

O'People
be gentle to
yourself...

The title of the completed "Muslim Faith, Mental Health and Wellbeing" resource. Launch in December Nicola Sturgeon MSP (Deputy First Minister for Scotland) along with the speakers from NHS GGC&C and the Head Imam of Glasgow Central Mosque. The resource has been taken up by the mosques in Glasgow and Fife Council has approached us to print and utilise the resource too. Further work is also being developed with the Sikh faith based on this resource with health and service user lead groups

Developing a Leadership programme

Building on our previous diversity program we have started work on establishing a group of skilled community leaders who will lead on awareness raising and development work in seven specific interest areas:

Minority ethnic women, young people, older people, people who are in the justice system, people with dual diagnoses, people with experience of domestic abuse and people who live in remote and rural areas.

So far we have recruited and trained 15 people focusing on the 1st three specific interest areas and the community leaders are currently at varying stages of development.

The work involved building links and capacity with service user lead groups and mainstream equality organisations. Groups and organisations so far that are involved in this work are (Age Scotland, FDAMH, Young Scott, ACUMEN, HUG and Positive Futures Positive Prisons).

We aim to recruit and develop a second batch of leaders by the end of the year with all of the seven areas having been progressed by the 2014 AGM.

Finally we would like to thank you as our individual members, group members, associate members and advisors. We would also like to say a huge thank you to the Mental Health Foundation for their continued support and encouragement in helping VOX to thrive!

Without your efforts on our behalf and without you freely giving of your time to make your views known VOX would not be the successful organisation we are.

We are sought out by government, statutory partners and the third sector as the organisation to come to hear the service user voice and that is down to you all.
We thank you!

**Wendy McAuslan
VOX Development Coordinator**



VOX

Voices Of experience

**ANNUAL REPORT
2012 - 2013**

Foreword, Joyce Mouriki, VOX's Chairperson

Forward, Joyce Mouriki, VOX's chairperson

VOX has had an exciting year, one which has been full of opportunities to use your views to influence how services and society develops and takes into consideration the voice of people who have mental health problems.

Our organisation has carried out information gathering sessions on issues such as social media and personalisation. We have also looked at the complex area of how people with mental health problems would want their friends and family to be involved in their care. Another on-going area we are looking at is spending cuts - what has happened to people with mental health problems over the last two years? This will shape how we aim to influence services and welfare reform over the next few years.

In addition to this we have provided training sessions for our group members, and capacity building work within Aberdeenshire.

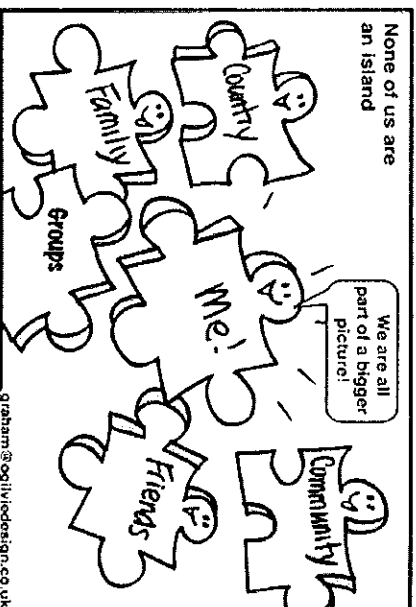
We are further developing our work around diversity issues by supporting community leaders rather than carrying out the work ourselves. So far this has resulted in 15 people being recruited and trained, and work strands being progressed on a number of areas such as minority ethnic women, young people and older people.

There are some exciting opportunities to be involved with 'see me' in the future to ensure that the individuals with mental health problems are at the heart of the way in which Scotland's anti-stigma campaign develops.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in VOX in the last year, particularly our members who have given their views and positively influenced services and society.

VOX's chairperson

Joyce Mouriki



Background to VOX

The need for a way to bring together the voice of mental health service users in a meaningful way was explored at an Open Space Event which was held in Dundee in 2004. The event was attended by 102 service users from across Scotland and as a result of the ideas shared, a clear mandate was given to the steering group to develop a national service user led organisation to represent mental health service users in service design and delivery matters at a national level.

An interim management group began work to develop a 3 year Development Plan, Business Plan and a Constitution. In addition, funding was sought to provide VOX with a Development Coordinator. The Scottish Government Mental Health Division in recognition of the need to develop a more consistent and representative approach to engaging with those who are affected by Scottish policy and service development, agreed to fund VOX during its development period.

VOX was launched in December 2006, and has since been developing and growing to become an inclusive and sustainable organisation.

On the 25th of June 2010 VOX became a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Objectives

VOX's objectives are as follows:

To develop, support and sustain an accountable, national organisation of, and for, people who

have or have had mental health problems.

To be a source of information, support and guidance in developing the capacity of people who have or have had mental health problems to participate in civil society and in the development of services which they may manage.

To offer a structure for people to communicate with each other and other organisations, so that they can exchange opinions, perspectives and experiences.

What we do

We are a national mental health members led charity and we work in partnership with mental health and related services to ensure that people with mental health problems get every opportunity to contribute positively to changes in the services that serve them and society more generally. VOX has both individual and group membership.

VOX produces a newsletter which is free and allows individual and group members to have their voices heard and it is a chance to hear about people's work across Scotland in relation to mental health. VOX also send out weekly updates to members which includes news and events in Scotland. In addition to this we also produce a Diversity e-Bulletin looking at mental health from diverse community perspectives. VOX also arranges consultation events and focus groups and are constantly developing opportunities to allow people to have their say on specific topics.

Who's involved?

VOX Members, as the ownership of VOX belongs with its members.

Board of Directors

Joyce Mouriki	Chairperson
Francis Fallon	Vice-Chairperson
Dougie Pickering	Secretary
Gordon A. Johnston	Treasurer
Colin Murchie	
Tracy Laird	
John Sawkins	
Pamela V. Shanks	
Carol Mapley	
Dianna M. Manson	
David B. Harrison	

Non-member directors

William A. Davidson
Richard E. Norris
Dr. Alison Thom

Advisors

Elaine Hunter, Allied Health Professionals Adviser
Ronald A. Franks, Legal Adviser
Derek Barron, Nursing Adviser
Kate McCormack, Social Work Adviser

VOX Staff Team

Wendy McAuslan, VOX Development Coordinator
Mahmud Al-Gailani, VOX Diversity Facilitator
John Steel, VOX Administration Officer

Your views have shaped how VOX develops

We continue to ensure that, at our members' meetings, you have the opportunity to set VOX's priorities, remember it's your organisation not ours!

In the VOX AGM which took place during September 2012, we discussed views around choice, medication and safety; we wrote a report around this which covered issues such as the importance of informed/educated choice, the role of alternatives to medication and the importance of the quality of relationships with medical staff. In addition to this there were some important points made around more complex situations, for example when individuals lack

insight/awareness and what should be done in these situations, this has linked into our more recent work on the role of family and friends within our care.

In December 2012 we held the winter festival meeting where we revisited good practice guidelines in terms of service user involvement, followed by open space sessions where our members prioritised the key issues that were important to them. This led to refreshed guidelines being produced and a focus for the work over the subsequent few months. The key issues which were identified included the following:

- Appropriate Services e.g. Person centred, flexible, values based, crisis services.
- Communication e.g. social media, information sharing, overcoming difficulties, and barriers, how to resolve problems.
- Medication – other options. Dynamics between staff and patients; openness about side effects and choices.
- Personalisation, links with spending cuts, worry over what this means within mental health.
- Welfare benefits, changes taking place, awareness of changes, influence, assessments.

So what have we done?

Good practice Guidelines - refreshed

We have refreshed our good practice guidelines and will utilise them to influence service providers and other organisations.

Personalisation

We have carried out a consultation on personalisation alongside HUG – action for mental health (in the highlands), PLUS in Perth, and the Mental Health Network Greater Glasgow.

What we found: Those who participated felt that whilst control and choice seem like great underpinning principles, they were worried that some of the key issues that most affected their life (such as inclusion and reforming social networks whilst unwell) may not be

adequately addressed using this model. They also raised concerns over how many people would be eligible to access self-directed support (SDS) for mental health problems, and a lack of consistency in where and when you would hear about SDS in the mental health system. There were also discussions about how services could be affected by a move towards personalisation, and how this may all become tangled up with spending cuts more generally. We will make sure that these issues are kept on the agenda and we aim to influence service development to reflect these views.

This area of work has also led to the initiation of a follow up piece of work around the spending cuts where we will be looking at the wider issues around cuts to services and other issues that impact financially on those with mental health problems.

Social Media, Technology and Mental Health

Four focus groups were held in Scotland to gather people's experiences of using social media and technology in relation to mental health.

What we found

- One of the main points was that not everyone knows how to use social media and technology, there seemed to be a growing divide between the disengaged and those who utilise social media regularly.
- Social media is updated all the time and some feel that they cannot keep up to date with it. Cost was also an issue.
- There are various Apps that some people use such as mood tracker which keeps tracks of one's mood and works out potential causes; many felt this was a useful tool in terms of self-management.
- Many prefer face to face contact rather than socialising on sites like Facebook and Twitter. However, there are people who are very isolated and the only way they can socialise or have contact with family and friends, is through social media.

This has helped us to develop a position on our members' views around social media and technology, and shall be utilised to shape future discussions on this topic.

Peer activism WORKS!



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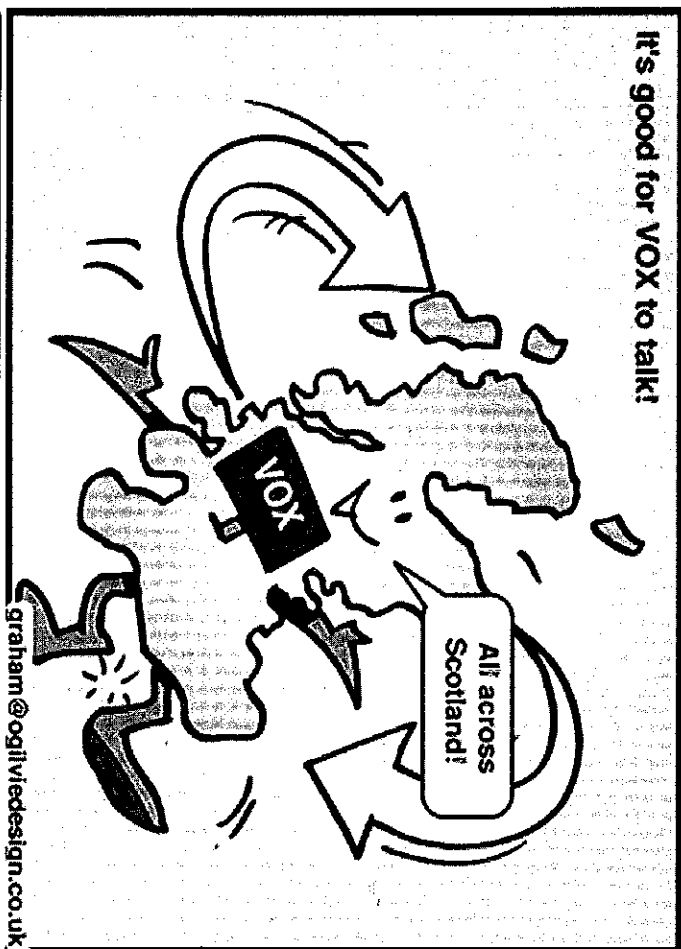
Work capability Assessments

In addition to information gleaned via our members meetings research has been carried out to gather our members' views on work capability assessments; this was sent onto the Department of Work and Pensions to influence issues around mental health and the assessment. 32 people were involved in the research itself with a larger

number of members joining discussion groups over the course of the year.

Again we will use what you have said to positively influence the direction of travel in relation to the benefits system.

It's good for VOX to talk!



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We share good practice with others, locally, nationally and internationally

Another key objective for VOX is to help improve the quality of service that people who experience mental health problems encounter. VOX therefore works to share examples of good practice both internally, with individuals, group and associate members as well as with wider stakeholder groups and organisations.

In order to influence the quality of mental health services, VOX members are supported to talk about their experiences within services at a wider range of events and meetings. VOX gave

an opportunity for two individuals to attend the IIMHL (International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership) Conference which took place in Auckland New Zealand during March 2013 where we learned from other countries and shared good practice which takes place in Scotland. This learning will be shared with the wider membership and we plan to progress some key strands of work.

Capacity Building for Individuals, Groups and Organisations

VOX continues to build the capacity of individual service users, groups and organisations.

Training

In September 2012 we held three training sessions aimed at our group members to provide training which they had previously identified as being areas they would benefit from further training in. This included; Research skills, Community development, Co-production and Evaluation (LEAP evaluation methods).

The training was attended by 22 people, and was evaluated very successfully. The following points were made by those who attended.

"It gave me space to think about the topic"

"It was helpful to share information and help build the capacity of our organisation"

"Sharing experience with other workers and organisations was great"

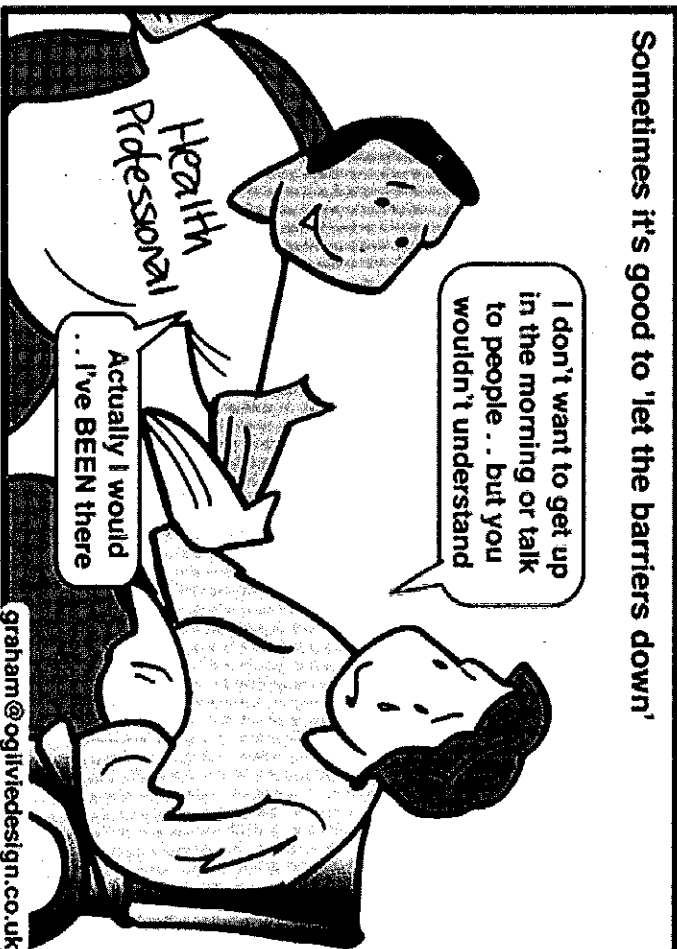
"The interactive/mutual learning aspect is really helpful for us"

Aberdeenshire

A key area of work for VOX is to increase opportunities for people in areas where there is not a great deal of capacity for having their voice heard on mental health issues. In response to a number of requests for capacity building work in Aberdeenshire VOX held an event on the 23rd of March 2013 in the Park Inn Aberdeen to encourage individuals within this geographical area to have a voice on mental health issues.

The event explored good practice in collective advocacy, views on how a mechanism to have a voice could be developed, and how we could support this in the short term with a view to develop a sustainable group. On the day of the event we utilised the skills of a cartoonist, and had support from a local band to ensure that the event was fun and inclusive in terms of style of involvement.

Sometimes it's good to 'let the barriers down'



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Improving Services

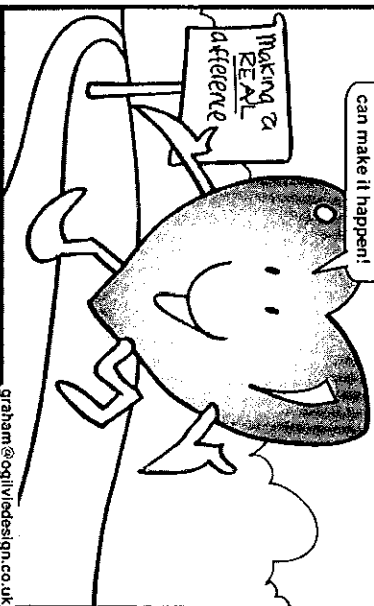
VOX sits on a range of groups whereby collaborative working helps to ensure that service users' views are taken into account, this includes;

- Royal College of Psychiatrists health problems.
- Psychological Matrix Steering Group In order to improve services we have had a range of ways of influencing, including the following;
- Patient Safety
- Scottish Recovery Indicator (SRI) Inputting VOX's views on the Mental Health Strategy to the Royal College of Psychiatrists.
- Suicide and Self Harm National Group Supporting the Development of the Climate Tool in Patient Safety (a tool which takes the individuals views onto account)
- Person Centredness
- Adult Health and Social Care Integration Continuing to support the development of the SRI (now SRI2), a tool for changing the culture of mental health services to make them more recovery focussed.
- Mental Health Cross Party Group Continuing to be involved in the development of the Psychological Matrix
- Mental Health Tribunals System Discussions with the Deputy Director of Integration and Service Development to discuss the integration consultation raising issues within mental health.

When representatives attend these groups they draw from work which VOX has carried out with its members, or other service user reports to ensure they are representing the views of those who have or have had mental

It's great to talk about the things we are passionate about

People with passion can make it happen!



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Involving the Bill Team Leader, Adult Health and Social Care Integration and the head of Protection of Rights Unit, Mental Health Division, Scottish Government to meet with our directors and consider key issues which have been highlighted to us. Members' presentation about mental health law and service users at the Cross Party Group on Mental Health.

Awareness Raising

Through Facebook, twitter, Friday bulletin, stalls at events and the mental health arts and film festival events we have utilised a range of methods and engaged with a large variety of individuals and organisations.

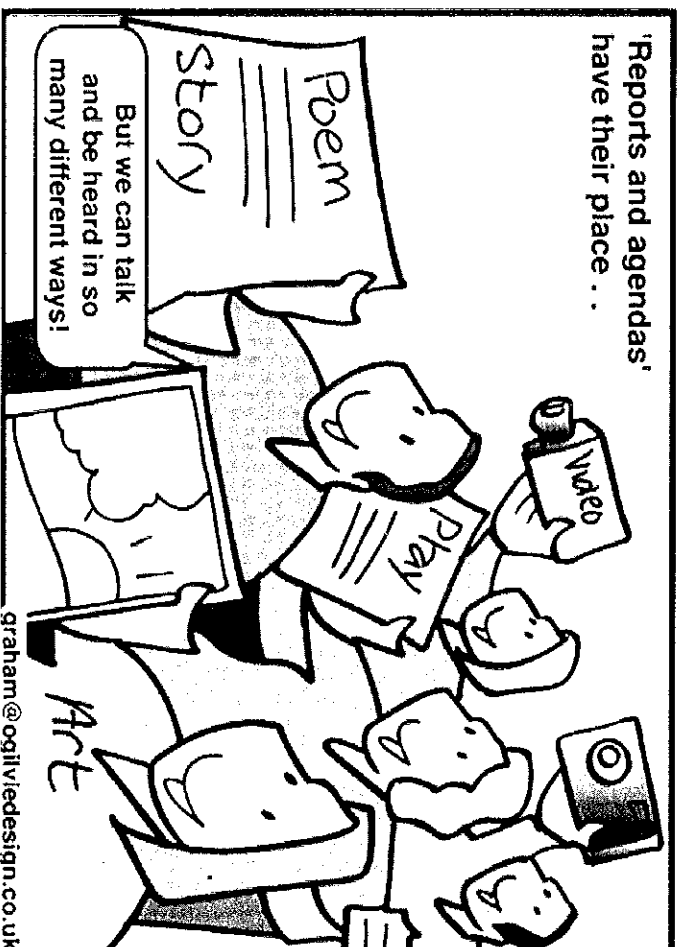
This included awareness raising on diversity issues as part of the mental health arts and film festival to over 700 people.

We raise awareness of opportunities (e.g.

consultation, creative engagement, training opportunities etc.) to get involved and have members voices heard to over 3000 people through our individual, associate and group members.

We have a long way to go in terms of how we use social media but we aim to focus on this over the next year so our presence becomes more notable and so that your opportunities to get involved are expanded.

'Reports and agendas' have their place . . .



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Measuring Outcomes in Mental Health

VOX is continuing to be involved in the strategy group for the development of the Scottish Recovery Indicator (now SRI2) to develop a tool to help health staff reflect, monitor and evaluate the service that they deliver, taking into account the views of their service users.

We have also been involved with Healthcare Improvement Scotland to share our members'

views in relation to the patient safety programme, focusing specifically in relation to Mental Health patient safety. The programme aims to reduce harm experienced by individuals receiving care within National Health Service settings. VOX have been invited to be involved in the specific Scottish Patient Safety programme for Mental Health to further take this work forward across all NHS boards.



Undertaking Research

Scottish Mental Health Service User Research Network (SMHSURN)

VOX has been supporting the development of the service user research network in partnership with Stirling University, the Scottish Recovery Network, Robert Gordon University, Strathclyde University and the Mental Health Foundation. VOX currently chairs this network, which is focussing on developing a database of service user researchers and on building capacity with groups who wish to undertake service user research.

Overall, the network aims to support partnerships to evolve between academic/professional researchers and service user researchers.

The role of carers

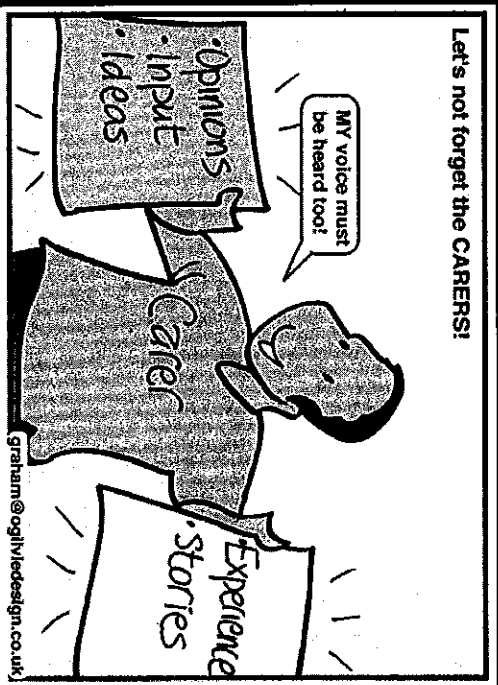
VOX has carried out 6 focus groups on the role of carers within (mainly) clinical care; this is from the perspective of the individual with a mental health problem. This work shall be fed into one of the commitments within the Scottish Government's mental health strategy (Commitment 2) on the involvement of carers. Those who participated highlighted the following;

- Having family and loved ones involved in our care is important /it can be part of our safety.
- Members don't feel it should only be at compulsory treatment time that input is given from family/friends.
- Family involvement discussions should take place when we are well.
- That it could be in a document which considers issues such as who can be involved/how and when they can communicate about your mental health (perhaps agreeing on signs and symptoms which can be communicated to health care staff)
- The importance of clear systems/processes/structures to make it possible
- Changing how confidentiality is currently used.

This report is being used to influence the steering group which is taking forward this commitment.

Overview of key issues for our members

VOX has also carried out an overview of key reports from our members so far. The report covers key themes such as stigma, discrimination, equality, models of care and advocacy. This will be used to influence future discussions around how we should be developing mental health services in the next few years.



Let's not forget the **CARERS!**

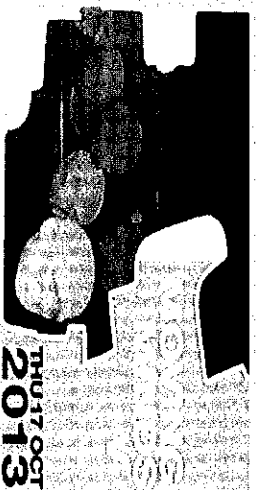
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Promoting Justice, Human Rights and Social Inclusion

We continue to sport a wide range of diverse people's voices such as minority ethnic communities, faith communities, older people, young people, LGBT people and asylum seekers and refugees.

We continue to support, steer and be involved in a number of strategic, local and national groups in relation to diversity such as: The cross party group on race and ethnicity, Sanctuary project, Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Anti

- Stigma Partnership Group, LGBT Action Group etc...
- A Young VOX member was given the opportunity to raise awareness of mental health and diversity issues internationally at the ILMHL 2012 conference in San Francisco USA.
- Raising awareness of Diversity and Mental issues by delivering two teaching sessions to Glasgow Universities new Master's degree course in Global Mental Health as well raising awareness of diverse mental health issues to MSP's at the Scottish Parliament.
- Presenting people's views and experiences as part of the LGBT Action group, at the 1st International Intersectional LGBT conference.



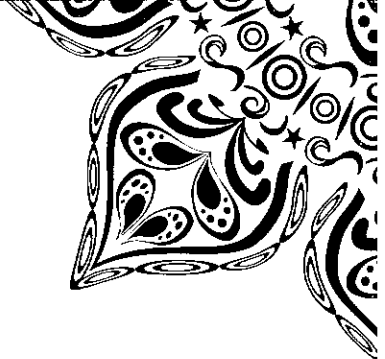
Moving Minds V

Last October we delivered the Fourth Diversity and Mental Health "Moving Minds", a day of events and activities held at Kelvingrove museum and art galleries as part of the annual Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival.

The event has attracted many new partners over the years and has become one of the 3 key annual events that the Museum hosts. According to the museums own figures we had over 700 people taking part in the activities on the day with an additional 150 at our workshops. We have already planned the fifth Moving Minds day which will be on the 17th of October and look forward to presenting another day of diversity and mental health.

A handy guide from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people with lived experience of mental health problems

LGBT VOX complete their mental health lived experience resource with support from the Equality Network and the Scottish Transgender Alliance, a preview of the resource will be available today at the 2013 AGM



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