

# Your Experience Counts



Look after your mental health & emotional well-being this Spring.

# Editor's Foreword

Hello Again and welcome to our Spring 2017 edition of Your Experience Counts.

I hope you all had a lovely Festive Period and indulged in all the festivities of the Season. Its been pretty cold the past few days but its nice to see the nights getting a bit lighter and the feeling that Spring is just around the corner.

We have a jam packed magazine for you and I hope you enjoy it and take some inspiration from it.

We have recruited 2 new Peer Workers to join our team and you will hear from them in the Summer edition.

All areas of the service have been extremely busy since the start of the New Year but you will hear all about it later on in the magazine.

if you have anything you want to share or add to the magazine, please contact Nicola, our admin worker on [nicola.wilson@samh.org.uk](mailto:nicola.wilson@samh.org.uk) and she will add your article to the first available magazine.

See you all in the next edition.

The Editor



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# Veterans Work

Our V1P Lanarkshire team works in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire and The Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH).

The team consists of Veteran Peer Support Workers, a Project Administrator and Psychology staff.

We provide:

- Information and signposting
- Understanding and listening
- Support and social networking
- Health and well-being



The team has been expanding recently and we have successfully recruited Volunteers to help facilitate our Access Point which runs every Friday in the Houldsworth Centre Wishaw 1100hrs to 1400hrs.

There are a number of other groups and services in the community that support veterans such as:

- Motherwell Wetherspoon's—Breakfast club for veterans on the first Sunday of each month starting at 10:00h.
- Airdrie Wetherspoon's—Breakfast club for veterans on the 3rd Sunday of each month starting at 10:00h.
- Kings Church, Motherwell—Drop-in service for veterans every Friday between 10:00-14:00.
- Hunter St, Council Offices, Bellshill—Veterans' support group every Tuesday starting at 17:00h.

Deborah Burns

Veteran Peer Support Worker

# Community Link Workers

It's been a very busy few months for our community link workers. Below you will hear from our newest link workers and what they have been up to.

**Craig-** I have worked with several community link service users and provided them with information on activities and groups within their local community to assist them become socially integrated. I have also undertaken some community mapping of my working area of Airdrie, Cumbernauld, Kilsyth, Moodiesburn, Chryston, Muirhead and Stepps to find out what community activities are going on in these areas which I then feed back into the service and our peer support workers.

I continue to be involved in carrying out assessment meetings with new service users who have been referred into our service and helping to match them up with Peer Support Workers.

I also recently helped to facilitate a MyRAP Group in Cumbernauld and am undergoing training to facilitate our Tools for Living modules.

I have attended various partnership meetings with Community Learning and Development teams and also arranged for the Airdrie CLD team to visit the MASH Group in Airdrie to provide them with advice on how to formally structure their group and write a constitution to enable them to apply for funding at a later date and this process is ongoing.

I also visited Ward 24 in Monklands Hospital recently with one of our Well-Informed Volunteers (Tommy) to talk to patients about our peer support and community link services available to them once they are discharged from hospital.

**Chris-** It seems ages since the last magazine was published and I have been working with some really lovely people. As always there is strong demand for the peer support workers and community link work. I have been working with quite a few people and it is really amazing to see how varied the interests of people can be. The range of interests really does cover everything... from walking groups to cycling clubs and art groups to cake decorating. The only strand of work I have found difficult to link in with is volunteering with animals. This is largely due to the demand for this type of volunteering and the health and safety implication of working with animals. That said, there is no reason why individuals can't go on the volunteer waiting list for work with organisations like Dogs Trust and the S.P.C.A.

Other Clubs and organisations are much easier to find and volunteers are still required for a host of different activities. Community Link Work never stays the same and everyone I work with has different requirements it's a real challenge to find clubs and organisations for people to link into.

The most satisfying part of the job is to run into people weeks later and see how much they are enjoying life and how things have turned around for them. So for anyone thinking of joining a club or trying new activities... go for it!!



# Well-informed

Well-informed finished 2016 with three new volunteers; John, Jim and Amy. They have since been joined by Heather and Lesley who recently attended their first promotional stalls. Amy has also been helping out in the resource centre where Brian has remained a valuable asset to the team. Regulars Maria, Terry and Robert aided long serving Tommy in bringing stalls to events across North Lanarkshire.

In January Tommy provided a stall at a family fun day at Centre Point, where photos suggest he was delighted to meet a host of Disney characters in costume. Later in the month, our information officer David brought a collection of resources to a Slosathon promoting The British Transplant Games, at the Ravenscraig Centre and became a participant in a record breaking 547 person slosh.

At the end of the month we returned to the colleges at Motherwell, Cumbernauld and Coatbridge. Tommy, David, Lesley and Community Link worker Chris invited students to complete a mental health quiz. The students were very keen to take part and had a real awareness of their mental health. We're hoping to return to the colleges very soon.

Ann, Tommy, David and Terry also partook in the Love Life Love Libraries Health and Well-being week across North Lanarkshire's libraries encouraging people to engage with their local libraries and their physical and mental health by delivering a number of stalls.

Jim has made regular visits to Ward One of Wishaw Hospital to promote Well-informed and Experience Counts services, which have been well received and Peer Support worker Kevin joined David for a further visit, armed with mental health pamphlets and stress balls.

We're also grateful to Eileen who attended an event at Cumbernauld Mosque on our behalf as part of our want to engage with new venues. Eileen said the event was well attended by the public and was a great success.

February was very busy for Well-Informed with 21 stalls attended across the month. Additionally Tommy has noticed an increase in visits to our stalls and the number of resources which are taken by the public. We're grateful to all of our volunteers for their hard work over the past 3 months for making that possible.

If you wish to volunteer with Well-informed, email [well-informed@samh.org.uk](mailto:well-informed@samh.org.uk) or call 0800 073 0918 and speak to our information officer.

**Well-informed**  
Promoting mental health and well-being

# Peers Contributions

## To my Peer Support Worker – With Thanks

It was good to talk and be understood  
Be listened to – whatever my mood  
Mental health's not all medication  
Wish GPs had your dedication  
It's great to chat without fear  
Of being judged when I bend your ear  
I've enjoyed our time – meeting up  
Over glasses of juice and coffee cups  
You've really been and inspiration  
With info on classes like relaxation  
I've been on courses with help from you  
Like MyRAP and Tools for Living too  
Thanks to you I'm on the right track  
You've helped me get my confidence back  
So keep on helping folk our there  
With your talent for showing you care

All the best  
Ann McGonnell



# Peer Support Worker Poem

I truly believe

When people are stressing we lend them our ears, or hand them a tissue to help dry their tears

We talk and we listen sharing good times and bad.

And share our life stories to encourage them through

To recover control of the life they once knew.

So please stand here and join me and give out three cheers, for our peers and peer workers and what they've achieved.

Does Experience Count?

Oh I truly believe

Dedicated to the Experience Counts  
team

Well done

Your friend and peer, Raymond.



# Volunteer Story



I first volunteered with Well-informed between 2015 and 2016 and then embarked on a 1 year employability programme called Project Search which is run by NHS Lanarkshire and New College Lanarkshire. I really enjoyed my time with Project Search. I was exposed to new environments, and I also developed skills familiar from my time volunteering with Well-informed.

My experience of giving out dementia resources at Well-informed information stalls informed my work with dementia patients during a Project Search work placement. The telephone calls I took at Well-informed also aided my work with dementia patients as I would ask patients questions to find out their interest area. Following this I then got to interact with patients directly while working in the discharge lounge. I also undertook training in mental health, drawing from my Well-informed experiences.

As a CSW Ward Clerk, I would advise patients in waiting rooms when they might expect to be seen, just as I had taken phone messages at Well-informed advising callers when they could expect a member of staff to call back. My time spent researching the times and dates of events during Well-informed calls also prepared me for booking appointments for patients, checking their availability.

I really enjoyed working in the Central Support Mail Room. I had completed similar tasks with Well-informed, organising appropriate letters and resources into envelopes in response to public enquiries, and taking the office mail from the postman and giving this to the correct member of staff. My experience of Well-informed information stalls also prepared me to deliver an eventful promotional stall for Project Search.

While previously volunteering with Well-Informed, I also forged a relationship with Firpark Secondary school after sending them information from one of our information stalls. This was well received by teachers (including head teacher John Morley and Enterprise Co-ordinator Elaine Sweeney) and students alike, and I'm pleased to say that my relationship with the school has continued, I've even been asked to help out at various bingo nights and other social events.

During Project Search I was introduced to new experiences, including working directly with dementia patients and people with learning difficulties and mental health difficulties. I gained confidence from these experiences. I believe that volunteering with Well-informed was a big help to me during Project Search, and I have returned to volunteer with Well-informed to continue to develop skills relevant to a career in administrative work. Here I am a valued volunteer amongst a group of people I am very fond of and I am very pleased to be able to help out. I now encourage other people to volunteer with Well-informed as the experience definitely benefitted me.

# North Lanarkshire Bipolar Group

If you live with Bipolar Disorder and you'd like to share information, advice, ideas and experience with other people in a similar situation, why not come along to the **North Lanarkshire Bipolar Group** which meets on the second Monday of every month (7-9pm) at Coatbridge Community Centre, 9 Old Monkland Road, Coatbridge ML5 5EA. Here are five top reasons why you might want to attend the group:

- it's a great way to meet other people who live with bipolar disorder and share experiences, ideas and insights on how to improve your quality of life (and get things off your chest)
- the group is for everyone who lives with bipolar and friends, family, partners and carers are equally welcome to attend
- the group will feature regular guest speakers who'll provide up to date information on topics suggested by group members (e.g. medication, diet and well-being, benefits advice, employability, mindfulness etc)
- it's free and you don't have to be a Bipolar Scotland member to attend
- no referral or appointment needed. Just come along if you feel up for it.

North Lanarkshire Bipolar Group is affiliated to Bipolar Scotland and you can learn more about the national organisation at [www.bipolarscotland.org.uk](http://www.bipolarscotland.org.uk). If you have any queries about the group, please feel free to contact the Group Facilitators on 07787 111 171 (Kirsty) or 07922 650 111 (Shauna). You can also contact Graeme in the Bipolar Scotland office on 0141 560 2050 for further info. Hope to see you there!!



# **M.A.S.H**

Mingling and Sharing Hope

M.A.S.H is a group for people with Mental Health Issues to come and have a chat and a cuppa, learn new skills and go on days out.

The people who made up the group have all had Peer Support work from S.A.M.H. and have all suffered from mental health at some point in their lives.

We decided to make the group up so we still had something to do when we finished our peer support.

We started the group in December 2016, we have arranged lunches out and craft days .

For more information please contact

Liz – 07427195472

[Mash.airdrie.2016@gmail.com](mailto:Mash.airdrie.2016@gmail.com)

# Volunteer Christmas Lunch



The Well-informed volunteer Christmas lunch took place on the ninth of December last year and was well attended. Volunteers were rewarded for their hard work throughout the year with an all you can eat World Buffet. Tommy, Robert, Amy, John, Heather and Lesley joined information officer David, and Ann of Experience Counts, and exchanged secret Santa gifts which were as creative as an agreed spending limit could allow.

David and Ann certainly enjoyed the meal, and the time spent in the company of our volunteers. We are very appreciative of all they do for our organisation. Without their hard work we could not achieve what we do. We just hope our volunteers enjoyed the day as much as we did.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our information officer by email at [well-informed@samh.org.uk](mailto:well-informed@samh.org.uk) or by phone on 0800 073 0918 for an application pack.

# Tools for Living 2017

Tools for living is a series of modules/ workshops devised by SAMH, based on cognitive behavioural approaches to help and encouraged individuals to focus on self management and more positive coping strategies.

Each module/ workshop lasts about 3 hours, 1 day a week over a 4 week period and will be available in 4 week blocks throughout the year, TFL is delivered by SAMH 'Experience Counts' Community Link workers in small group settings throughout the North Lanarkshire area.

The 4 modules that are available are:-

- Emotional Awareness
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Positive about change
- Anxiety and Stress

If you are interested in attending, please contact Nicola on 01698 265659 or email : [nicola.wilson@samh.org.uk](mailto:nicola.wilson@samh.org.uk)

# Stress control Classes



Stress Control classes will help us develop skills and techniques to manage common issues caused by modern day living such as stress, anxiety or low confidence, which can affect well-being.

The classes are delivered in local community facilities and consist of six sessions lasting 90 minutes each. We will not need to speak about our issues during the class. Just sit back and listen about helpful stress control techniques\*. Feel free to bring someone along with you for support.

**\* Some of the issues covered during the sessions are:**

- Learning about stress
- Controlling your body
- Controlling your thoughts
- Controlling your actions
- Controlling panic & sleep problems
- Wellbeing & controlling the future

To find your nearest class and book a free place phone 0300 303 0447 or email: [stresscontrol@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:stresscontrol@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)

<p><b><u>HAMILTON</u></b> University of the West of Scotland Campus Almada Street Hamilton ML3 0JB</p> <p>Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Apr – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017 2:30pm – 4:00pm</p>	<p><b><u>RUTHERGLEN</u></b> No. 18 Healthy n Happy Farmeloa Road Rutherglen G73 1DL</p> <p>Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> May – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017 10:00am – 11:30am</p>	<p><b><u>CLYDESDALE</u></b> Carluke Leisure Centre 135 Carnwath Road Carluke ML8 4EA</p> <p>Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> May – 7<sup>th</sup> Jun 2017 6:00pm – 7:30pm</p>	<p><b><u>CUMBERNAULD</u></b> New College Lanarkshire Cumbernauld Campus (Drumcarron Room) Town Centre Cumbernauld G67 1HU</p> <p>Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> May – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017 6:00pm – 7:30pm</p>
<p><b><u>EAST KILBRIDE</u></b> Lecture Theatre Hairmyres Hospital Eaglesham Road East Kilbride G75 8RG</p> <p><b>*No class on 1<sup>st</sup> June*</b> Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> May – 15<sup>th</sup> Jun 2017 6:00pm – 7:30pm</p>	<p><b><u>COATBRIDGE</u></b> New College Lanarkshire Coatbridge Campus (Room S24) Kildonan Street Coatbridge ML5 3LS</p> <p>Tues 9<sup>th</sup> May – 13<sup>st</sup> Jun 2017 6:00pm – 7:30pm</p>	<p><b><u>WISHAW</u></b> Volunteer Centre 9-11 Kenilworth Avenue Wishaw ML2 7LP</p> <p>Wed 10<sup>th</sup> May – 14<sup>th</sup> Jun 5:30pm – 7:00pm</p>	<p><b><u>BELLSHILL</u></b> Bellshill Cultural Centre John Street Bellshill ML4 1RJ</p> <p>Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> May – 22<sup>nd</sup> Jun 2017 1:00pm – 2:30pm</p>

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62 Windmillhill Street  
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ML1 1TA

Phone: 01698 265 659  
E-mail:  
experience.counts@samh.org  
.uk



## Useful Telephone Numbers

- Contact Well-informed on 0800 073 0918 for general enquiries relating to mental well-being.
- Breathing Space: 0800 838 587
- The Samaritans: 116 123
- Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 0271234
- NHS 24: 111
- Lanarkshire Links: (01698) 265232

## About Experience Counts

Experience Counts supports the mental well-being of the people of North Lanarkshire. It benefits people who are over 16, living in North Lanarkshire, experiencing or recovering from a mental health problem and facing challenges or struggling to achieve personal outcomes.

Peer Support Workers create an environment which empowers people and supports them to take control of their recovery. Through their work with individuals, Peer Support Workers help people to identify their strengths, understand their challenges and explore what they find useful and what causes them difficulty.

Peer Support Workers support people to develop their own, individualized, Recovery Action Plans and work towards personal goals over a period of up to 6 months.