



Restyling stigma!

Hairdressers highlight the need to challenge discrimination against people with mental health problems.

A coalition of mental health organisations in Hertfordshire is inviting barbers and hairdressers to support the national Time to Change campaign, England's most ambitious programme to end the discrimination and stigma faced by people with mental health problems. By agreeing to display posters and campaign material, they will help to promote the message that it's ok to talk about mental health and dispel some of the myths around mental illness. The campaign has started in East Hertfordshire and Watford and will be eventually rolled out across the whole of the county.

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

Annette Lawrence, owner of Sullivans A Cuts says

'Time to Change is a good campaign and very much needed to change attitudes. I have clients who have told me they have mental health issues and we always support people to feel at ease by talking and listening to them. I have people who have been coming here for a number of years and so we have got to know them and, despite some challenges that they initially faced when coming to have their hair cut, we have worked with them to make it as stress free as we can. We are more than happy to display the posters and merchandise to help challenge stigma.'

Sullivans A Cuts, 41 Church St, Ware, Tel **01920 468099**.



Alison Williams, Rethink, holding publicity material from the Time to Change campaign, with salon owner, Annette Lawrence

If you would like to find out more, call Brid Kelly, Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, on **01727 804083**. To get involved in the national Time To Change campaign call **020 8215 2357** or contact info@time-to-change.org.uk www.time-to-change.org.uk.

Investing In Your Mental Health

This is a programme of work that brings together all the changes needed in mental health services in Hertfordshire. Achieving these improvements in a difficult

economic climate means that everyone needs to work together to find new ways of supporting people in the future. Service users are therefore having meetings with the people who plan and provide services to work out the best ways of doing this. These discussions have started in South West Herts so that new approaches can be tried out there first and, in the coming months, there will be similar discussions in other parts of the county. Already people are coming up with some really

interesting and exciting ideas about how we could improve the help available to service users in ways that need not cost more. If you would like to keep in touch about these ideas or would like to get involved discussing them, contact the Viewpoint office on **01707 328014** as we need as many people involved as possible to help us get this right.

In this issue

- *Viewpoint expands*
- *Recovery stories*
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- *Art & poetry*

Mark Jordan
Programme Director
Investing In Your Mental Health



Viewpoint expands

We all welcome Leslie Billy to Viewpoint as Operational Manager, a newly created role to enable us to expand our

work in Hertfordshire, helping interested groups and individuals to get involved in the development, provision and monitoring of mental health services.

Leslie brings with him a great wealth of knowledge of the needs of mental health service users and a passion to improve services using their voice and expertise. He began his career as a nursing assistant at a local psychiatric hospital before moving to Guideposts Trust as a day services worker in 1992, progressing to deputy manager of a team running mental health day services in Watford, Rickmansworth, Potters Bar and Borehamwood. He joined the Viewpoint team in November 2009 and says

'I am thrilled to join Viewpoint at this momentous point in its history. Service user involvement has to be meaningful and not just a tick-box exercise. My job is to develop the staff team to make this happen and create many more opportunities for service users to get involved in a variety of ways to suit their interests.'

Viewpoint Executive Board

Brian Luck, Chair, Corrina Scott, Richard Johnston, Jacqui Lynskey, Margot Holmes-Smith, John Carling, Simon Chivers, Alan Fountain, Lyn Johnson, Ray Gibbons, Samantha Croft, Clare Wood, Michelle Karpus, Brid Kelly.

We have secured funding to move into much larger premises which are conveniently two doors down from our old office in Welwyn Garden City. This will allow us to employ more staff to ensure that we can help more service users to have their voice heard. There is a large room on the ground floor which will be used to hold meetings and training events and, in the future, will be available for other organisations to hire. Our new contact details are on the back page.

Our first priority is to employ involvement workers specialising in the areas of alcohol and substance misuse, older people and housing strategy as well as an administrator. Later on in the year, we hope to employ engagement workers, possibly on a sessional basis, to do general involvement work and, subject to funding, more staff for the training group. We will be advertising locally and on our website www.hertsviewpoint.co.uk.



Dennis Edwards, Chief Executive, says 'The problem for many charities when they expand is that they lose their personal touch and become too corporate. That's the last thing I want to see happening to Viewpoint. Service users will always be first and foremost the most important people for us so we will be holding a series of events in our new building to get people together to talk about our future plans.'

Role of Trustees

The members of the Executive Board are the trustees of Viewpoint. They have the ultimate responsibility for directing Viewpoint's affairs and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run and delivers the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up. These are set out in our constitution and include the promotion of mental health in Hertfordshire, in particular by the involvement of users and former users of mental health services. The trustees meet once a month to make decisions about current business and implement Viewpoint's long term strategy. Travel expenses are paid.

Trustees are elected once a year at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) by Viewpoint's members. If you wish to become a trustee, you have to be a member of Viewpoint. Near the date of the AGM, we ask those who want to become a trustee to write a statement about how they will be able to use their knowledge and experience to benefit Viewpoint's work. The statements are sent out to all our members who can then vote by post or at the AGM for the candidates of their choice.

'Being a trustee has been a great help to my own recovery as well as being an opportunity to learn new skills and becoming a part of the great team that is Viewpoint,' says Brian Luck, Chair.



Your views make a difference!

Viewpoint was set up over 9 years ago to empower people who use mental health services in Hertfordshire to bring about change for the better. We are an independent charity and not affiliated to any of the providers of mental health services such as Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) or Mind. This means that we can facilitate independent pathways for service users to use their expertise to influence the improvement of mental health services. The way we do this has evolved in a number of routes, both formal and informal. Some examples are set out below.

Service user involvement activities

Training by Viewpoint

- Attending confidence building, presentation skills and Powerpoint courses leading to service users training on courses for:

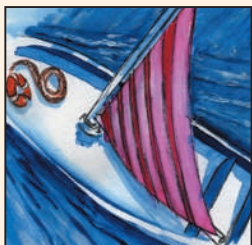
- ◆ Schools ◆ clergy ◆ police
- ◆ probation staff ◆ The Centre for Mental Health Recovery
- ◆ approved mental health professionals ◆ psychiatrists
- ◆ carers ◆ drug and alcohol agencies

Attending service user forums

- Discussing local mental health services and suggesting improvements eg the need for more information about diagnoses and the risks of drug taking.

Contributing to newsletter

- Articles, information, poetry, recovery stories, artwork.



Artwork John Church



Campaigns

Stevenage Borough Football Club v Altrincham F C • 26th Sept 2009

- Stevenage Borough F C teamed up with local mental health charities to fight stigma and discrimination faced by people who experience mental health problems. At half time, 140 volunteers held up placards to show the Time to Change logo, promoting the national £20 million campaign aimed at reducing stigma. Further details were described in the match programmes.

Membership of focus and steering groups

- Setting up a peer support scheme.
- Contributing to strategy group meetings for mental health and drug and alcohol services.
- Attending public briefings on mental health held by the Joint Commissioning Partnership Board.

Interviewing staff for HPFT

- Recruiting staff for the Personality Disorder Service. *'I felt an equal member of the interviewing team.'* Martin Bragg
- Evaluating the presentations of other job candidates.

Reviewing HPFT's policies



Alan Fountain reading a Mental Health Act policy

Consultations

- Developing and improving the role of care co-ordinators.
- Contributing to the Hertfordshire Day Services Review eg the design of the questionnaire, peer to peer reviews of services and the development of a communications strategy.
- Influencing the Investing in Your Mental Health programme of work eg contributing to focus workshops on the individual needs of service users in crisis, recovery and support in the community.

Join us!
Get involved.
Make a difference.

We will support you to make your views known to the commissioners and providers of mental health services. We want as many people as possible to influence and improve the quality of the care they receive. To find out more, please call us on **01707 328014**.

Turning my life around

If it wasn't for Turning Point at Watford, I don't think I would be here anymore. I was drinking heavily but it was only when I hit rock bottom and woke up in hospital after an overdose that I realised I wanted to change.

The Community Drug & Alcohol Team referred me to the charity Turning Point where I was put on a 16 week structured programme and allocated a key worker, Meno. He was very direct, pulled me out of my self-pity and has been a real saviour. He suggested all sorts of activities to keep me occupied. I rediscovered my love of art and completed a foundation art course at college.

My GP was also very supportive. He gave me a drug which makes you violently ill when you drink alcohol. I couldn't resist one more drink and it was really awful. Never again!

I used to be a builder and I started going to a training organisation which provides young offenders with skills in the building trade. When one of the trainers left, I was offered his job. The same day, Meno asked me to be a volunteer for Turning Point. After years of being on the scrap heap, I couldn't believe I'd got two job offers!

I chose Turning Point. After all the care the staff had given me I wanted to give something back. Getting used to working in an office when I had never turned a computer on before was a challenge but I was sent on courses to get me up to date.

I like doing the group work and find working with drug users

interesting and challenging. However, it is more difficult working with groups of alcoholics as many of their experiences are similar to mine and they bring back bad memories. I have good support from the staff to learn how to manage my feelings as I really want to help group members to face up to their difficulties and get better in the same way that I have.

Group facilitators are advised not talk about their own experiences as the attention should be on the members of the group. However, I became so frustrated on one occasion that I did open up and it transformed things. It helped to turn four people around and it was great when they said that I had given them hope. I was given a pat on the back by my line manager too.

Although the staff see me as another team member, I have found it very hard to accept that I am a volunteer and their equal. It's taking a long time to regain my confidence. Having the structure of working full time and being



allowed to learn from my mistakes has really helped me to avoid alcohol.

I have caused a lot of damage to people but I am slowly salvaging my relationships. I have had a lot of support from my ex wife and my mum has been brilliant. I am so grateful to them and all the team at Turning Point. Once I have stayed dry for two years I will be able to apply for a paid job with them and my hope is to help turn around the lives of other people like me.

Marc Austin was talking to Jacqui Deakin

Turning Point Hertsreach Watford

**TURNING
POINT**
HERTSREACH
turning lives around



We provide free & confidential services to adults who have a problem with drugs and/or alcohol, offering a pathway to recovery through a range of treatment, information, education and community-based services. We accept self referrals, referrals from GPs, partner agencies as well as treatment providers & other professionals.

**Contact details: Turning Point, 20 Upton Road, Watford, WD18 0JP
Tel: 01923 221037 Fax: 01923 224747 www.turning-point.co.uk**

Try to see me, not my gender. I will try to see you.

Born in a small village in Hertfordshire in 1968, I like to think of myself as a sixties love child. When I felt old enough I moved to London in search of the bright lights. I enjoyed a creative career. I worked hard and achieved an MA from St Martins.

I used alcohol and drugs socially at first. I cannot say at which point I became aware that I was no longer in control or if indeed I ever was. Shame and disassociation had become a web in which I was trapped, painfully waiting for the black widow spider that was my addiction to take my life. I experienced my own living nightmare; alcohol and drugs took my relationships, my career, my car, my home. The bright lights switched off and I existed in a very dark space that was my reality, hiding from others and myself. Sigmund Freud warned that *'from the moment a man doubts the meaning and value of life, he is sick'*. I had lost my soul and desire for life and, most importantly, I had no idea who I was. I was sick.

I came home to Hertfordshire and held out my hand for help. My doctor and the mental health services suggested I go to Vale House where I attended therapeutic groups and received counselling. I learnt to trust and I learnt that I was not alone.



Today I do not use alcohol or drugs to numb my emotions or silence my mind.

For me, recovery means being self honest.

However, simply knowing my truth, is not enough to set me free, I need to take action.

Please try to remember that I am a human being and I don't like nightmares the same as you may not.

I am a female to male transsexual and this is my truth.

I am in the early stages of transition.

I am not afraid of being alone.

I am not afraid of being different.

I am not afraid of surgery.

I am not afraid of me.

Please don't be afraid of me.

I am somebody's child, I am a friend and I am a survivor.

Life can be challenging and rewarding.

Now I am sober, I have been given a chance.

I asked a friend what is life? He replied 'Life is this moment'

Recovery Support Groups

If you are recovering from drug and alcohol problems and looking for peer support, you are welcome to join one of the groups near you. They also provide the opportunity to give your views to Drug and Alcohol Services.

HUGz - Hertford

Footsteps - Hitchin

Don't Cave In – Royston

In Your Hands – Stevenage

For more information, please call Angela at Viewpoint on **01707 328014**.

Vale House Stabilisation Services

Help is offered to people who have an addiction problem, or who know someone with a problem, or parents who are worried about their children.

Contact details:

43 Cowbridge, Hertford, SG14 1PN

Tel: **01992 553173** Fax: **01992 509729**

Email: enquiries@stabilisationservices.org



I would like to thank the following people and places for their valuable contribution to my recovery and for being there to hold my hand when I reached out; my counsellor, my doctor, my sponsor, my family, my friends, Vale house and Viewpoint.

Sonny Van Eden Seaforth

Strategies for sickness

It may sound trivial but the impact of my fear of being sick has been huge. You don't often hear about 'emetophobia', as it's called, but I have found that talking about my phobia has helped me to deal with it and other people to become more understanding.

My mother died suddenly when I was ten from pneumonia. I saw her in hospital with tubes up her nose struggling to breathe, coughing and retching into a plastic cup. For weeks after, I feared I would be sick and slept with a bowl by my bed. When this didn't happen, I started to starve myself to prevent myself from being sick and, when I started to feel ill, I would binge on crisps, chocolate and cakes because I believed they were the types of food that wouldn't give me food poisoning.

Growing up, I have gone from very bad times to good times. I have worked my way into a management post and am in a good relationship and own my home. My difficulties came to a head in my late twenties when I had a relationship breakdown. I



FarmingForAll
Community Interest Company

Farming For All provides engaging and inspirational outdoor activities for people with a wide range of abilities as an effective means of improving physical, mental and emotional well being. As part of a small group you will be involved in exciting, educational and motivational activities on topics such as bush crafts, horticulture, conservation, and animal husbandry. Such experiences will help build your self confidence and communication skills.

If you are interested in life enriching activities like growing your own food, building a clay oven or cooking in the open, then ask your support worker to contact us to identify suitable activities for you.

www.farmingforall.org.uk email: enquiries@farmingforall.org.uk

Cultivating Confidence!

developed obsessive compulsive disorder quite badly which I now control with a mild anti-depressant with anti anxiety properties. Everything has to be clean and 'untouched' and I hate it if my routine is disturbed. I have self-harmed and seen a vast range of doctors and therapists.

My fear of sickness is something I have to deal with on a daily basis: where I eat and what I eat, where I travel to and how I travel, holiday destinations, type of employment and my social life. However, I have developed strategies to cope and now it's not a problem unless someone makes me feel it is. For example, if I'm going out in public I

use the support of friends who can shield me from scenes which could upset me, such as someone being ill in the street. When the Norovirus was a health risk I made a resolution not to read up about it on the internet. I have learnt not to put myself at risk.

When it comes to eating, I shop daily in case any of the food has gone off. I won't order meat dishes in a restaurant and I won't let my partner cook at home which is fine by him as he works long hours! I belong to an internet forum www.gutreaction.myfreeforum.org and have bought the only book on the subject, *Living with Emetophobia : Coping with extreme fear of Vomiting* by Nicolette Heaton-Harris.

I hope that this article gives hope to other sufferers that there are ways of coping to give you a fuller life. If anyone would like talk to me about it, you are welcome to call the Viewpoint office on **01707 328014** and the staff can pass on your details to me.

Kerrie Williams

Counselling

Herts Mind Network offers individual counselling sessions for adults in Hemel Hempstead, Watford and Cheshunt.

Appointments are available daytimes and evenings and provide an opportunity in a confidential setting to talk through your concerns and find ways to move forward. To make an appointment for counselling or to find out more about our services in general please call **08444 77 22 12** or e-mail info@hertsmindnetwork.org or visit our website www.hertsmindnetwork.org



Investing in independence

My journey from welfare dependency to full employment and financial independence has not been without its problems. I was on benefits that provided me with a reasonable and secure standard of living. Taking on irregular work to begin with resulted in the cutting of my benefit income which meant that I was worse off by £200 - £300 per month. When will government finally incentivise, in a realistic sense, a gradual but progressive return to employment!!

After more than a decade of illness, I had changed from being a productive and dependable person to becoming disengaged and demoralised. It was not so much

my symptoms that held me back as my negative and hopeless outlook. I had grown used to having things done and decided for me. It can be a very seductive but deeply corrosive process.

However, little by little, I began to chart a course back to employment. My first port of call was Viewpoint, where I became a trainer and trustee. I feel sure that I need not remind you of their ability to nurture people's development and participation; they are a true exemplar in this field.

I then began to undertake some service user involvement work with Hertfordshire Partnership NHS

Foundation Trust (HPFT) who also played a crucial role in supporting me to regain my self-worth. At this time I was asked to become a visiting lecturer in mental health recovery at Hertfordshire University and, with some uncertainty, accepted. I spent a very happy eighteen months with them engaged in both teaching and training mental health students and professionals. What was most gratifying was to have the opportunity to utilise both my lived experience of mental illness and my previous professional experience as a social worker. I was also offered a number of consultancy engagements with HPFT, The Sainsbury Centre and the World Health Organisation which provided me with a rich and diverse work experience.

And now I find myself working as a Project Manager with Mind in Mid Herts. They are proving to be a first rate employer, presenting me with a broad range of projects to implement. Top of my list of things to do is the delivery of a new and ambitious So Resilient Programme of activities. These span a wide range of services focusing on wellbeing and social inclusion, including couple counselling, health promotion, facilitating a greater sense of connectedness between service users and the wider community, film making, and a green project.

If I could conclude with some advice it would be this; rediscover your purposefulness and productivity in what ever medium you choose. It might be further education, voluntary work, or paid employment. Being involved and active are pathways to achieving a greater sense of wellbeing. Many thanks for reading this article, and dare to consider what might seem impossible. You might be proved wrong.

Chris Munt
Stevenage Wellbeing Centre
01438 369216

Inspiration

I am a community mental health worker working with older clients and have suffered with depression for a number of years. I regularly read the newsletter to keep up-to-date with any new developments in mental health which I can bring to the attention of my clients and colleagues. I often look at the poetry page and feel inspired by the writers and their creative thoughts. I wrote the poem 'The Tutors' after I had completed a course at the University of Hertfordshire in community mental health. On the last day we were asked to do something creative to express how we felt about the course. Our tutors, in particular Sonya Chelvanayagam, were inspirational and the poem is my tribute to them.

The Tutors

*Here we go, I've taken the bite,
Got it together and enrolled for the course with all my might,
As if the pressures in my life were not enough –
Kids, work, sickness – but hey the whole class has got it rough.
And despite personal problems, and things that happen on the way
All the students turn up for the tutorial and teaching day,
Motivated by the tutors who know where they are at –
The 'stressed out' students still keep going, and of the group really want
to be a part.
Inspired by their tutors focused, but firm style,
They want to finish the course, and go that extra mile,
Egged on by their encouraging and knowledgeable perspective,
In becoming good mental health workers they want to be effective.
And learning is encouraged by interchange of ideas,
And by interacting with each other we lose our inhibitions and fears,
Yes they manage to draw the best out of each one,
And boy how these 'tutors' have the students' hearts won.*

Roz Sofocleous

LGBT 2010
HEALTH SUMMIT
6-7 SEPTEMBER
HERTFORDSHIRE



the emotional connection : healthy mind, healthy body

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

2010 LGBT Health Summit

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, in partnership with a variety of local and national agencies, is hosting the 2010 LGBT Health summit, the largest annual health event in the UK for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender health issues.

The theme of the 2010 summit is 'the emotional connection', looking at how a healthy mind and emotional side can have a direct impact on the physical health of LGBT people in the UK.

The event is free to all and runs over 2 days on 6th & 7th September and will take place in Hatfield, Hertfordshire.

For further information or to book a place, please view the summit website at www.lgbthealth.co.uk or contact James Holland, Equalities Manager, Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, on **01727 804206**.

Having your say

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is eager to receive your feedback about your inpatient stay or treatment in community services. We collect this information in the Having Your Say forms. Your responses are used by the Trust to monitor how happy you are with the services we offer. We use your suggestions to find ways to improve services and congratulate staff on a job well done.



For example, following feedback from service users about the food options available in the inpatient

units, fish and chips are being offered on a trial basis and one unit purchased a microwave. The Trust is constantly striving for excellence and is monitored on its performance. Some of our funding is dependant on proving we are listening to feedback from our service users and carers.

If you would like to complete a Having Your Say form, please call **Lara Harwood**, Service User & Carer Experience Team, on **01923 427229**. You can also complete a Having Your Say form online at www.hertspartsft.nhs.uk, or over the phone by calling the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on **01727 804629**. Forms are also available from your Community Mental Health Team, ward or care team. Please note that any feedback given is completely confidential and can remain anonymous if you wish.



NHS Your views matter



The Joint Commissioning Partnership Board is holding quarterly public meetings as it wants to hear your views on the services it provides. If you wish to attend, please telephone the appropriate number below or email joint.commissioning@hertscg.gov.uk.

Learning Disabilities

August 5th 2010
10.30am - 12.30pm
Wellfeel Trust, Birchwood Centre,
Longmead, Hatfield,
Herts, AL10 0AN

Topic: Personalisation

For further information, please call **01438 843202**.

Mental Health for Older People (MHSOP)

August 9th 2010
10.30am - 12.00 noon
Alzheimer's Society -
Ware Branch Meeting,
Ware Priory, High St, Ware, Herts,
SG12 9AL

Topic: Introduction to MHSOP services

For further information, please call **01438 843232**.

Substance Misuse

August 10th 2010
7.00pm - 9.00pm
Turning Point, 51 Station Rd,
Letchworth Garden City, Herts,
SG6 3BQ

Topic: Draft System Design/Review of Alcohol Strategy and Action Plan

For further information, please call: **01438 844994**.

Working Age Mental Health

August 11th 2010
1.00pm - 3.00pm
Silver Birch Centre, Christchurch,
Bedford Rd, Hitchin, Herts,
SG5 1HF

Topic: Investing in Your Mental Health

For further information, please call: **01438 843172**.

**Are you suffering from mental ill health?
Would you like to build up your confidence?**



The Recovery in Sight Centre is a user led organisation for anyone affected by mental ill health. We offer:

- Our In-sight course: recovery based group training for service users and carers.
- Volunteering opportunities in administration, marketing and communications.
- Bipolar self-help groups -
Watford – every second Saturday morning of the month
Stevenage – every fourth Wednesday afternoon of the month

You are welcome to contact us for more information and an informal chat on:

01707 284808 or **01923 239489**
Email: contact@recovery-in-sight.com
www.recovery-in-sight.com



**Volunteer website editors needed!
Free training provided**

The Out of Sight Out of Mind? website will help to preserve the history of Hill End Hospital and the people who lived and worked there. Your memories and photographs are needed to bring the website alive. You can scan them in at Trestle Arts Base and at St Albans Central Library. To make an appointment, please call Trestle on **01727 850950** and the library on **0300 1234049** or you can go to the customer services desk in the library.

For more information, contact
Tricia Dibb: Project Manager
Email: outofsight@leisureconnection.co.uk
Tel: **01727 827667**

**Forward
Incorporating
BI-POLAR NEWS
A FREE & INDEPENDENT
WORK IN PROGRESS
Written by manic
depressives for manic
depressives ...**

*Edited by Jonathan Ashby &
Benefits Bob the Welfare
Weasel*

You are welcome to sign up for our free e-mail newsletter by sending a blank e-mail to ashby300@hotmail.com with 'SUBSCRIBE' in the subject box. We will not pass on your details to other organisations. We would also welcome volunteer sub editors and admin support so, if you are interested in joining us, please put 'VOLUNTEER' in the subject box.



Hertfordshire Partnership **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

HPFT Involvement Network for Older People

Do you use mental health services for older people?
Are you a carer? Do you want a say about the services you receive?

Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation NHS Trust (HPFT) has achieved important service improvements by involving service users and carers of working age and now we are establishing an Involvement Network for Older People. This means that service users and carers will not need to travel to meetings. Instead, members can choose whether post, email, phone or face-to-face visits at home will be their preferred method of feedback. Members will be asked to spare



2-3 hours every 2 months to read proposals and to feed back ideas for improvement. The Trust would like to recruit approximately 14 people, who will be offered £10 an hour for their time.

For more information, contact:
Jo Burnham, Patient and Public Involvement Lead
Direct line **01727 804761**
Email joanne.burnham@hertspartsft.nhs.uk
www.hertspartsft.nhs.uk/your-involvement



Herts Equality Council

Working towards a fairer Hertfordshire

The new Hertfordshire Equalities Council (HEC) – the first of its kind in the country - was launched in March. With initial funding from the Herts County Council, Herts Constabulary, Herts NHS and Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, HEC will offer an independent means of engagement that aims to provide candid and constructive relationships across the county.

The idea of 'people from different backgrounds getting along well together' is growing in importance nationally. HEC's mission is to seek to promote equality and human rights, to create a fairer Hertfordshire. The idea is to do this by providing advice and guidance to implement an effective equality strategy. A diverse partnership has already been formed to help set the foundations and core members will be co-opted over time.

HEC will seek to provide:

- Advice and support to victims of discrimination and harassment
- Support and challenge to organisations around equality, diversity and community cohesion issues
- Independent engagement with communities
- A contribution to building stronger and more cohesive communities across Hertfordshire
- Increased public awareness of diversity, equality and community cohesion

HEC is in the early stages of its development and, if you would like further information, you are welcome to call Faizal Hakim, Project Manager, on **07943162190**.

Turning Point

TURNING POINT
turning lives around

Complex Needs Service

This is a new service being piloted in Hertford, Cheshunt, Ware and East Hertfordshire. We provide community support to individuals with complex needs including people affected by:

- drug and alcohol misuse,
- mental health problems,
- personality disorder,
- learning disability.

We offer practical, person-centred support to increase your quality of life. You can refer yourself or your carer or any agency in the area can make a referral on your behalf. For more information, please call

01923 254202 or visit www.hertsmh-turning-point.co.uk

Herts Urgent Care



Herts Urgent Care provides GP out-of-hours services to more than 1.2 million patients in Hertfordshire. We also run the Urgent Care Centre as well as a GP practice, the West Herts Medical Centre, at Hemel Hempstead General Hospital.

As a social enterprise, we have no shareholders and operate strictly on a not-for-profit basis where any surpluses are re-invested in the service.

Our priority is putting the patient first and this influences everything we do. Our values are very important to us and our ethos is based on being professional, open and honest and making sure we inform, involve and listen to both staff and patients.

Understanding the needs of mental health service users is integral to providing excellent services and we ensure that we listen to their views. Viewpoint is a stakeholder in our council and Viewpoint member, Steven Cowley, is our champion of mental health issues. He says

'I like being a part of Herts Urgent Care as I am passionate about improving health services. Members of the community rather than the professionals who provide the service can see things from a different perspective and identify existing problems – this can make a huge impact on changing things for the better.'

If you would like to have a say about health care in your area, join Herts Urgent Care's membership scheme. For more information, call Margaret Hickman, Director of Engagement on **01707 733 735** or visit www.hertsurgentcare.com.

'Dealing with mental illness' Viewpoint DVD

Viewpoint has produced a DVD as a training tool for employers to provide staff with an insight into mental illness from the perspective of those who use adult mental health services. It plays for 24 minutes and looks at:

- How it feels to experience mental illness
- What helps in the process of developing good mental health
- The way forward to improve mental health services

See the whole person and not just the diagnosis is the message.

If you would like more information about obtaining copies of the DVD, please contact Jacqui Deakin at Viewpoint on **01707 328014** or email jacqui@hertsviewpoint.co.uk.



Alcoholics Anonymous
0845 769 7555
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Ire
020 7403 0888
10.00am – 10.00pm 365 days

Carers in Hertfordshire
01992 586969
www.carersinherts.org.uk

Guideposts Trust 01923 223554
Charity providing day services & support for people with mental health problems & their carers.

Herts Area Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre 01707 276512
Helpline answered Thurs eve 7.30pm - 9.30pm. All other times answer phone & call back service.

Herts Mind Network 08444 77 22 12
www.hertsmindnetwork.org
Provides services in Dacorum, SW Herts, E Herts mere and SE Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's Out-of-Hours Mental Health Helpline 01438 843322
5pm - 9am Mondays–Fridays. 24hrs at weekends and on Bank Holidays.

Hertfordshire Postnatal Illness Support
01727 826627 & 01727 823466

www.postnatalillness.co.uk

Mind in Mid Herts
Hertford: 01992 584438
St Albans: 01727 865070
Stevenage: 01438 369216
Welwyn Garden City: 01707 326875
www.mindinmidherts.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous
National Helpline 0300 999 1212
www.ukna.org

PALS Patient Advice and Liaison Service. Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
01727 804629 9.00am – 4.00pm
Monday to Friday
www.hertspartsft.nhs.uk

Papyrus - Prevention of young suicide. HOPElineUK: 0800 068 41 41
www.papyrus.org.uk
For young people worried about themselves or people they know.

PohWER 0300 456 2370
www.pohwer.net
A free, independent and confidential advocacy service.

Recovery In-Sight Centre
01707 284808 & 01923 239489
www.recoveryin-sight.com
Mental health service user led organisation offering recovery training & volunteering opportunities.

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90
24 hours every day of the year
jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

SANEline 0845 767 8000
6.00pm – 11.00pm
www.sane.org.uk

The Living Room (Stevenage)
01438 355649
www.thelivingroom.me.uk
Charity supporting people with drug, alcohol & other dependencies.

Turning Point Hertsreach Hemel Hempstead: 01442 240 579
Hertford: 01992 503141
Letchworth: 01462 672381
St Albans: 01727 893344
Watford: 01923 221 037
Welwyn Garden City: 01707 343801
www.turning-point.co.uk

Charity supporting people with complex needs including mental health and drugs and/or alcohol.

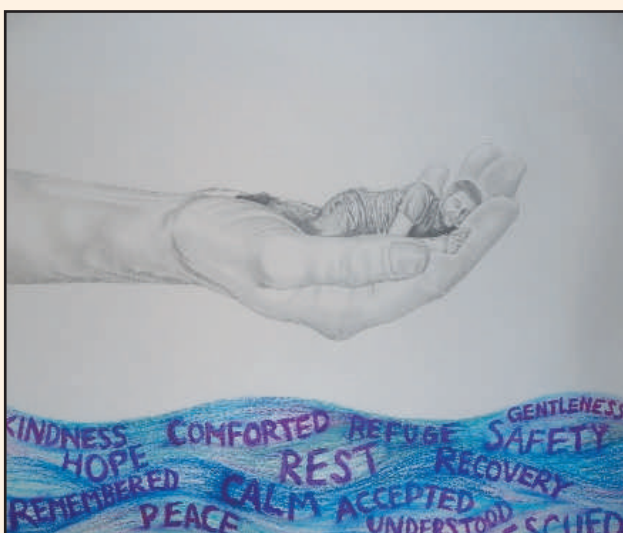
Vale House Stabilisation Services
01992 553173
Charity supporting people with addictions.

Westminster Drugs Project Hertfordshire Drugline Open Access Services 01992 581 040
www.wdp-drugs.org.uk
Provider of drug & alcohol services.

Artwork

Overwhelming Waves

by Hannah Brookes



Would you like to improve mental health services in Hertfordshire?

Viewpoint's purpose is to use the views and expertise of people who use or have used mental health services in Hertfordshire to bring about change for the better. We help interested groups and individuals to get involved in the development, provision and monitoring of mental health services. If you want to influence the future of services, we can support you to make a difference!

Viewpoint offers support and travel expenses for people who want to get involved and works with a group of trainers who give presentations about their road to recovery from mental ill health. We welcome contributions to this newsletter on a positive theme.

To find out more and receive the newsletter, please fill out the slip overleaf on the back page and return it to us.

Viewpoint is a registered charity 1105423

When the night turns to day

You believe that the pain
you are in will never end.

When your mind breaks,
there is nowhere to run,
Or hide.

But, let me give you hope, for
There can be no light
Without the dark.

Look into that place, and see
Through that starless
And empty sky, for
Hidden is the truth.

Focus on the light and let it
Lead you home.

That time is passing, slowly,
You will emerge.
Strongly, where all
Your questions will
Be answered.

Dick Hodson 2010

Ode to Ade

Let's keep it funky, let's keep it real, keep it tight,
Let's not fight.
I know things between us can be alright.

Let's talk about the problems, then we can solve them.
Let's not be blind.
Let's take the time. It's a matter of will, and a little skill.
Let's not criticise, let's harmonise,
Companionship, we can champion it.

Different minds and different ways, we can choose to
adapt, not make waves.
A hasty word spoken cannot return, but can rest in the
heart like the weight of a stone.

Let's be patient, let's be kind, let's build each other up and
we'll be fine.

M R V Brown 2002

Artwork

Sunrise through the eye of
the beholder

by Kermit



If you would like more information about Viewpoint and to receive our free newsletter, contact us on **01707 328014**, or complete the reply slip below and send it in an envelope with no need for stamps to **FREEPOST RSHZ-UKGK-RUJJ**, Viewpoint, 56 Bridge Rd East, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 1JU

Name:

Address:

Tel. number:

Email:

For a larger print version of the newsletter call **01707 328014**.

SUMMER 2010

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