

Vol Sector Rep Notes of Mental Health SIG 19/02/09

1. Brian Black submitted a report detailing the support that he had given to a variety of groups in the area and asking for guidance from the SIG as to where his work should be focused in the future. In the absence of John Dow who had a very clear picture of what Brian's role should be, it was difficult to comment other than to offer suggestions that had come from the VSMHF such as a training delivery audit across the sector. This was something Brian felt he could look at. (Report available hard copy to be tabled)

The point was made that Brian perhaps would have benefited from being attached to other voluntary sector development workers through CVS and Gary expressed some disappointment in the lack of groups that were coming forward for support.

2. The 3 LMHP gave their reports – they are all working on their action plans at the moment and GNEF are looking to distribute funds through identifying specific pieces of work rather than open bidding in the future. Dunfermline seem to be taking a similar approach and are also doing a scoping exercise into talking therapies. They have purchased licences to deliver Beating the Blues through a variety of community outlets including the libraries.

3. Mental health Collaborative group – it seems that there was a request from Beth Sparling through CVS to identify voluntary sector reps for this group. Apparently there was no response and Beth then contacted Gary Guichan and John Dow . John agreed to be the representative and was clear that he was there in that capacity rather than as a rep for the Today Group. Beth has offered to attend the VSMHF meeting in July to clarify these arrangements.

4. A request for funding had been submitted to the SIG by a local group. Members of the SIG pointed out that there was a funding pathway that had been agreed and that ad hoc requests should not be responded to until there was clarity about money available, priorities and an application process.

5. I offered to consult through the sector on proposals to lift the exemption that applies to mental health facilities operated by the NHS in respect of smoking. This consultation is aimed at service users and I will provide further information at the meeting, as the documentation is tens of pages long.

Carolyn Walker and I had a meeting with members of the PASG (physical activity strategy group) as representatives of the SIG. This was to ensure that the needs of clients with mental health issues were not being overlooked in the planning of this service. Various suggestions were made such as bringing the scheme to the organisations working with clients so that it was then easier for them to engage. Also providing a buddying service to facilitate involvement of vulnerable clients. Hopefully some of these suggestions will be incorporated into the future service.