

VOX Winter Newsletter

Welcome to the winter edition of the VOX Newsletter, the weather over the past few months has been very mild but here's hoping that we can get a little snow over the festive period. At this time we would take the opportunity to extend our very best wishes to all our members, our group and associate members and especially to everyone who has been involved in the independence process. We trust that you all have a very merry Winter Festival break and a prosperous and healthy 2010.

In this edition we will hear more from our creative writing voxters in our members' page, we will introduce you to four of VOX's directors, get your brains into action for our Scottish Quiz and provide lots of information on new projects and developments taking place in Scotland. The initiatives we will look at in this edition includes the Brighter Futures Programme which aims to improve the quality of life for older people, SAMH's Get Active Campaign, Bipolar Fellowships Self Management Training and the Depression Alliances new online support service. In addition to this we will give you a taste of the findings from some Consultation work VOX has been involved in recently included hearing your views on Reforming the Medical Statement and the Mental Health Act Consultation. You will also hear from Mahmud on some of the initiatives which are taking place with individuals from a range of diverse groups such as older people's coffee mornings, young people's VOX and Journeys of Experience. We hope you enjoy this edition and please get in touch if you have any ideas for future articles.

International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) 2010

VOX together with the Scottish Government are able to offer five service user places for those who wish to attend the IIMHL Conference which is taking place in Ireland on the **17th to 21st May 2010**. The IIMHL is a "virtual" agency that works to improve mental health services by supporting innovative leadership processes. Citizens in Partnership - Inclusion or Illusion, is the theme chosen for the IIMHL Network meeting in Ireland in May 2010. If you would like to take on a leadership role in Scotland and attend the IIMHL 2010 please get in touch to receive the application form, either by telephone at **0141 572 1663** or by Email [**jsteel@mhf.org.uk**](mailto:jsteel@mhf.org.uk)

Members Page

By Yvonne McLintock

My head is thinking too quickly today, I'm hoping a remedy will come my way
Problems keep popping in and out, makes me feel like *Breaking Out*

It's hard to be so well sussed out; I try hard to stop all that fussing about
Maybe I'll try and mellow out; My Doctor says "that's what it's all about"

Use your head make it go away, But it's hard when its there every day
So take your pill, do what you are told, because always
Doctors and Peoples opinions, well they always know

My answer is an easy way, pen, paper, glue, scraps crafts all day
That makes the bad days go away, hooray, give it a go anyway.

.....

Just Words - by Jan MacAskill

I've written poems before, but this one is different there's always more
To express, to say each day, as it is lived, is a blessing
And nothing will lessen the love I feel, for mankind and his many ways its real,
This love of life regardless of its strife, I'll pull through, will you?

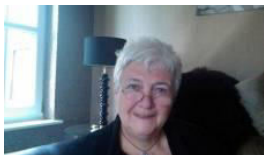
If you reach out there's a helping hand, kindness and care to pull the strands
Of a shattered life together well, this poem can't go on forever
But don't be alone at home, join the human race and face
Your trials or another will take your place
And achieve in your stead well read, but act and let your soul be fed.

.....

VOX – Board of Directors

VOX board is made up of Member Directors who have, or have had mental health problems, and Non Member Directors who help to support VOX. In this edition we are going to introduce you to our four Office Bearers Joyce, Frank, Shaun and Colin.

Joyce Mouriki, Chairperson



I am a service user. I brought up two girls in Greece where I had lived for twenty years and where I had first become ill. I subsequently returned to Scotland eleven years ago now and still receive services in Lanarkshire where I am the Vice Chair of the local service user and carer organisation which I helped to co-found and has been in existence for over ten years.

I am the Chairperson of Voices Of eXperience and helped found that organisation, being first on the interim management committee and now as Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

I am employed in Patient and Public Involvement with NHS Quality Improvement Scotland and I have been engaged in involving service users, informal carers and voluntary organisations in the mental health work programme.

More recently, as well as leading on mental health involvement, I have taken on the role in promoting patient and public involvement in the wider work of the NHS in Scotland. I also sit as a general member of the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland.

Frank Fallan, Vice Chairperson



My background was initially in mining as I left school and went to the traditional job alongside my father in the coal industry, however in the 1960's the coal fields in Scotland were quickly closing, and I choose to take up training to become a Psychiatric Nurse, so my career started in 1963 at 18 years of age when I became a student nurse.

After having to retire from the NHS as a Senior Staff Nurse after 30 years on health grounds and recovered sufficiently after some 5 years, I was invited by the late John Miller to become involved in the Mental Health service/user carer involvement process in 1995.

I am a member of various voluntary organisations including, The Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire Partnership Board, NHS Lanarkshire Mental Health Service Improvement Board, Local Advisory member to Lanarkshire Area, Scottish Health Council, member of the Service Users/Carer Group of the Mental Health Tribunal Appeals Service, Scotland, representing VOX members, Chair of North Lanarkshire Disability Forum., Chair of Greater Shotts Healthy Living Centre.

I was awarded the United Nations International Volunteer of the Year Award in 2001 by the then Scottish First Minister Jack McConnell MSP, and represented my local constituency of Airdrie & Shotts as the elected local hero at the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 2004.

Shaun McNeil, Company Secretary



Shaun McNeil is a Mental Health Service User Activist and is employed as the Managing Director of Advocacy Matters (Greater Glasgow) Limited, the largest Mental Health Advocacy Project in Scotland. He worked as a Manager in Supported Accommodation and prior to that was a Registered Mental Nurse. He has a Bachelor of Science in Mental Health Practice and is a member of the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH), MIND, Mindlink, Interrelate, Lanarkshire Links and the Depression Alliance Scotland. Shaun is a media volunteer for the "See Me" and "Choose Life" campaigns.

Shaun is the Co-Founder of VOX (Voices Of eXperience) and is the Board Secretary; he represents VOX on the Scottish Parliaments Cross Party Group on Mental Health and the Scottish Governments Mental Health Delivery Plan Group and also chaired the Service User and Carer Group during the National Review of Mental Health Nursing "Rights, Relationships and Recovery. Shaun has appeared on television, spoken on radio and submitted and participated in articles in the printed press and professional journals. He is also a columnist for the Royal College of Nursing's "Mental Health Practice" journal and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (Scottish Division) and the Service Users Recovery Forum of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Shaun has an acute awareness of the challenges of a mental health diagnosis and has personal experience of mental health problems, he has worked in the field of mental health in a voluntary and paid capacity for over 25 years and is committed to promoting the person as the expert in their own recovery, in equality, non-discrimination and protecting/enhancing the rights of people with mental health problems. Shaun has made himself available, as much as possible, to assist in the support and guidance of the staff of VOX and is excited about, and looks forward to, continuing the central role within the organisation and in VOX's real potential to strengthen the voice and promote the participation of people with mental health problems in Scotland.

Colin Murchie, Treasurer

I have personal life experience of mental health problems. I have been the treasurer of VOX during the last two years and have been involved in the board training sessions, and the two sub-groups. I have the essential skills and knowledge to enable me to further assist in the development of VOX. In addition and as well as reading economics at University, I am a Qualified Accountant.

Next time meet the other VOX Directors and Non Member Directors

Member Directors

Joyce Mouriki	Chairperson
Francis Fallan	Vice Chairperson
Shaun McNeil	Company Secretary
Colin Murchie	Treasurer
Dougie Pickering	Director
Ross Mcphail	Director
Chris Evans	Director
Laura Cameron	Director

Non Member Directors (Advisors to the Board)

Dr Sandra Grant, Richard Norris and Alex Davidson

Celebration Ceilidh/Disco

VOX held their independence celebration Ceilidh/Disco in The Corinthian, Ingram Street, Glasgow on Thursday 29th October 2009. Members and their guests enjoyed a wonderful night of traditional Scottish country dance music followed by some modern disco type music which by all accounts went down very well, the feedback was very encouraging and we would express our grateful thanks to all our members and friends who participated and made the event such a success. Joyce Mouriki, VOX Chairperson, presented a bouquet of flowers to Isabella Goldie, the Mental Health Foundation Head of Scotland for all the support she had personally given to VOX during the independence process. Isabella responded by saying that she was delighted to see VOX flourishing so well and wished the project every success in the future.



Joyce Mouriki VOX Board Chairperson



Isabella Goldie, MHF Head of Scotland

Winter Members Meeting

This year's winter members meeting will be held on **Saturday 5th December 2009 in The Corinthian, 191 Ingram Street, Glasgow from 10.00am until 2.00pm**. This meeting gives members a chance to share their thoughts on what is important to them in mental health just now. A festive buffet lunch will be available at 12.45pm. Spaces for this event will be limited so please phone the office on 0141 572 1663 or email jsteel@mhf.org.uk to book a place.

What's been happening at VOX

Capacity Building

VOX supported Chrys Muirhead, Convenor of Peer Support Fife who coordinated an event entitled "United we stand" held in Fife. Over 80 people attended the mental health networking meeting held on the 14th October in Elmwood College, Cupar. Altogether 14 organisations were represented on the day and there were many interesting workshops and presentations including a keynote speech from Graham Morgan from the Highland Users Group (HUG). VOX will continue to support capacity building within Fife to help build upon this day, well done to Chrys and everyone else who helped and participated in the day.

Improving Services

VOX delivered a workshop at the Rights, Relationships and Recovery Conference. Approximately 60 participants (mostly health care professionals) took part in the workshop called "The Journey Back to Recovery – how do we make Partnerships work. The session focused on communication and involvement. The feedback from the session was extremely positive with comments like "The session was both powerful and memorable" and "We need to utilise service users and carers in training workshops to make a difference". VOX are keen to build on this work in the future.

Sharing Best Practice

The first stage of Mental Health, Peer Support and Employment Project is now completed, this project funded by Workforce Plus aims to find out what it is about peer support that makes a difference to people who are looking for work, training or volunteering opportunities. We will soon have the findings of the questionnaire which was put together by the Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health. The next stage will be service user led focus groups where we will find out just what it is about peer support that makes a difference for people seeking work, training or volunteering.

Awareness Raising

As part of the Mental Health Arts and Film Festival VOX and in partnership with Lapidus, VOX delivered a five-week programme supporting people to tell stories, share poetry and learn storytelling techniques. VOX members had previously mentioned that creative writing was one of their priorities, which would allow individuals to build skills and gain confidence to be able to share their views. Those who were involved in the programme are keen to continue writing creatively, again watch this space for opportunities to have your voice heard through creative writing.

Self Directed Support



Frank Fallan and John Jackson pictured here with the government appointed officer, delivering the first national presentation on Self Directed Support in respects to Mental Health Service Users, at a conference in Airth Castle Falkirk. VOX together with the Mental Health Foundation has been developing work around Self Directed Support for those with mental health problems. The uptake of SDS for those with mental health problems is low so we have been working with local groups to develop an information resource aimed at those with mental health problems around SDS, we will send out information to our members as soon as the leaflet has been printed.

CAPS Advocacy

The Consultation and Advocacy Promotion Service in Edinburgh has just completed a six month project where they spoke to people with experience of personality disorder and produced a resource for staff to help them better understand and support people with this diagnosis. The final draft of the resource is now up on the CAPS website for people to comment on before we get it printed. If you would like to look at this resource please go to www.capsadvocacy.org and click on the Much More Than a Label link. For more information contact Naomi Salisbury on naomisalisbury@capsadvocacy.org or telephone 0131 538 7177

Your say:-

Intensive Psychiatric Care Units, Reforming the Medical Statement and the Mental Health Act.

Intensive Psychiatric Care Units (IPCU): Service User and Carer Focus Groups

Quality Improvement Scotland (QIS) is carrying out a piece of work to find out service user and carer experiences of IPCU's. This work is being taken forward in collaboration with the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (MWC) and is being supported by 'Better Together', Scotland's Patient Experience Programme.

QIS will be using two approaches to gather the information:

- interview sessions in selected IPCU's with inpatients who have self-selected to be involved, and
- service user led focus group sessions in each NHS board area with people who have had prior experience of IPCU care and their informal carers.

VOX has been commissioned by Quality Improvement Scotland to undertake the service user led focus groups across National Health Service Board areas in Scotland. We will let you know when the reports of service user experiences are published.

Reforming the Medical Statement Consultation

During the consultation process for Reforming the Medical Statement, VOX worked with two local groups, The Mental Health Network (Greater Glasgow) and Augment in Angus, thanks to everyone involved. We also received individual responses from VOX members, in total 35 people contributed to the consultation process. Key themes identified included the following:-

1. We like the focus on strengths but...

VOX members and focus group members liked the focus on strengths which is implied in the document through the 'may be fit to work' category, and felt that in relation to recovery this was a positive move forward, however, our members worried about the drive behind this focus.

"Strengths based is good, however this can be used in a positive or negative way, I worry this will be used against us"

2. The role of the GP is crucial

Members felt that whether or not the addition of 'may be fit for work' would be helpful would depend on the relationship with your GP.

"I've got a good relationship with mine, but I would be unsure how this would work if you didn't know them very well"

3. Mental Health fluctuates

"Mental Health can go up and down, so you may look fit for work but know yourself how the way you feel can change"

Two areas were of concern in relation to the fluctuating nature of mental health problems. Firstly, in relation to assessment by the GP who may feel that someone is ready to think about work because they may seem well on the day they visit their GP. This is further complicated by the amount of time given by a GP (which is only for a few minutes)

"A few minutes do not give an accurate understanding of how someone feels"

4. What about the role of the workplace/employment initiatives/process for involvement.

Members felt that in order for these changes to be helpful the workplace and employment initiatives must also change. Some of the issues mentioned include "workplace stigma", "reasonable adjustments within the workplace",

"awareness raising of mental health problems for employment initiatives, staff and employers" and "a clear link/open process to make any proposed changes work effectively".

We will be looking to find out what the next steps are and will keep you updated with any news on Reforming the Medical Statement.

The Mental Health Act

VOX consulted with membership and produced summary papers of the mental health act for local groups, in addition together with the Mental Health Network (Greater Glasgow) we held a focus group to find out your views on the Mental Health Act. These are some of the issues which were mentioned.

- Advance Statements

It was felt that people still aren't aware of advance statements and there isn't a consistent enough process to raise awareness of advance statements. There are also concerns about psychiatrists over-turning advance statements.

"Why should they be overturned if someone was well when they wrote it"

- Independent Advocacy

Advocacy services vary across the country, and greater investment is needed to ensure some kind of consistency. Members felt that "appropriate provision" is a vague concept which needs to be quantified.

- Named Person

The emotional impact of being a named person and the strain which can arise within a relationship because of this needs to be better supported throughout the process and that this could be done through a "counselling approach".

One issue that came up was that when people didn't have a named person that they ended up with a default named person who may not know them very well. Members were worried about this, especially about the full medical reports they receive and felt that this part of the act didn't work particularly well.

- Tribunals

It was suggested that the process of how to obtain quicker ways to obtain medical information should be prioritised prior to looking at the extension of five days to ten days. Members felt that this should be properly investigated. Members did not feel that the inadequacies of the system should be resolved by them.

The type of venue where tribunals are held should be given more thought.

"It needs to be somewhere which makes you feel comfortable when you come in, not intimidating"

For a full copy of the report please get in touch, again we will inform you about any changes which are taking place as a result of the consultation.

VOX Winter Diversity Update By Mahmud Al-Gailani

Welcome to this winter's diversity update. We have been involved in a number of projects to strengthen and widen the voice of people with a lived experience of mental health problems. VOX has been supporting several groups and projects as well as building capacity within other organisations.

In our the last VOX newsletter we explored what is meant by the equality strands as well as why it is important to insure equality and diversity are recognised and promoted throughout our work. VOX has also been working in partnership with other organisations to promote the importance of equality and diversity within mental health settings.

Our free diversity training has proved popular with lots of positive feedback received. Since our last issue VOX has delivered a half day training session to AUGMENT a service user lead group in Arbroath with a further session planned for later this month. A session is also planed early next year with HUG (Highland Users Group) in Inverness to explore issues around diversity and mental health.

We are still committed to supporting groups and organisations to access this training and welcome further interest for 2010.

For those interested, the training is free and can be tailored to suit the group, the only condition is that the group or organisation is led by people with a lived experience of mental health problems, past or present, or that they involve service users in the leadership of the organisation.

For more details please contact VOX on **0141 572 1663** and ask for Mahmud or email: mal-gailani@mhf.org.uk

Diversity News:

Journeys of Experience: Moving people moving minds

Was the title of VOX's diversity event, which was part of our contribution to the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in October? Over 140 people attended the event making it our largest half day event to date.

The event provided a diverse range of activities starting with a poem by Jamila Brown a poet and artist who explores her experiences of mental health through her powerful and moving poetry, a taster of which you can find further on in this update.

We also heard from a group of Asian drummers, a band singing songs from Malawi as well as hearing from several speakers on their experiences around mental health and recovery.



The main themes of the day were Mental Health, gender and migration. These were explored through three guided tours delivered by the Glasgow Museums Curators on the history of mental health asylums in Glasgow, violence against women through the ages as well as a look at south East Asian migration to Scotland.

The event also screened a film entitled Sanctuary introduced by the director from Diversity Films that explores some of the mental health issues that affect refugees and asylum seekers and the event ended with an organ recital and an opportunity to meet with mental health organisations. The event reached a wide audience of people from Social work and mental health nursing students to members of the public, organisations and people with a lived experience of mental health problems.

A taster of the poem;

BLUE

*Peshawar, is the land of her father's birth,
She is the first born girl, to 9 younger,
Recalls listening to uncle SAVDAGAR- a good man,
Migrated here, after his older brother, Roshan,
Praying to Mecca, 3 times a day- at least,*

*Bismillah Al Rahman Al Rahim, la illah ila Allah.
Mohammed rasool Allah,
Bismillah Al Rahman Al Raheem, la illah ila Allah.
Mohammed rasool Allah.*

*Those words and that sacred prayer,
She remembers well,
and those ornately embroidered slippers luxurious,
Gold braid, the turned up toes,
"hand made in Pakistan", stamped on the side,
Placed outside the living room door.*

*She understands his praying
Keeps him strong, keeps him secure,
And she looked up to him,
Looked up to his commitment, to his faith,
Long ago came from his motherland of Peshawar
Secured a job on the buses,
Eventually becoming a train driver*

*A proud man, whose formal studio photographs,
Sent back home, speak of hope,
talk of "getting on" in the world.*

*The family were made to wear their Sunday best,
to look like they were all "doing well"
in the material sense,*

*Except-
She heard him listening to late night BBC world service,
in the hope of news, fragments from home
and the early morning, Asian, TV, Viewing*

*Over here? Yes, everything is going very well!
Over here, yes, everything is fine, life is
good, over here,*

*Except-
One thing, one thing that is sure,
if truth be told, which is that his
heart is still over there.*

"This poem excerpt, by award winning activist, and writer, Jamila Brown, is from a first collection, called, "The Gold & Silver Shoes" stories, monologues, and poems, exploring themes of alienation, identity, and loss, which will be published in 2010".

Jamila Brown (C)

Young Voices of Experience

To further strengthen the voice of young people and to lead on raising awareness of the issues that affect young people and mental health, VOX have established a Young VOX social network. There are currently over 15 young people registered to discuss and share issues that affect them as well as planning an event for young people, by young people in relation to mental health.

Members of the group are currently involved in supporting the development of the integrated care pathways (ICP's) for children and adolescents' mental health services in partnership (CAMHS) with NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (QIS).

There are several involvement opportunities with Young VOX and we would welcome more interested young people to be involved. The group is open to young people aged 16-25 who have a lived experience of mental health issues.

If you are interested in joining the group or would like to know more, than please contact us to find out more. mal-gailani@mhf.org.uk

Over 50's Coffee Mornings

This group has been meeting every two months as a sort of social gathering with a coffee morning theme. The group is open to people 50 and over but also welcomes people in their 40's if they feel happy to be part of an older peoples group.

The group meets to discuss issues related to mental health and being an older person as well as sharing useful information.

Members of the group have over the last two meetings been discussing transport issues and taking part in researching how mental health friendly different modes of public transport are. The public transport test drives as we call them have highlighted links between mental and physical disabilities as well as generate some solutions for the group to work on.

The group are looking next at developing a handy card that can have useful information to support individuals who may experience a difficulty while travelling and need some time, understanding and or support.

If you are interested in meeting up for a coffee morning to discuss mental health issues for people around 50 or over please get in touch to see when our next meeting will be.

Equality News

- The Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 came into effect this September. Giving full equality to same-sex couples, the new adoption and fostering law started in Scotland on the 28th of September enabling same-sex couples to apply to jointly adopt a child. If the adoption goes through, both the couple become the child's legal parents.
- Recent reports in the media have reported a small drop in the gender pay gap. That is the gap in earnings between men and women. Figures reported show a 1% drop in the pay gap, this is good news, but when you consider that the Equal Pay act 1970 came into effect in 1975, almost 35 years have passed and there is still a gap in pay between men and women. This reported 1% drop was for full time employment whilst part time employment pay gap has not changed, and is in some cases as high as 32% in other words some women in part time employment are being paid up to 32% less than their fellow male counterparts.

Till the next issue of VOX diversity update

Mahmud Al-Gailani

SAMH: Getting Active

Activity is good for your mental health, so they say, and if that's the case then we at SAMH must be in for a spell of excellent mental health, because we don't seem to have stopped all year! So we are delighted to have the chance to tell readers of VOX's newsletter about some of the things we have been doing lately. This year, we launched our Get Active campaign with our ambassador Sir Chris Hoy MBE. Get Active is all about using sport and physical activity to promote mental health.

It doesn't mean that we think everyone should be an Olympic cyclist like Chris, but we do think that if you can manage to find a physical activity you enjoy, your mental health will benefit. It can be as simple as going for a walk every couple of days.

We have just launched a revised edition of our guide, *After a Suicide*. First issued in 2004, *After a Suicide* is aimed at people who have been bereaved through suicide. It provides practical advice on the tasks which need to be dealt with, from funerals to claiming benefits, and includes quotes from other people who have faced the same situation. We have been funded by Choose Life, the national strategy and action plan to prevent suicide in Scotland, and have had suggestions and input from people up and down the country to help us make the guide the best it possibly can be. With an average of two people a day dying by suicide, *After a Suicide* is sadly still a much-needed publication.

SAMH also produces *The Point*, Scotland's mental health magazine. With a new edition every quarter, we're always looking for new writers, stories and ideas, so if you are a budding or even an accomplished journalist, or if you know of a story that *The Point* should be covering, please do let us know.

You can read about these and all the many other things that SAMH has been up to recently on our website www.samh.org.uk. You can also order Christmas cards or join SAMH via the site. And if we can help you, please call us free on 0800 917 34 66, any weekday afternoon.

Carolyn Roberts
enquire@samh.org.uk

TRIVIA

Robert the Bruce Did You Know?



Robert the Bruce's Heart

On his deathbed in 1329, Robert the Bruce asked that his heart should be carried into battle against the "Infidels" because he himself had not been able to go on a Crusade. (Removing internal organs after death was a common practice in those days). Bruce's body was buried in Dunfermline Abbey and when it was exhumed in 1818 it was found that his ribs had been sawn through, indicating that his heart had indeed been taken from his body. Sir James Douglas is said to have taken Bruce's heart in a casket with him to Spain in 1330 but, in a battle against the Moors, Douglas was killed. Sir William Keith brought Bruce's heart back to Scotland and it was buried in Melrose Abbey. In 1921, during excavations beneath the Chapter House at Melrose Abbey, a conical leaden casket was discovered. It measured 10 inches high and was 4 inches in diameter at the base but tapering towards the top (see illustration above left). It was pitted but otherwise in good condition. The casket was reburied but in 1996, it was removed again from beneath the Chapter House floor and examined once more. Historic Scotland said "It is not possible to prove absolutely that it is Bruce's heart but it is reasonable to assume that it is". The present 11th Earl of Elgin and 15th Earl of Kincardine, Andrew Douglas Alexander Thomas Bruce, is a direct descent of King Robert The Bruce.

The Scottish Quiz Questions

1. Who won the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314?
2. Who had the largest cotton mills in Great Britain?
3. Who invented and started the first television station?
4. Who is arguable Scotland's most famous poet?
5. Who founded the National Parks System in the United States?
6. Who invented the telephone?
7. Who wrote "Peter Pan"?
8. Who wrote "Will Ye No Come Back Again"?
9. Who founded the Bank of England?
10. Who gave his art collection to the City of Glasgow?
11. Who is Scotland's most famous explorer?
12. Who invented the steam engine?
13. Who created the road surface "tarmac"?
14. Who invented waterproof clothing?
15. Who is the patron saint of Glasgow?
16. Who invented and patented Pneumatic tyres?
17. Which Scot invented the vacuum flask?
18. Who discovered penicillin?
19. Who was the first King of Scotland and England?
20. Who was America's first naval hero?

See back page for answers

INFORMATION

The Scottish Recovery Network Roadshows

"What does recovery mean to you"?

Making Recovery Real Roadshows:

Thurso - 1st December 2009

Oban – 24th February 2010

Stranraer - 24th March 2010

Recovery means different things to different people. For some, it's about learning to cope with a mental health problem, and enjoying a fulfilling life in spite of it. For others, it means a return to the way life was before they became unwell. Whatever your view, the 'recovery approach' is about supporting you to create a life that is both meaningful and manageable.

Open invitation

We hope you'll join us at one of our upcoming *Making Recovery Real Roadshow* events, to look at what recovery means for communities in Scotland. At each event there will be opportunities to:

- explore recovery themes and tools, and share experiences;
- make connections with others and learn about existing initiatives, including local recovery networks; and
- discuss what action is needed to make recovery more likely for local people who are experiencing mental health problems.

The events are for anyone with an interest in mental health or wellbeing - people who feel that recovery is possible, as well as those who are more sceptical.

They're also for friends, family, professional care givers, and anyone else **you** think should take part in the discussion. **Please help us get the word out** by directing people to our website: www.scottishrecovery.net. We are currently taking bookings for the Thurso event. If you would like to attend, fill in a booking form at www.scottishrecovery.net, or contact us on [0141 240 7790](tel:01412407790) or info@scottishrecovery.net. Bookings for Oban will open on 19th November and for Stranraer in January 2010. The events are free to attend, each will run from 10am to 4.30pm, and lunch will be provided. We can help with reasonable expenses for travel within Scotland.

Brighter Futures



The Mental Health Foundation's 'Brighter Futures' project aims to develop and pilot a peer mentoring service for 75 isolated older people in the community. Funded through Big Lottery Fund's Life Transitions area of investment and working with three project partners (Glasgow Association for Mental Health, Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health and Better Government for Older People, Lanarkshire) this two year project will significantly improve the quality of life of older people, enhancing their social networks, mental health and enabling meaningful activity. Forty five volunteers aged over 50 will be trained and supported as mentors, to assist older people to identify a positive future and overcome barriers to greater social connectedness. The project aims to raise the profile of the issues affecting the mental health of older people and the importance of investing in service improvement work for older people, by influencing policy makers and service commissioners at national and local level.

Providing a Peer Mentoring Service for people in later life.

Mentoring is a one to one relationship based upon trust, confidentiality and mutual involvement and works particularly well with people who are at risk of exclusion from society. Brighter Futures volunteers will be able to use their skills and experience to help an older person to become more actively involved in their community. This will involve assisting the person to participate in opportunities and activities of interest while enabling them to establish a role in their community. All volunteers will participate in mentoring training, be part of a team of volunteers as well as having regular planned one to one support with the volunteer coordinator.

How to contact Brighter Futures; If you are interested in volunteering or making a referral please contact one of the Brighter Futures Volunteer Coordinators in your area.

Glasgow –	Glasgow Association for Mental Health	0141 552 5592
East Renfrewshire-	Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health	0141 881 8811
East Kilbride –	Better Government for Older People	01698 458 743

If you are interested in further information about Brighter Futures please contact Brighter Futures Project Manager Tina Yu at Mental Health Foundation on 0141 572 0413, email: tinayu@mhf.org.uk

New Online Support Service for people with Depression

Depression Alliance Scotland (DAS) now has a new service offering guidance and support in using Living Life to the Full Interactive (LLTTFi). This is an online self-help package based on the proven cognitive behaviour therapy approach that we know can be a very effective treatment for Depression and Anxiety.

DAS currently provide an information service and run groups in the community along with other services. LLTTFi is a valuable addition to DAS' range of existing services as it allows DAS to reach people wherever they live in Scotland. It is also great for people who don't think a group setting suits them.

If you have access to a computer, feel you have the motivation to work through a 6 week programme and would like support from our Support Worker then this course could be for you.

The course will offer:

- Regular telephone support sessions throughout the course
- Free access to the Living Life to the Full Interactive website
- Access to handouts and materials
- Text and video clips to help you learn
- Hints and tips for making positive changes

To find out whether this course would be suitable for you, please phone Depression Alliance Scotland on **0845 123 23 20** or email info@dascot.org.

Bipolar Fellowship Scotland – Self-Management Training

Much of a person's recovery from bipolar disorder is rooted in the ability of the person to manage the condition.

Training on self-management is available here in Scotland. Bipolar Fellowship Scotland and MDF the BiPolar Organisation (England and Wales) run a training course which is modular and teaches people how to recognise personal triggers and early warning signs, which in turn will enable participants to understand how and when to take action to prevent the mood shift from escalating to severe depression or mania.

The course includes:

- **Session 1** Principles of Self Management and the aims and objectives of the course.
The nature and impact of bipolar disorder
- **Session 2** Identification of triggers and warning signs
- **Session 3** Coping strategies and self medication
- **Session 4** Support networks and Action Plans
- **Session 5** Advance statement
- **Session 6** Complementary therapies, coping strategies and finalising action plans

The SMT course takes place over 3 days. The course tends to take place over a weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and lasts from 10am – 4.30pm. Therefore participants need to be well enough to fully take part in all three days and must be prepared to cover topics which can be challenging.

For further information please contact Alan Douglas on aland@bipolarscotland.org.uk or Yvonne Fleming on Yvonnef@bipolarscotland.org.uk

The Scottish Quiz Answers

1. **King Robert the Bruce** (born in Turnberry Castle, Ayrshire)
2. **David Dale** in New Lanark (born in Stewarton, Ayrshire)
3. **John Logie Baird** (born in Helensburgh)
4. **Robert Burns** (born in Alloway, Ayrshire)
5. **John Muir** (born in Dunbar)
6. **Alexander Graham Bell** (born in Edinburgh)
7. **Sir James Mathew Barrie** (born in Kirriemuir)
8. **Carolina Oliphant** (born in Gask, Perthshire)
9. **William Paterson** (born in Tynwald, Dumfriesshire)
10. **Sir William Burrell** (born in Glasgow)
11. **David Livingstone** (born in Blantyre)
12. **James Watt** (born in Greenock)
13. **John Loudon MacAdam** (born in Ayr)
14. **Charles Macintosh** (born in Glasgow)
15. **St. Kentigern, also known as St. Mungo** (born in Culross, Fife)
16. **James Boyd Dunlop** (born in Dreghorn, Ayrshire)
17. **Sir James Dewar** (born in Kincardine-on-Forth)
18. **Sir Alexander Fleming** (born in Darvel, Ayrshire)
19. **James V1 (1566-1625)** (born in Dunfermline, Fife)
20. **John Paul Jones** (born near Kirkbean, Kircudbrightshire)

Join Us!

VOX now has the capacity to reach over 1500 people due to our links with local groups across Scotland, including the following Mental Health Service User led groups:-

- The Highland Users Group
- Edinburgh Users Group
- Edinburgh Patients Council
- Bipolar Fellowship Scotland
- Klacksun
- Plus Perth
- Lanarkshire Links

If your group wants to get more involved and become a member of VOX please get in touch. We also have associate membership for those who are interested in the work we do but don't qualify for full membership.