvement.

For further information about the support programme, contact: Janet Muir, Manager, CHEX - janet@scdc.org.uk - Tel: 0141 248 1990 or Lizanne Conway, Community and Voluntary Sector Programme Manager, NHS Health Scotland - lizanne.conway@health.scot.nhs.uk - Tel: 0131 537 4724

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

CHPs three years on: Taking Stock & Moving Forward

This conference hosted by Voluntary Health Scotland and the Council for Voluntary Services network will take place on **Wednesday 20th February 2008 at the Hilton, Edinburgh Airport.**



A range of themes will be addressed during the day including:

- ◆ The engagement of the voluntary and community sector in health improvement in Community Health Partnerships (CHPs);
- ◆ Achieving public involvement in CHPs through the voluntary and community sector;
- ◆ The role of Council's for Voluntary Service in CHPs
- ◆ Stories from the field - the experience of the voluntary and community sector to date

This conference is aimed at our partners in the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and local authorities and will consist of plenary speakers, workshops and an expert panel session.



Further information on fees and a full programme will be distributed in the near future and will be posted on the VHS website.

Limited exhibition stands will be available. For more detail on how to reserve a stand please contact Bill Weir on 0131 652 5993 or email bill.weir@vhscotland.org.uk

Government to step-up action on Scotland's alcohol misuse

Scotland's principal alcohol strategy, the "Plan for action on alcohol problems: update" published in February this year, plans to produce a long-term vision for changing culture and behaviours over the coming decade.

The plans were drawn up and subsequently reviewed by Labour-run governments.

During the Holyrood elections this May the SNP's manifesto highlighted four of the Plan's many actions and promised to deliver on each if they got into power. These actions are to:

- ◆ Ensure clearer product labelling of unit content and sensible drinking messages
- ◆ Have an effective alcohol education programme, starting in primary schools
- ◆ Have a tough clampdown on irresponsible drinks promotions and under-age drinking
- ◆ Take action to stop deep discounting in shops and supermarkets.

To date there has been a great deal of vocal support from the Scottish Government on these issues but actual changes are yet to materialise.

Kenny MacAskill, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, recently said "So far as implementation [of The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005] is concerned, significant progress has been made, particularly in putting in place the regulations needed to make the Act work."

"Regulations on late-opening conditions, training, closure orders, and a whole range of

technical matters have all been made.

The final regulations needed for transition are being finalised and will complete the arrangements needed to allow the transition period to start in February."

With alcohol misuse statistics such as those highlighted below, changes in Scotland's alcohol strategy are long overdue.

- ◆ People living in the most deprived areas of Scotland are four times more likely to die an alcohol-related death than those in the least deprived areas
- ◆ Between the periods 1987-1991, and 1997-2001, male deaths from liver cirrhosis in Scotland more than doubled
- ◆ The most recent Scottish Health Survey shows that in a usual week over a quarter (27%) of all men drank in excess of the recommended 21 units per week and 14% of all women drank over the recommended 14 units

Jack Law, chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland, said "The year on year rise in alcoholic liver disease deaths shows just how far we have to go in tackling Scotland's problem drinking culture, especially as the European trend is going in the opposite direction.

It is clear that Scotland has reached the point where tackling alcohol misuse must be at the very forefront of our health improvement agenda. The way we are drinking is causing severe and growing damage to health and to society - someone dies from an alcohol-related condition every four hours".

"We need action on both the price of alcohol and its availability, with stricter enforcement of the licensing laws relating to those under-age or drunk.

We want to see more funding and support for brief interventions - where people who are at risk of developing an alcohol problem are given advice on cutting down their drinking at an early stage".



Meanwhile Scotland's first Alcohol Awareness Week runs from 21-27 October 2007, and is one of the initiatives under the

Government's partnership agreement with the alcohol industry.

It is a joint programme of events in which Government, the alcohol industry, health professionals and the voluntary sector are working together to provide useful information to members of the public and promote a joined up message about responsible consumption of alcohol.

As part of the Awareness Week the Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (SAADAT) is organising an expert seminar on 22nd October at Parliament Building in Edinburgh.

The seminar "Everybody's doing it? - A new approach to preventing substance misuse in Scotland" will consider whether a social norms approach to prevention can help reduce problematic substance use, particularly among young adults.

For more information on the awareness week please visit <http://www.alcoholawarenessweek.com> and for detail on the seminar visit <http://www.saadatonline.co.uk>

Better Health Better Care - a discussion document: VHS consults members

Building a Health Service Fit for the Future (The Kerr Report, 2005) laid out recommendations for changing the approach to achieving health in Scotland.

The associated *Delivering for Health* (2005) identified the strategy for action.

Now the Scottish Government has published its discussion document *Better Health, Better Care*, which will be followed by an action plan in December. The discussion document can be accessed at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/betterhealthbettercare>

VHS will respond to the consultation by addressing the specific questions in the document but also by reviewing the suggested actions in the context of *A Vision for the Voluntary Sector* (2005) which identified the key roles of the voluntary sector as: service delivery partner; contributor to strong communities; agent of change; and advocate and contributor to policy development.

Better Health, Better Care reminds us of the recent shift in the balance of health care in Scotland: from acute care in hospital to preventive and long-term primary and community care; from doctor-dependent to whole team care; from reactive, episodic and fragmented care to preventive, continuous and integrated care; from patient dependency to patients as partners.

Better Health, Better Care identifies the opportunities for cross-cutting working created by streamlining government departments, appointing the

first Minister for Public Health and expanding the health and wellbeing portfolio to include poverty reduction, housing, social inclusion and sport. It also reiterates pre-Election commitments to the abolition of prescription charges, the extension of free school meals and the introduction of direct elections to NHS Boards.

Each of the seven sections includes questions for consideration. VHS has added its own questions. In all the areas, we are asked to prioritise proposed approaches and suggest key performance targets for the NHS.

1: Improving your experience of care

- ◆ Do you support direct elections to NHS Boards? Why/why not?
- ◆ How can the voluntary & community sector (VCS) play a greater role in managed clinical networks (MCNs)?
- ◆ How can the VCS improve access to health services, particularly through transport initiatives?

2: Best Value

- ◆ How can the NHS improve its team working with (VCS) partners?
- ◆ What joint resources can be developed with (VCS) partners for better service delivery eg. joint workforce development?
- ◆ How can the public sector maximise the VCS contribution to public service delivery?

3: Taking responsibility

- ◆ How can the VCS encourage people to take an active part in improving their own health?
- ◆ In what areas of health improvement does the VCS already deliver innovative approaches?

4: Tackling health inequalities

- ◆ How can the VCS best contribute to the Task Force on Health Inequalities?
- ◆ How can the VCS maximise its

contribution to improving health inequalities through the recommendations of *Healthy Communities: a shared challenge*?

- ◆ How can the VCS maximise its contribution to improving health inequalities through the Equality and Diversity Agenda?

5: Anticipatory Care and Long Term Conditions

- ◆ How can our sector best support the work of the Long Term Conditions Alliance in Scotland (LTCAS)?
- ◆ Can you identify existing examples of effective self-management and anticipatory care from within the VCS?
- ◆ How can we ensure mainstreaming of good practice in the VCS?

6: The best possible start

- ◆ How can the VCS best support vulnerable families with young children to minimise health inequalities?
- ◆ Can you identify existing examples of VCS support for vulnerable families?
- ◆ How effective is collaboration between sectors in this area?

7: Continuous improvement in healthcare

This section is about improving patient access to healthcare and ensuring the six dimensions of quality.

- ◆ How can the VCS contribute to this agenda?

The consultation period closes on 12th November 2007. We hope to see as much input from members as possible to the response which VHS will make.

To be included, responses should reach us by Thursday 1st November. Our consultation questions will also be posted on the VHS website at: <http://www.vhscotland.org.uk/info/consultation.php>

Village halls contribution to health improvement

Voluntary Health Scotland believes that village halls have the potential to play a very significant role in health in small and rural communities.

People in these communities often find themselves isolated from mainstream health and other services provision.

Local health improvement action centred on the village hall can include smoking cessation support, health visitor sessions with mothers of young children, immunisation clinics and physical activity sessions.

Hands-on health care can also be delivered in this setting - for example, chiropody sessions for older people, blood pressure

monitoring, diabetes care and advice.

VHS asked village halls across Scotland for examples of local health-focused activities and information is beginning to come in.



In Coigach Village Hall in Achiltibuie the local district nurses run health groups and clinics and the GP practice hold weekly surgeries.

The building recently expanded to include a healthcare room which is rented all week by NHS Highland through the Ullapool practice.

The role of village halls in health improvement and health care is the subject of a guest lecture to be given by Heather Batsch of

Roxburgh Association of Voluntary Service following the Voluntary Scotland AGM on 29th November 2007.

The VHS AGM will take place at The Trades Hall in Glasgow at 11am.

The lecture from Heather will be followed by a guided tour of the Trades Hall by Jim Lugton from SCVO and a networking lunch.

For more information about the Coigach Village Hall please visit: http://www.achiltibuie.net/coigach_hall.htm.

Further information about the VHS AGM can be obtained by contacting Alison Crofts on 0131 557 6845 or email: alison.crofts@vhscotland.org.uk

A Compact for Health in Tayside: Joint working between the NHS and the voluntary sector

A partnership agreement known as the Compact for Health was signed off by NHS Tayside and the local voluntary sector in 2004.

The Compact set out shared principles and values for working together and identified key actions for strengthening and enhancing the planning and delivery of health services for the benefit of our local communities.

A multi-agency Compact Implementation Group (CIG) was then set up to take forward key areas of work:

- ◆ Formation of Local Working Groups (LWGs) to progress actions in each geographical area
- ◆ A survey to find out how well the voluntary sector is represented on strategic planning groups and

joint planning groups - this established baseline information

- ◆ Raising awareness of the ongoing joint working between the NHS, local authority and voluntary sector via newsletters and annual reports
- ◆ Production of a good practice guide - a "Framework for Funding the Voluntary Sector" - to facilitate a greater understanding of funding availability and allocation

The multi-agency LWGs comprise representation from the voluntary sector, local authorities and NHS.

Each group is responsible for implementing the Compact for Health and forging stronger links between the statutory and voluntary sectors. Members of the LWGs link into key planning processes such as community planning. These groups

also report back to the multi-agency group (CIG).

The Dundee LWG has also produced a local Compact modelled on the Scottish Compact entitled "*Working better to make Dundee better - a Compact*" the main partners being the voluntary sector, Dundee City Council, NHS Tayside, Tayside Police, Tayside Fire Brigade and Rescue Service, Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Communities Scotland, as well as the academic institutions and the private sector.

For further information on progress within each geographical area, please contact Linda Taylor
Tel: 01382 424071
linda.taylor9@nhs.net

BEMIS reports variable engagement by public bodies with BME communities

BEMIS, the black-led national intermediary body which represents and supports the development of the BME voluntary sector across Scotland, is keen to promote the engagement of diverse communities in public and voluntary sector bodies.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 lays out general duties in terms of eliminating racial discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and good race relations.

Recently, BEMIS commissioned research from **Rock Solid Social Research** with the aim of finding out how well public sector agencies (local authorities, NHS Boards and Police Forces), Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS), and Volunteer Centres were engaging with ethnic minority communities in planning,

reviewing and delivering services.

The overall response rate to the enquiry was 44%, with however only two returns by NHS Boards



(both rural) The key findings include the following:

- ◆ There is a big gap between very good and very poor levels of understanding of race equality and quality of practice on the ground.
- ◆ Good practice is demonstrated by rural as well as urban agencies, and some of the best examples of partnership working exist within rural services.
- ◆ Police Forces are consistent in terms of transparent frameworks, with clear systems for monitoring,

evaluation and review.

- ◆ Within Local Authorities levels of informed knowledge and quality of engagement among staff outwith lead service departments are poorer, often lacking leadership at corporate level.
- ◆ Staff from a significant minority of CVS and Volunteer Centres confuse non-discriminatory practice with "treating everyone equally" and particularly in rural areas, report that the BME community is either "integrated" or "invisible".

VHS is keen to explore in more depth what can be done to encourage NHS Boards to engage better with minority ethnic communities and hopes to see this as the subject of further enquiry.

For further information contact: marion.lacey@rocksolid-research.co.uk or tanveer.parniez@bemis.org.uk

'Living A Healthy Life' self-management programme

The 'Living a Healthy Life' self-management programme started in 2001, but its roots go back to the 1970s when the Long Term Conditions Management Course was developed in the USA to provide a patient education programme for people with arthritis.

The Programme was introduced to the UK by Arthritis Care in the 1990s and a partnership was then established between the MS Society Scotland and Arthritis Care Scotland in 2001.

The Programme is different from most health support services in that it is run by

volunteers who themselves have long-term conditions, rather than by health professionals.

The programme helps people with long-term conditions to manage them more effectively. The free courses, which always have a maximum of 18 participants and which are open to anyone with a long-term condition, are run by volunteer course leaders, lay people who are specially trained to run the course.

The courses are held locally and run for six weeks with weekly sessions of 2.5 hours. Those attending learn a wide variety of techniques and methods for building their self confidence to control their symptoms and the impact on their

lives and families.

Participants learn to work in partnership with their health care professionals, communicating effectively their needs, so sharing responsibility for treatment.

They learn new skills, which include how to manage the symptoms such as pain, fatigue and difficult emotions. These are done through exploring issues including exercise, relaxation, diet, communications techniques, planning and problem solving.

To find out more about the courses call Ailsa Blair on 0131 335 4055 or visit www.mssocietyscotland.org.uk/life-with-ms/learning-more/self-management.html

Young people need support as tobacco law changes

Reducing smoking among young people is a key policy objective of the Scottish Government.

Smoking prevalence in 2004 in adults aged 16-plus in Scotland was 26.5%.

It is likely that the prevalence among young people in poorer communities is much higher than this.

In 2005, the Scottish Executive set a target for reducing the adult smoking prevalence to 22% by 2010, with an additional target for reducing the rate in poorer communities from 37.3% to 33.2% by 2008.

It is therefore imperative to establish a range of approaches, employing educational and community approaches in addition to legislation and structural approaches to reducing tobacco consumption in young people.

Since October 1st, the law prohibits 16 and 17 year-old smokers from buying cigarettes.

It seems however that there will be few extra resources to ensure enforcement of the law and little extra support available to help young people to stop smoking.

Currently, 82% of 15 year-old smokers regularly buy their cigarettes from shops and Trading Standards Officers in Glasgow caught almost a third of shops selling cigarettes to under-16s during an undercover investigation in the City.

Until 2005, a ban on test-purchasing by children limited the collection of evidence by Trading Standards Officers, and led to only eleven

court prosecutions in 2006/07.

Maureen Moore, Director of ASH Scotland said: *"The current age restrictions are not being upheld. It is clear therefore, that adequate resources must be made available so Trading Standards Officers are able to fully support and enforce the law. However, Officers need to have effective enforcement tools as well. A tobacco licensing scheme is necessary for Scotland - this could be used as both an active deterrent and to penalise persistent offenders."*

At the same time, the *Sunday Herald* (16/09/07) found that most NHS Boards do not have plans to specifically target young smokers in the context of the new legislation, with only NHS Shetland carrying out a proactive campaign offering advice through schools on smoking cessation services.

The *Sunday Herald* found that elsewhere support for the 50% of young people who wish to quit smoking is patchy.

While most NHS Boards say that their normal smoking cessation service includes advice for young people, only five Boards - Highland, Lanarkshire, Forth Valley, Glasgow and Tayside - have run some form of specialised support project for young people.

However, new in the Edinburgh CHP is a health campaign aimed at young people, with posters on buses and commercials running in cinemas.

A specialist counsellor will also be appointed to help under-18s stop smoking and there will be a new web page with advice on how to quit.

Stop smoking groups for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual young

people in the Lothians are also running throughout this month.

Young people aged 16 - 18 who are no longer in school, further education, training or work are among the most vulnerable groups in society and are often invisible to mainstream services.

For them, smoking is associated with many other risk factors including alcohol, drugs and their consequences.

Support programmes for these young people therefore have to be carefully targeted, highly imaginative, accessible and acceptable. Approaches that focus on smoking alone are unlikely to succeed.

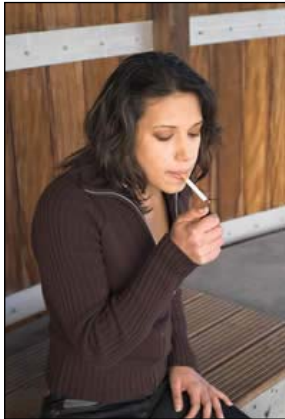
Barnardo's Scotland works extensively with some of the most vulnerable young people in communities, including young offenders.

Health Promotion Co-ordinator Fiona Mitchell commented: *"Smoking cessation support for young people needs to be tailored to their specific needs - they are unlikely to want to join pre-existing groups and information needs to reach them where they are at. Smoking cessation support should be delivered as part of an overall package designed to increase life skills and build confidence."*

VHS is keen to hear from any of its members who are addressing smoking in the wider context of support for vulnerable young people.

If you would like to contribute to this discussion please call Helen Tyrrell on 0131 557 6845 or email:

helen.tyrrell@vhscotland.org.uk



HRIS success at BMA awards

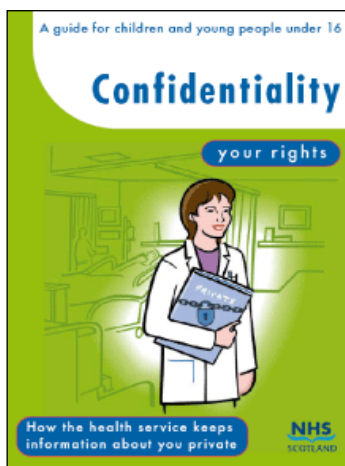
The work of Health Rights Information Scotland has been recognised at the BMA Patient Information Awards 2007.

Their leaflet 'Confidentiality - your rights', which sets out how the health service keeps information about young people private, won first prize in the Patient Information Award (Young People) category.

The panel of judges were particularly impressed by "the range of people and groups, including children, who were involved in the leaflet"

which they felt "shows how seriously this organisation takes the production of information for children and young people".

As well as achieving the special prize for information for young people, the leaflet was also awarded a 'Highly Commended' certificate in the general Patient Information Award category.



Martyn Evans, Director of the Scottish Consumer Council, said:

"The project team has experience in producing high quality, accessible information for patients both in printed form and on the web. This award is an extremely valuable opportunity to highlight their work and fitting recognition of the team's work."

Health Rights Information Scotland is based at the Scottish Consumer Council, and funded by the Scottish Government Health Directorate.

It is a joint initiative to provide consistent, high-quality information for patients for use throughout the NHS in

Scotland.

The leaflet, 'Confidentiality - your rights', has been issued to NHS Boards throughout Scotland for distribution to places within their area that provide NHS care, such as GP and dental surgeries, hospitals and pharmacies.

It is also available from the HRIS website at www.hris.org.uk

Interpreter training in sexual health

With a strong commitment to the growth and development of its British Sign Language and English Interpreters, Deaf Action scored another first recently when it organised vital interpreter training in sexual health.

Russell Alderson, an experienced linguist and trainer, made the journey from London to Edinburgh at the request of Kevin Geddes, Deaf Action's Social Enterprise Manager, to provide some expert tuition on the subject.

No stranger to the interpreting profession, having worked in the field for many years, Russell devised a training session including role play situations and terminology, and how to work in such a sensitive environment.



Russell said, "While working as a freelance interpreter I often worked in medical settings and became very interested in this topic. Working as an interpreter, you not only have to facilitate accurate communication but you must also take into account the cultural sensitivities."

Communication Support Agency Manager, Shaurna Dickson, who took part in the training, added "This was the first time I'd taken part in training on this subject and I found it really informative. Russell gave us some great advice on interpreting in a sexual health environment and reinforced the need to consider the reactions and feelings of clients".

Contact Deaf Action on 0131 556 3128 or email admin@deafaction.org

West of Scotland Patient Focus and Public Involvement Network

The Scottish Health Council is holding its third West of Scotland Patient Focus and Public Involvement Network event on 30th October 2007.

The event will focus on workshops from NHS Boards showcasing and sharing the best of their Patient Focus and Public Involvement activity as well as providing an opportunity for people who

are involved or have an interest in Patient Focus and Public Involvement to share their experiences.

If you would like to attend this event at the Beardmore Hotel and Conference Centre, Clydebank please contact Gillian Macfarlane on 01563 825801 or email: gillian.macfarlane@scottishhealthcouncil.org

National delivery plan for specialist children's services in Scotland

An open meeting is being held on Monday 26th November to discuss the outcomes and recommendations for inclusion in the National Delivery Plan for Specialist Children's Services in Scotland.

The meeting will address the issue of 'How do we ensure services are fit for the 21st century?' and will cover:

- ◆ Delivering Managed Clinical Networks
- ◆ Developing the Workforce for the Future
- ◆ Planning and Commissioning of Services
- ◆ Performance Management - Making it Happen

The event will also discuss the outcomes from the Review of Specialist Children's Services in Scotland in the following key services:

- ◆ Age Appropriate Care
- ◆ Children's Cancer Services
- ◆ Complex Respiratory
- ◆ Dermatology
- ◆ Endocrinology
- ◆ Gastroenterology
- ◆ General Surgery
- ◆ Remote and Rural
- ◆ Rheumatology

The meeting will be held at the MacDonald & Inchyra Grange Hotel in Falkirk.

To register online please visit http://conventions.nss.scot.nhs.uk/event_128 or contact Richard Snowden, Convention Management Service, NHS National Services Scotland on 0131 275 7748 or email richard@conventionmanagement.co.uk

New joint venture for management development

The Managers Development Network (MDN) is a new joint venture between IHM Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland.

It is designed to provide junior, middle and practice health and social care managers across the country with opportunities for enhancing personal and professional development, networking with and learning from colleagues and sharing good practice.



Regular local, regional and national education events will explore the key topics and issues for learning which have already been identified by managers themselves.

IHM Scotland and NES are keen to stress that the MDN is open to all managers, in whatever sector they are working and VHS has discussed with them ways of alerting our sector to opportunities.

VHS and CHEX have worked together to research the learning and development needs of voluntary organisations and the opportunities for management learning created by the MDN are seen as one good way of meeting needs locally.

Most MDN events are free of charge and they are planned to fit in easily to managers' busy working days.

While MDN has undertaken to circulate information via VHS, we suggest that you also contact your local Management Development Network Facilitator for more information.

Local contacts are:

Dumfries & Galloway, Ayrshire & Arran, Lanarkshire, Forth Valley, Golden Jubilee Hospital, State Hospital:
Mary Douglas - 01896 752413 / 07824 474143,
mary.douglas2@nhs.net

Highland, Grampian, Tayside, Western Isles, Shetland, Orkney, NHS QIS:
Charlotte Leggatt - 01463 793400 / 07967 843296,
charlotte@55751.highland-hb.scot.nhs.uk
Brian Blake - 01382 632001 / 07768 264628, brian.blake@nhs.net

Fife, Lothian, Borders, NSS, NES, Scottish Ambulance Service:
Beverley Beasant - 01382 496359 / 07747 792210,
beverley.beasant@nes.scot.nhs.uk

Great Glasgow & Clyde NHS24:
Interim Contact:
Hilary Iannotti Education & Business Manager IHM Scotland - 01292 440395 / 07866 251053,
hilary.iannotti@btopenworld.com

Please visit www.ihmscotland.co.uk/mdn to find out what is happening in your area.

If you know of other managers within your department or organisation who would benefit from joining the network please pass this information on to them.



West Dunbartonshire voluntary sector network takes on strategic role in CHP

Suggesting to the voluntary health organisations in West Dunbartonshire two years ago that they should create a network was met with some scepticism.

However, the opportunity to be consulted and kept informed about developments within the CHP persuaded more than 40 organisations to get involved. Since then, confidence in the group's work has steadily grown.

Along with the Public Partnership Forum (PPF), which has two places, the network now has a representative place on the CHP Board - a first in Scotland and an opportunity that delivers value to both the CHP and the voluntary sector.

The Voluntary Health Sector Network (VHSN) is also represented on the Health Improvement Strategy Group (HISG).

Last year, HISG funding supported successful new initiatives including a carer's survival strategies course and a first aid initiative.

The recent health needs analysis led by the CHP manager provided funds for further health improvement services. It is anticipated that a "commissioning" approach to funding will develop and VHSOs will have more scope to deliver targeted services funded by the NHS.

The Network has also been proactive in supplying detailed information to the CHP Board. Recent research showed how voluntary groups co-operate

with each other to enhance the services to local residents but it also revealed a need to enhance communication with the statutory sector, and highlighted limitations in the recognition given to voluntary sector providers.

It is significant that, among these organisations, only 4% of income (£422,400) was derived from NHS budgets. Of the same organisations, 7% were branches of national organisations, 25% have a West Dunbartonshire-wide focus, whilst 68% have a more local focus, and



48% of the voluntary sector in West Dunbartonshire state that they contribute to some aspect of health provision.

The research has enabled the VHSN to make recommendations to the CHP Board. It notes the scope for improved joint design, planning and delivery of services in order to better serve whole communities. In particular there is untapped value in smaller organisations whose work has an immediacy and client proximity from which all the partners would benefit.

The VHS Network has brought the work of volunteers to the attention of planners and decision-makers. Better informed, the CHP Board now has the opportunity to ensure these valuable contributions get the support they need to continue delivering benefits into some of our most challenged communities - that is the power of information and collective action.

Further information can be obtained from Jethro Jeffery from West Dunbartonshire CVS on 0141 941 0886 or email jethro@wdcvs.com

Research findings send message of hope

At an event in Glasgow on 9th October over 150 people joined the Scottish Recovery Network at the launch of the findings from the Narrative Research Project.

The research draws on the experience of nearly 70 individuals across Scotland to highlight factors that helped and hindered their recovery from long-term mental health problems.

The research report, *'Recovering Mental Health in Scotland'*, shows that people can and do recover from even the most serious and long-term mental health problems.

While recovery is a unique and individual process the research identified a number of common themes including the central role of hope which allowed people to see that it was possible to recover a life beyond illness.

These unique experiences have been used to create *'Routes to Recovery'*, a booklet also launched at the event providing information, suggestions and a strong message of hope for those who are on the journey.

Simon Bradstreet, Director at the Scottish Recovery Network (SRN) said: *"People who experience mental health problems truly are experts by experience... The research was designed with this in mind and the findings should be a source of hope and optimism to people living with mental illness as well as a valuable resource for friends, families, carers and service providers."*

Both *'Recovering Mental Health in Scotland'* and *'Routes to Recovery'* are available on the Scottish Recovery Network website at: <http://www.scottishrecovery.net>

New web-based support for those working with children and young people

With the launch in June 2007 of a much-needed website aimed at supporting people who work with children and young people, extensive advice is now available on how to respond helpfully to children and young people's troubling behaviours or issues as these arise.

The website, www.handsonscotland.co.uk, includes advice, techniques and video clips on a wide variety of topics eg. anxiety, eating problems, self-harm.

The Scottish Needs Assessment Program (SNAP) Report on Child and Adolescent Mental Health (2003) reported typically long waiting times before children or young people with behavioural problems can be seen by a specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) workers, leaving many frontline workers managing troubling behaviours or issues for a long time before help can be accessed.

The SNAP report also found that "... many practitioners reported significant difficulty in accessing specialist services for the young people with whom they work" and went on to say that "... most contact is often provided by those with the least formal mental health training."

Frontline workers reported that they were lacking in the practical skills needed to address troubling behaviours.

Thus, the Playfield Institute in Fife, in collaboration with Barnardo's Scotland and the University of Dundee, was funded by HeadsUp Scotland (the National Project for Children and Young People's Mental Health, established by

the Scottish Executive in 2004) to develop a national toolkit of practical resources for frontline workers.



The toolkit was developed in response to

workers' expressed needs, with sections being written by specialist workers.

A pilot study was conducted by the Playfield Institute to ensure that the website was meeting its aims.

Overall feedback from this was very positive, with any problems highlighted by frontline workers being considered and acted upon where possible.

The majority of participants (87%) reported that the toolkit would make feel better equipped to do their job.

The Playfield Institute will maintain the toolkit for one year, during which time an evaluation of the website will be conducted.

The HandsOnScotland website was designed specifically for frontline workers without any specific background, training or knowledge of child and adolescent mental health issues - social workers, foster carers, youth workers, nursery and school nurses, as well as teachers, including guidance teachers.

The Website should prove especially useful to the many hundreds of voluntary workers and volunteers who are engaged with children and young people.

Contact: Wendy Simpson, Institute Head of Research and Development.
Telephone: 01334 696015
E-mail: w.simpson@nhs.net
www.handsonscotland.co.uk

Mental Health Week welcomes public health expert from USA

During this year's Mental Health Week (8th - 14th October) a US expert in public health and sociology appeared at a number of events to discuss mental wellbeing.

Dr Corey Keyes from Emory University in Atlanta

highlighted that positive mental wellbeing is essential for our overall health.



Keyes pointed out that the quality of life should be as important as the quantity. He thinks the public health focus needs to move from illness and disease to health and well-being and has called for a complementary approach to health care, one that integrates behavioural and social sciences into medicine and public health.

A key component of this, and the one that Keyes is most interested in, is mental health. "Good mental health requires more than the mere absence of mental illness," he believes.

At the same time the Scottish Association of Mental Health (SAMH) has called for increased spending on mental health.

Charlie McMillan, SAMH director of research, influence and change, said: "The spend in terms of mental health and wellbeing has been significant in the past few years but this has to be seen in relation to the cost of physical and mental health problems in Scotland as a whole.

"It has to increase if we are to have a sustained impact on the promotion of mental health and wellbeing for everyone in Scotland."

Contact SAMH on 0141 568 7000