



PURPOSE OF THIS NEWSLETTER

This publication is specifically designed for carers of those receiving older people's mental health services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. It helps them to know about and have a voice in service planning and delivery, locally and nationally.

Older People and mental health

According to the Mental Health Foundation* it is estimated that 18% of the general population in the UK are of pensionable age and that this figure will grow to 20% by 2025.

As a society, we tend to assume that older people will develop mental health problems as a 'normal' aspect of ageing. Most older people do not develop mental health problems, although a significant minority does. For example:

- about 25% of people over 85 have dementia
- between 10-15% of people over 65 have depression
- between 4-23% of older adults seen by medical staff have an alcohol problem

In addition to those older people who have an identifiable mental illness such as dementia, there are many who experience psychological or emotional distress associated with isolation, loneliness or loss. These problems are not recorded by the health or medical care system.

In 2006, Age Concern and the Mental Health Foundation joined forces to support the launch of a report from an independent Inquiry into 'Mental Health and Wellbeing in Later Life'.

They are currently producing a comprehensive work programme on older people's mental health issues, which will feed in to their policy work.



They want you to have your say on policy work including older people and mental health issues. By providing them your contact details, they will be able to:

- inform you of which policy work subjects we are concentrating on
- invite you to feed in your opinions and experiences to help inform our policy work
- build up a database of people who are interested in contributing their views on policy and mental health

*To find out about the work of the Mental Health Foundation call 020 7803 1100 or email mhf@mhf.org.uk

You can also visit their website at www.mentalhealth.org.uk

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New Scheme to help the Armed Forces

A new scheme which helps armed forces veterans and current personnel and their families is to be piloted in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The 'Armed Forces Community Welfare Pathway' aims to improve access to important local services for serving and former military personnel.

The Ministry of Defence has chosen the Vale of Glamorgan Council to launch the scheme in Wales. Currently only three councils in England and one in Scotland are piloting the scheme.

The Vale council has appointed Cllr Janice Charles as the council's Armed Forces Community Champion, she said: "I encouraged the council to take part in the scheme as I feel very strongly that we should support our armed forces and veterans. There are terrible cases of veterans living in poor conditions when there is help available for them, but they do not know how to access the support.

"I believe this scheme will make it easier for troops, their families, and veterans to access the services that are there to help them. They serve their country nobly and they should not go wanting for the lack of help and information."

A key feature of the Welfare Pathway is a new National Point of Contact telephone number, 08000 223366, which will increase the chance of people getting the help they need - particularly those who don't know where to turn to for advice.

Sgt Stu Taylor, of Harlech Flight at St Athan, has first hand experience of the service and has recommended it to friends returning from overseas tours. He commented: "Having a single point of contact for a wide range of services is particularly useful for families returning from overseas. Coming back to the UK is a time of upheaval for families and the Welfare Pathway saves having to call several different numbers."

Some of the benefits that serving personnel, their families and veterans can access through



the Welfare Pathway are:

- * Advice about access to NHS services
- * Information about help for veterans with mental health problems
- * Help and advice about education, skills and careers
- * Help with affordable and social housing
- * Help with transport, including Blue Badges and concessionary transport
- * Advice about, and access to, affordable childcare

If the pilots are successful the scheme will be rolled out nationally in April 2011.



For more information on carer events and involvement in the Vale contact Matthew Salisbury on 029 2022 2000

Feedback on our Evaluation

Between February and April this year we commissioned an evaluation of the work we do to involve Carers and Service Users in the planning and delivery of Older People's Mental Health Services in Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan.

We wanted to:

1. Measure how far the Project has met its aims and objectives over the past three years
2. To highlight its achievements to date
3. To explore the reasons why it remains such a challenge to engage the majority of older people's mental health service users and their carers
4. Identify ways that the project can build on its previous success to ensure its future sustainability

The evaluation was carried out through a review of documents and extensive interviews with carers, service users, and staff and professional colleagues in the health services.

Amazingly, and well beyond expectation, 179 people contributed to the evaluation (of those 17 were older people with mental health needs and 131 were carers).

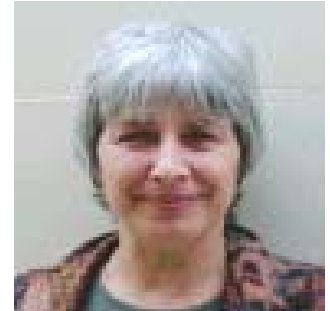
We would like to officially thank everyone who participated. To those carers, service users and colleagues in service provision in both statutory and voluntary sectors, we appreciate your contribution.

We were pleased to receive much praise for our work and also suggestions for improvement.

Areas of good work include:

- This newsletter *Involvement News*
- Good links with service providers
- **Organisation and management** of meetings, events and other opportunities for involvement (such as Stakeholder Meetings, Carer Meetings, Training)
- **Influencing** both local and national developments
- Providing Carer representatives for Joint Planning Meetings

The evaluation was undertaken by Dr Rosie Tope, a specialist health researcher and also a carer for her husband who has dementia.



- **Skill** of the project team
- The compilation and distribution of the **Directions** publication

Areas for improvement include:

- Using different ways and means to involve carers and service users, such as meeting times and locations or telephone interviews
- Making clear the difference between this project and the work of others such as the Alzheimer's Society and the Community Health Councils
- Getting more carers and service users involved 'at the right level at the right time'
- Training for carers on being a 'representative' for themselves and others

The report emphasized the need for continued funding for this work to ensure carer and service users voices are heard in the development of the mental health services. It also highlighted an unsurprising key reason why more are not involved " *the majority are just too busy caring and there is not enough available support to release them from this duty*".

Final thanks to Rosie for the extensive work undertaken (above and beyond the call of duty!)

**We've only been able to touch on the report here. If you want more information about the evaluation, would like to find out more about the work of involving carers and service users, or becoming involved yourself in some way please get in touch. Telephone Jane, Matt or Matthew on 029 2022 2000*

Your thoughts on care homes

The Enhanced Dementia Care Project is currently being run by Cardiff County Council and is aiming to improve the quality of dementia care across Cardiff. This project is currently in the process of producing a booklet for carers of people with dementia who are considering a placement in a care home. The booklet will give guidance and information on the sort of questions carers should be asking about the care homes they are considering. The guidance will cover all aspects of care homes including the different types of home, fees and the quality of the environment and personal care.

The project group would really like to have some pieces expressing the personal experiences of care homes from the perspective of carers of people with dementia. These pieces can cover any aspect of your experience of care homes. This could be through a short prose piece (no more than 300 words), a poem, a short phrase, a quotation or other media. It would need to be able to go in to a booklet format and the project are not able to give any guarantees that every piece will go in.

Here is an example of a poem about a care home to give you an idea of what they are looking for. Please send your pieces to Matt or Jane at Cardiff and Vale Mental Health Development Project. We will be collecting these and passing them on to Becky Vangasse, the lead for the Enhanced Dementia Care Project. If you would like to discuss this further please contact us on 02920 222 000.

Blue Tunics

I have seen angels.
Not fabulous creatures,
not Heavenly Bodies
beating vast white wings
as they travel that void
between heaven and earth,
Or Golden Images in
Houses of God.

My angels
are clad in blue tunics
need tea-breaks and a
"Good night out."

My angels
wash uncomprehending faces,
uncontrolled bottoms
and patiently, kindly
interpret the needs of those
who cannot explain.

My angels
have hands so gentle
smiles so caring
hearts so giving
I am humbled in praise.

My angels
will be found at Cae Glas
and daily, constantly
I thank God
and ask Him to
Grant them
His Blessing.



Mental Health Services for Older People (MHSOP) Directorate Celebrates!

MHSOP within Cardiff and Vale ULHB won two awards at the recent Mental Health and Learning Disability Nursing Awards 2009-10. The ceremony was held in the All Nations Centre in Cardiff and attended by representatives of Mental Health and Learning Disability Nursing from across Wales.

Jan Morgan, Clinical Governance Support Nurse, won Older Peoples Mental Health Nurse of the Year. MHSOP Refocusing Nurses won Best Contribution to Inpatient Mental Health Care.

The ceremony was attended by Rosemary Kennedy, Chief Nursing Officer for Wales and the awards were presented by Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Health. Clinical Nurse Leader Diane Thomas was commended for her leadership of Refocusing Nurses, and of course Mandy King Lecturer Practitioner, won an award last year, partly also for her contribution to the development of this project.

Other good news being celebrated by the Directorate is the Royal College of Psychiatrists Accreditation for Inpatient Mental Health Services (AIMS) in Whitchurch Hospital.

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A word from a carer...



On Monday the 5th July I was invited to an evening function at the Pier Head Building in Cardiff Bay. It was Alzheimer's Awareness Week. The event was organised by the Alzheimer's Society. I had no preconception of what to expect. The evening event turned out to be both poignant and encouraging. I will remember it for the rest of my life.

A speech was given by a Mr David Mcwade, a Methodist minister from North Wales. He told the audience that he has Alzheimer's. His speech came from the heart. He said how this illness is affecting his life. He could not write his speech because it had become too difficult for him to read, in his words "it was too exhausting". After years of being an avid book reader, no longer being able to read was one of his most enjoyable past-times he missed the most.

His speech clarified so much for me. For the first time since my husband had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's I understood what my husband had experienced. If only my husband could have told me himself all the feelings and fears he had I would have had such a better understanding of how this illness was affecting him. Mr Mcwade ended his speech by telling us that he could deal with his illness because he had two wonderful inspirations in his life, his faith and his amazing wife.

Before I left I spoke to Mr Mcwade and thanked him for his wonderful talk. It was a privilege and an honour to meet this incredibly honest and modest man. That was the poignant part of the evening. The encouraging part of the evening was seeing so many people from many different organisations who work to improve the lives of Alzheimer's sufferers, their carers' and their families and to take away the stigma that still exists with this illness and to bring to Government and local authorities attention how this illness must become a priority issue now.

Who Cares? So many, many people, more than we can ever envisage.

Pauline Johnson

If you have something you would like to include in the next issue of Involvement News, be it your story, an event or meeting you went to that you'd like to share, or anything that you feel may be of interest to the our readers please get in touch. Contact Jane on 029 2022 2000 email jane@cvmhdp.org.uk

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Accreditation recognises the achievements of staff and reassures service users and carers. The AIMS-Older People Standards Accreditation was introduced in Jun 06 to identify and acknowledge wards that have high standards of patient care and organisation, and to support and enable others to achieve these. In order to achieve accreditation wards have to undergo rigorous review of the general standards, timely and purposeful admission, safety, and therapeutic environment.

Evidence is gathered by self review, completion of questionnaires by patients, carers, staff, and ward managers. Completion of checklists, Health Record Audits, Environment and facilities audit and a standards of care review. A peer review visit is undertaken by a one day visit by external review team (made up of Carers, Service Users, and Professionals) in order to validate the self review findings and provide an opportunity for discussion e.g. sharing of ideas, make suggestions, offer advice and give support. A recommendation of accreditation status is then made by Accreditation Advisory Committee.

Last year West 1 was the first older people's ward in Wales to achieve accreditation with excellence. They have been followed by West 2 who were successfully accredited earlier this year. The remaining Acute Inpatient wards of West 4 Whitchurch, and Morgannwg and St Barrucs wards in Barry Hospital have gone through the review process and are waiting to hear the accreditation outcome. Accreditation is valid for 4 years, subject to satisfactory completion of an annual self-review.

By Diane Thomas CNL : Acute Inpatient Assessment MHSOP Directorate

Opportunities for Involvement in Cardiff & Vale (open to carers and those with caring experience)

If you are interested in anything shown below please call Matt, Jane or Matthew on 029 2022 2000



Hospital Laundry Services—your opinion is required

Do you have a view about the laundry service used by the hospitals?

The University Local Health Board (uLHB) currently holds a contract for the laundry with a company called ABU. As this contract is due to expire they have undertaken a tendering process. The tenders have now been received.

The uLHB need a panel of users (and carers) for the service to attend an Adjudication Meeting to analyse the responses, and if felt appropriate to have a site visit to the two companies who have responded being ABU and Gwent Laundry.

If you are interested in being a part of the panel, or would more information, please contact Jane, Matt or Matthew on 029 2022 2000 or by email on jane@cvmhdp.org.uk

We are able to pay any travel expenses incurred.



Can you give a carers' perspective?

Talk to student nurses

There is another opportunity this summer to speak to student nurses who are going to work on local older people's mental health wards.

Now, before they go into the work place, is an ideal time to meet them to talk a bit about your experience as a carer of a relative or friend which will help them to develop their nursing skills.

You will need to be a carer or recent carer of an older person who has received care from nurses who work for the University Local Health Board. Obviously the more experience you have in this area the more you will be able to share with the students. They are interested in meeting carers, learning from you, and hearing what you think has been good and not so good practice in your experience.

The date for the meeting (which lasts about 1hr) is Tuesday 27th July 2008 at 10.30am in central Cardiff.

If you are interested in attending with some other carers Jane can give you more information on 029 2022 2000. We pay travel expenses or can provide a lift.

Psychology Involvement

The Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology has opportunities for carers to become involved in its recruitment and training of Post Graduate students.

These opportunities will include sitting on interview panels selecting the students, giving a carer perspective to students in training sessions or sitting on a meeting of academic staff, carers and service users which looks at ways to enhance involvement.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities contact Matt on 02920 222000 for more information.

Carers Trained in Recruitment for the Health Board

A small group of ex-carers has shown an interest in helping to recruit staff for the University Health Board. They have been on a short training course and are now waiting for their first panels. This is a great opportunity for carers and ex-carers to have a say in the appointment of staff within the Mental Health Services for Older People.

If anybody else would be interested in helping with this role there is likely to be another training course later in the year. Please contact Matt at the Development Project for more information on 02920 222000

Carers Involvement Group (in older people's mental health services) run by Jane & Matt

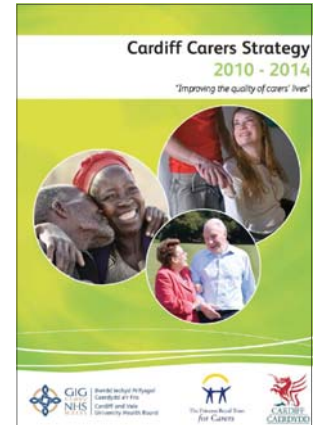
The next meeting of the Carers Involvement Group will be 2.00pm on Wednesday 25th August 2010 at Solace, 1 Park Road, Whitchurch. Please come along if you can. You are more than welcome to come and see if you'd like to become a member without obligation. We pay carers travel /fuel expenses.

On Wednesday 16th June there was an enjoyable and successful day devoted to the army of unpaid family carers who look after those with learning difficulties, physical challenges and mental health problems such as dementia.

The morning was an opportunity for carers to get a bit of pampering along with some training. Carers had free Reflexology sessions and were also given free training in accessing and navigating around the internet.

The Carers Participation Group was also launched. This is the main way for Cardiff County Council to involve, consult and communicate with carers. The group gives carers a unified voice and enables professionals and carers to talk to one another. There are lots of ways to get involved including attending meetings, joining an internet forum and completing questionnaires. To find out more contact Nicola Hayne, the Carers Policy and Development Officer on 02920 873631 or e mail carers@cardiff.gov.uk .

It was a busy day at County Hall because the Carers Strategy (pictured) was also launched in the afternoon. This strategy has been developed by the Carers Advisory Planning Group and sets out the aims and objectives in terms of ensuring that carers needs are met in the coming years.



David Francis, the Chair of the new University Health Board and Mike Murphy, Head of Adult Services at the Council gave the strategy their full endorsement. It is acknowledged that it is vitally important that health and social care services are working together and signed up to the same principles and policies. This document is an important step towards achieving successful partnership working.

Sue Hutton from the Carers Centre spoke about the importance of providing carers with the right support and advice when needed.

Rosie Tope, who cares for her husband who has dementia, spoke eloquently and movingly about her experience of caring and the devastating impact it had on her and her husband's lives. Despite, the challenges she had faced, Rosie showed the positivity, humour and steadfastness that are the hallmarks of so many carers.

If anybody would like a copy of the Carers Strategy contact Nicola Hayne on 029 2087 3631



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Matt, Jane & Matthew, Development Workers

What is the Cardiff & Vale Mental Health Development Project?

We support carers and service users of mental health services to know about and have a voice in service planning and delivery. To do this we have dedicated Development Workers who work in partnership with voluntary agencies and statutory services.

This publication is specifically designed for carers of those receiving older people's mental health services to get information and to become involved.

We aim to update this newsletter once every two months. All information in this publication is provided to the best of our knowledge. If you have anything you would like to include in a future issue please contact us, we'd be pleased to hear from you.

Riverside Advice—Mental Health Carers Project

Riverside Advice is a well established provider of information/advice and practical assistance for Cardiff residents who are experiencing problems with welfare benefits and debt matters.

The Mental Health Carers Project is funded by Cardiff County Council Adult Services and has been operational for just over two years. The project has been well-promoted amongst carer involvement groups and agencies and referrals come from a variety of agencies as well as self-referrals from clients themselves. A dedicated project worker from Riverside Advice who specialises in welfare benefits advice and mental health issues is able to visit carers in their own homes to assist them with their welfare benefits related issues.

By telephoning Riverside Advice on 029 2034 1577 carers can be quickly assessed to ensure the project meets their needs and appointments can be made for clients to be seen at the advice offices or in their own homes.

The project is flexible in terms of the hours that home visits can be booked, acknowledging the fact that carers have responsibilities that cannot easily be dealt with by another person.

Services that the project assists carers with include benefit checks to ensure maximisation of income; identifying eligibility for new and additional welfare benefits claims; liaison with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Disability & Carers Service to resolve ongoing problems and queries; form filling, especially for Disability Living Allowance claims and renewals; and Tribunal representation. The advice and assistance provided under this project is completely free, confidential and impartial. The standard financial eligibility checks required by some agencies and projects do not apply to this project; consequently, access to this service is more widely available.

At present, morning and afternoon appointments are offered for Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and can take place at the office of Riverside Advice or the client's home according to the client's needs/preference.