

# Mental Health Support



Mental Health Services in Rhondda Cynon Taf

FIRST EDITION



New website to be launched on World Mental Health Day 2006!

Welcome to the first edition of the 'Mental Health Support' quarterly newsletter, providing information on the support and services available throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf and the wider area. This newsletter will include articles of interest to service users, carers, health care professionals and others with an interest in mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

This newsletter has been edited by Mental Health Support Partnership Team who would welcome your views and comments. If you would like to contribute information, articles or photographs for future editions of the newsletter, please contact the editorial team via [www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk) or e-mail [mh-support@btconnect.com](mailto:mh-support@btconnect.com).

[www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk)

[www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk) is a website that is managed by service user volunteers working in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and New Horizons Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Resource Centre. The website has been designed to house information relevant to people with mental health problems, their families and friends, carers and professionals within mental health services. It is a useful tool for locating organisations and services both within Rhondda Cynon Taf and nationally, as well as for accessing information and advice on diagnosis, medication and various documents and publications. A

news and events section tells people what's on in the local area and registered members will be able to access galleries displaying artwork and photos, as well as an open discussion forum and real-time chat providing 24hour peer support. The website is to be launched on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2006 (World Mental Health Day). If you would like more information on the website, are interested in volunteering as a photographer, journalist, trainer or administrator or you would like to contribute artwork, photos, poetry or short stories, please contact **Melissa** or **Angela** on **(01685) 881113** or e-mail [mh-support@btconnect.com](mailto:mh-support@btconnect.com).

## Sainsbury's Centre for Mental Health Development - Update

### North Glamorgan NHS Trust

The implementation of the recommendations made in the Cynon and Merthyr Remodelling Consultation document recently published by the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health is well underway with staff recently appointed to the new teams in Crises Resolution & Home Treatment and Assertive Outreach.

### Pontypridd & Rhondda NHS Trust

The next phase in the 'Fit for Purpose' initiative is a project, again led by Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, where service users, carers, voluntary and statutory sector providers have been invited to meet with representatives to share views in current service provision and ideas for the future.

More information about these documents can be found on [www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk)

This newsletter has been edited by Mental Health Support Partnership Team who can be contacted via [www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk) or [mh-support@btconnect.com](mailto:mh-support@btconnect.com). For further information on articles included in the newsletter, please contact the writers.



## RCT World Mental Health Week (October 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2006)

*In Rhondda Cynon Taf we are celebrating World Mental Health Day with a week full of activities – so why not stimulate your mind?*

### Some events going on in the week:

Art Exhibition

Poetry Book launch with Boyd Clack

School Presentations

Website launch

New Horizons Open Day with Valleys Radio

Balloon Release

...and much more.

For more information and a copy of the programme

**Freephone: 0808 100 1801**

or visit

[www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthsupport.co.uk)



**Annette Jones from the Wellbeing Support Programme out enjoying the sun with the Cynon Recreation Group**

## Rhondda Cynon Taf Support to Access Recreation Scheme (STARS)

**STARS** has been set up for users of The Council's Community Care Division, to offer service users access to a range of physical activities. The scheme is a partnership initiative between Leisure Culture & Tourism and Community Care. Access to STARS is via referral only with anyone having undergone an assessment by RCT Community Care Division being eligible. The service user is given a one-to-one consultation with an active lifestyle advisor to determine individual requirements and goals and then is signposted to activities in their locality under a 45-week programme,

which is subject to review. The activities themselves are provided by Community Leisure at a subsidised cost of £1 per session though consultations and reviews are free. At the end of the programme, a further consultation is held to discuss further participation signposting and exit routes. Participating in physical activity can contribute towards achieving and maintaining positive improvements for health, including not only physical benefits but also benefiting the individual psychologically and socially.

## Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Support Project

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Carers Support Project has now been in existence for almost 9 years. It aims to support all local carers and there are now over 5,000 on the mailing list. The project offers carers a freephone line, telephone counselling service, carers pack, quarterly newsletter, trips, workshops, information sessions and support to groups. There is one worker at the project who has particular responsibility for carers caring for someone experiencing mental ill health and offers a range of activities geared to this group of carers. A carer is anyone who looks after family, partners and friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The help they provide is unpaid. Carers can ring **Freephone 0808 100 1801** for a free pack and further information about the work of the project.

## The Wellbeing Support Programme

The first Well-Being Support Programme in Wales began in March '03 to improve the overall holistic care of people with severe/enduring mental health problems, through offering a programme to improve lifestyle via weight management, physical activity, assessment of overall needs, and improving compliance with medication by minimising side-effects and providing education and support for clients and their carers. Since May '03 the programme commenced working with Ty Heddwch.

## Volunteering is Good for Your Mental Health

New Horizons is a service-user led charity working within Rhondda Cynon Taf for people experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues by managing resource centres that provide a range of services and opportunities. We can only do this with the help of our volunteers. Therefore, we are pleased to announce that funding has been received to continue the volunteering project for the next three years. So if you want to build your confidence, meet new friends, create fun in your life, improve your skills, gain qualifications or boost your career options whilst improving your mental health why not come and volunteer for us. For more information, please contact New Horizons on 01685 881113 or Email: [newhorizons2001@btconnect.com](mailto:newhorizons2001@btconnect.com)



The Nurse Advisor visits on a regular basis and monitors BP, pulse and weight. The Nurse Advisor has links with New Horizons, the Caradog Unit and Ty Aberaman and takes referrals from both statutory and non-statutory organisations. Plans are currently underway to roll out the programme to other areas. For more information contact **Annette Jones** (St. David's CMHT, tel: **01685 881246**).



**The Ysbyty  
George  
Thomas in  
Treorchy**



**Ysgol Gynradd  
Pen-tych**

## Children Record the Lives of People with Dementia

Pen Pych Primary School children have been working in partnership with people with Dementia to record their life histories as part of an intergenerational project. The children spent 2 hours every week for the whole term at the Lewis Merthyr Day Unit at Ysbyty George Thomas in Treorchy. They worked with individuals with Dementia, researching and learning about their family history, their community and life experiences. Many of these children expressed further interest into social care and were touched by the stories they found. Headteacher, Mr Gareth Todd Jones said *"In all my years of teaching, I find it difficult to think of something quite as special. The rolling out of the project into the community is fantastic and I would love for all my children to have this experience."* With such a great response the scheme is now successfully being extended to Cilfynydd Primary School who are to be working with Tonteg Day Unit service-users. Councillor John David (Older Persons

Champion) said *"The pilot scheme was a great success with everyone learning new things. It has helped improve links between younger and older generations, along with promoting intergenerational learning as part of a wider ethos of lifelong learning."* Age Concern and the Alzheimer's Society are also loyal supporters of the project that benefits all involved. Claire Goatson, Nurse Manager at The Lewis Merthyr Day Unit, is in charge of running the project said *"It has been an honour and a privilege to have been part of such an inspirational experience that has produced an extremely thought provoking and personal piece of work. It also proves that there are a lot of forward thinking innovation projects on-going with services for older people."* With hope to extend the scheme across the County Borough, volunteers are needed. If you want to get involved, please contact **James McMahon** on **(01443) 442100**.

## RCT World Mental Health Week 2005

In order to raise awareness of World Mental Health Week '05, RCT Independent Living Service staff worked in partnership with New Horizons at Tonypany Community School. The school's assemblies were taken by the team to talk about what is meant by 'mental health', the more common terms used, and about the stigma and discrimination that people experiencing mental health problems may encounter. The talks were given to all ages, and images of celebrities who have had mental health problems were shown in order to demonstrate that mental health is something which affects everyone. Year 12 and 13 pupils had an extended assembly with a New Horizons service-user speaking about their personal experience. RCT staff were also available during the week for the pupils to talk about any questions or concerns they had relating to mental health, as well as careers and volunteering opportunities in social care and mental health. For the staff of Tonypany Community School and their partners in health, the Police and Communities First, 2 sessions on mental health and stress management were made available after school. The sessions were well attended, and all the information made available was snapped up! Overall, the community cluster who worked with RCT and New Horizons for the week said *"It was a great success"* and that next year would be even better! Plans are now underway to enable education cluster workers across the County Borough to increase mental health awareness through assemblies and other projects, as well as establish strong links to both children's and adults' mental health services.

## Have your say in Local Mental Health Services

You are the expert in what it feels like to use the mental health services. What services should be offered to support people when they have mental health difficulties? Who should provide these services? What should they offer? How could they work better? The people who make plans for Rhondda Cynon Taff need to hear from you! The Service User Involvement in Mental Health Project at Interlink, Pontypridd, offers lots of ways you can use your experience to help improve things for others. You will also gain opportunities to meet like-minded people, learn new skills and try things out in a supported way. Some of the ways you can get involved are: be part of recruitment interviews for new mental health staff, represent service users' views on joint planning groups alongside mental health managers, discuss things that are important to you with other local mental health service users and get help to take your ideas forward, give mental health awareness talks to students, mental health workers and community groups, and get a service user newsletter. If you would like to join the Service User Network, give me a ring: **Polly Kitzinger** Tel: **(01443) 485337**



## GOOD LUCK NICOLA!

**It's Goodbye and Good luck to Nicola Mawer who is off to pastures new to further her career in a totally different direction. All those involved in mental health services in RCT wish her well and thank her for her commitment to mental health over the past few years.**

## Routes to Recovery...Become a Peer Mentor

Could you help people who use mental health services recognise what they're good at and think through what support they need to achieve what they'd like to do? - Not sure? If you understand what it feels like to suffer with a mental health problem and lack confidence in yourself, and if you like people and are good at listening, you may be *just* the person were looking for! You won't be expected to do anything at first but will be given training and support. The 'Routes to Recovery' mental health service user -only group meets fortnightly at Interlink in Pontypridd. All are welcome to join. You will get an opportunity to meet new friends, learn new skills, gain knowledge and experience, enjoy a buffet, give support to other service users and have support to try out volunteering. All expenses paid. *Call me and chat with me about it - Kath Jones:* Interlink(01443) 485337



## Independent Living Service Review

The Council's Mental Health Independent Living Service is currently under review. A full consultation exercise with all relevant parties is underway. This will give everyone the chance to discuss any changes that are proposed and ensure that the views of service users, Carers and partner agencies are reflected in the way that the Service operates in the future. The revised service will reflect key themes from The Welsh Assembly Government's revised Mental Health National Service Framework for Adults of Working Age (Raising the Standard 2005), the R.C.T. Mental Health Strategy 2004 – 2008, the R.C.T. Community Care Division's Business Plans, The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health Report in respect of services in the North Glamorgan NHS Trust area. The key themes of the service will be recovery, promoting independence and the social inclusion of people experiencing persistent and/or enduring mental ill health. The service will continue to provide support on a one-to-one or group basis, to promote independence and maximise individual's potential. By working closely with other organisations we aim to support people effectively in their home communities, hopefully reducing the number of unnecessary admissions to hospital. We also aim to provide a range of services that offer support when people are discharged home after a stay in hospital. It is important that the way the service operates in the future takes account of and complements other services, including those provided by the NHS Trusts, the Independent and Voluntary sectors. This will ensure that we make the best use of resources and reduce the duplication of services. The collaboration and positive joint working of all partner agencies will be vital in ensuring the services we provide are of a high quality and meet the needs of individuals in a timely and appropriate manner.

## The Care Programme Approach (CPA) Update

Progress with CPA implementation has continued since April '05 when it was launched in RCT and Merthyr. The two staff responsible for leading the development of the CPA are **Michaela Morris** within the Merthyr & Cynon Valley (St. Tydfils Hospital, tel: **01685 723244**) and **Jackie Neale** within Taff Ely & Rhondda Valley (Royal Glamorgan Mental Health Unit, tel: **01443 443443**) Staffs within both North Glamorgan and Pontypridd & Rhondda NHS Trusts and within Merthyr and RCT Local Authorities have been working extremely hard to put the CPA into practice for all service-users in the area. Everyone in need of specialist Mental Health services has the opportunity to talk to a Mental Health

Professional about their needs, and everyone who receives services has a Care Co-ordinator. The Care Co-ordinators role is to ensure that service-users have a written Care Plan, which they are involved in preparing, and to ensure that this plan is working and helping service-users in their road to recovery. The Care Co-ordinator has to remain in contact with service-users and formulate a Crisis Plan if this is needed. The Care Co-ordinator should also work closely with service-users' family and carers. The role of the Care Co-ordinator is central to an effective CPA, and staff are rising to the challenge!



Launch of the Care Programme Booklet 'The Only Way is Up'