

## Challenging Stigma

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

**T**ime to Change is England's most ambitious programme to end the discrimination faced by people with mental health problems and improve the nation's wellbeing. Mind and Rethink are leading the programme, funded with £16m from the Big Lottery Fund and £4m from Comic Relief and evaluated by the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College, London.

It involves a national high profile campaign, legal test cases and training for student doctors and teachers as well 28 community projects across the country including a local Exercise to Health scheme run by Mind in Mid Herts. It has been shown that one of the best ways of breaking down stigma is to bring together people with and without mental health problems.

Is the campaign working? Time to Change report there is a strong recognition of the campaign as well as early signs that it has started to improve people's attitudes of those who have experienced mental illness. From its evaluation of the first burst of the campaign in January and February, it found that, among those who had seen the campaign, 57% said that their opinion of people who have experienced mental illness has improved as a direct result.

**Myth: It's difficult to challenge mental health discrimination**



**Fact: There's lots you can do to help - get involved today**

time to change

mind rethink comic relief

## More mental health services from GPs

Enhanced Primary Mental Health Services are a new source of help for people suffering mild and moderate mental health problems. They are being introduced into GPs' surgeries across Hertfordshire as part of the Government's initiative called 'Improving Access To Psychological Therapies'.

For a long time, there has been little to offer people who are struggling to cope with stress, anxiety, and depression but do not need specialist NHS care. To date, the main remedy has been medication but this does not suit everyone. It has been known for some time that, without the right sort of timely help, an individual's mental health may deteriorate to such an extent that they then require psychiatric services.

The aim of the new services is to ensure that patients who go to their doctor with mild to moderate mental health problems are seen by a member of a team of mental health practitioners within a fortnight of their first visit. The teams include a number of different professionals such as psychologists, specially trained therapists and primary mental health workers with consultant psychiatrists available for consultation.

The types of help the services offer include both health and social care interventions such as: i) cognitive behavioural therapy; ii) group therapy for anxiety management and relaxation; iii) practical help and support to retain or regain employment.

The teams can also provide access to counselling, guided self help, information about services provided by local voluntary organisations and schemes such as exercise on prescription. The services are provided in GPs' surgeries or other community locations.

Enhanced Primary Mental Health Services are not designed to meet the needs of people with severe and enduring mental health problems or complex issues who will be referred by their GPs to other, more appropriate, sources of help.

### Accessing Enhanced Primary Mental Health Services

Your GP can refer you or you can refer yourself.

Call your surgery to find out more.



**"It's odd, but people found my cancer easier to deal with than my depression?"**

*A Time to Change resource*

The campaign continues with Get Moving: a week of physical activity events during 3rd – 11th October which brings people together to challenge stigma and discrimination and promote the benefits of being active for mental wellbeing. To join in and find out more, see the contact details below.

Get Moving week includes World Mental Health Day on 10th October. To celebrate here, in Hertfordshire, there are events all over the county and further details can be found on page 6.

### Time to get involved!

**Online at:** [www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk)  
**Email:** [info@time-to-change.org.uk](mailto:info@time-to-change.org.uk)  
**Phone:** 020 8215 2356  
**Write:** Time to Change  
15-19 Broadway  
Stratford  
London E15 4BQ

## Talk About It!

### A new DVD for black and minority ethnic groups

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has been working in partnership with local community agencies - including Viewpoint - to produce a DVD for black and minority ethnic (BME) communities in Hertfordshire. Entitled 'Talk About It:



understanding and improving your emotional wellbeing', the DVD is aimed at encouraging BME communities to access mental health services and talk more openly about these issues within their communities, thereby breaking down the stigma that exists for many people around mental health problems.

The DVD is for members of the public, is subtitled in 10 different languages and will be given out with accompanying information on local services in Hertfordshire for BME communities. We will be launching it throughout October around the county so look out for more information. If you would like a copy of the DVD for you or someone you know, please email your name and postal address to

[james.holland@hertspartsft.nhs.uk](mailto:james.holland@hertspartsft.nhs.uk) or call **01727 804206** so a copy can be sent to you when they are ready in October.



*A clip from 'Talk About It'*

*James Holland*

*Equalities Manager, Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust*

# Sea change in services

## Day services review

**How well do you pass the time of day?** Better opportunities for all are what the funder of mental health day services, the Joint Commissioning Team (JCT), is hoping to achieve with its review of day services. It wants to fund those organisations which prove they have a vision of hope for service users matched by a programme of activities that helps them live life as fully as possible. The expectation is that service users will gain more control over their destinies. This is an opportunity to be creative and think about new ways of doing things that help restore confidence, boost self esteem and feel better.

Day services include a wide range of activities, some of which are provided by Herts Partnership Foundation Trust and voluntary organisations such as Herts Mind Network and Mind in Mid Herts and Guideposts Trust. If you go to an art class, for example, or to a drop-in or use a befriending scheme, this review could affect you so it is important that you have an opportunity to express your views.

The review is taking place over the next couple of years and a series of consultations and reviews with service users and carers starts in September. The aim is to produce a draft strategy for the New Year. Members of the JCT will visit day services to discuss the proposals with service users and to encourage them to complete questionnaires. Help will be provided for those who need assistance to do this.

The JCT is particularly keen to ensure that people have equal access to services as some areas in Hertfordshire currently have very few activities available. Additionally, the JCT wants to fund new types of services to meet the needs of people who would benefit from day services but don't use any because they don't like what's on offer.

Viewpoint will be involved in holding meetings for service users to have a say about their services and what other forms of day opportunities they would like to access. There will also be the chance for service users to visit other day services outside of their area to share good ideas.

In the meantime, anyone who uses mental health services, whether you are a member of Viewpoint or not, is welcome to call us to talk about it on **01707 328014**.

## Personalised budgets: service users in the driving seat

### What is a 'personalised budget'?

- It is an opportunity for you to have more control over your care.
- From December 2009, if you have social care needs you will have an assessment to see what sort of care you need.
- The eligibility criteria to work out the level of care you need are set out in a scheme called 'Fair Access to Care'.
- To qualify, you need to be in the 'critical or substantial risk' band.
- You need to fill in a self assessment questionnaire with help from the person doing the assessment to calculate how much money is available to fund your assessed needs. This will be your Personal Budget.
- Depending on your income and savings, you may need to make a contribution towards the cost of your care.

### What are 'Direct Payments'?

- They are an opportunity for you to take control and purchase your own services.
- They are the sum of money allocated to you to pay for your social care needs.
- You need to set up a bank account just for your Direct Payments. The local authority will pay your Direct Payments into this account.
- If you do not want to manage the money yourself, you can continue to use the services provided by the local authority.
- Direct Payments transform the relationship between you and your care workers. You are central to the assessment process and have a lot more choice about the services you receive.

### How can I use Direct Payments?

- You can use your Direct Payments for activities outside the mental health system so going to the local day centre is no longer the only option. For example, you can buy a gym membership or items to start up a hobby or do a college course.



- You can also use Direct Payments to employ a personal assistant. The Leonard Cheshire Disability organisation provides support to deal with employment issues.

### Who can help me?

- Several peer mentors will be employed by Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust to help you. Viewpoint and its members have been involved in the recruitment process of the Co-ordinator who will be appointing the peer mentors in the autumn.

### Example of how to use Direct Payments

One service user, who had not left his home for years, used Direct Payments to develop his interest in photography by buying a computer and posting his photographs on the internet. Other web users said they liked them and this helped to reduce his social isolation. He started taking photographs in his garden and eventually developed enough confidence to go further afield and join other organisations to pursue his interest.



### Direct Payments: Help and Advice

#### Leonard Cheshire

Direct Payments Support Service  
**01462 439002/439000**

#### Adult Care Services

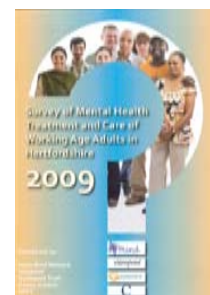
From area codes **01923** and **0208**: **01923 471400**  
From all other Hertfordshire area codes: **01438 737400**

Text phone for deaf and hard of hearing people only  
**01438 737599**

8.00am to 8.00pm Monday – Friday  
9.00am to 4.00pm Saturdays

## Survey results

In 2008, Viewpoint, Guideposts Trust, Herts Mind Network, Carers in Herts and Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust sent out questionnaires to mental health service users and carers about the treatment and care they receive. The results have now been published. For a copy of the report call Viewpoint on **01707 328014** or see [www.hertspartsft.nhs.uk](http://www.hertspartsft.nhs.uk).



## ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

When four mental health teams moved into Borehamwood Civic Centre this summer, the opportunity arose for service users and carers to attend some of the planning meetings about the relocation and give their views about the new layout of the reception area. The physical environment of mental health centres can greatly influence the mood and comfort of those waiting for an appointment. The contractors, Pexhurst Services Ltd (Pexhurst), brought along chairs for service users, carers and staff to try out as well as samples of flooring and units.

Bucket chairs had been identified for use in the waiting areas but service users and carers raised the concern that they were too small and wouldn't suit those with limited mobility. Pexhurst took this and other issues into account and introduced a wider range of seating set out in clusters around tables rather than in straight lines.

'It's in everyone's interest that the people using the building are happy with the design, furnishings and layout and we value their participation in the planning process,' said Albert Vella of Pexhurst. 'My impression from my first meeting with the service users was there was a sense of relief that they would be getting a quality product. A well designed building helps the mental well being of everyone.'

'We did feel listened to and we're very pleased with the new building which is fit for use and seems very welcoming,' said Brian Luck, Viewpoint Chair.

### New garden at QE2 Mental Health Unit

The concrete patio of the Mental Health Unit at the QE2 hospital in Welwyn Garden City has been transformed into a new garden with plants, seats, decking and a giant chess set. Modern Matron, Rada Veerabudren, who championed the renovation, says it will provide both sanctuary and fresh air for up to 80 patients. Many thanks to Viewpoint member, Alan, who created a number of wooden plant troughs to support the project.

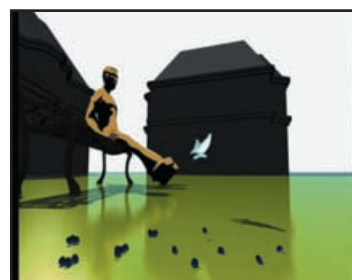
If you are interested in maintaining the garden, Rada is looking for volunteers. Please call her on **01707 365365**.



*Viewpoint member, Alan, enjoying the garden*

### Out of Sight, Out of Mind?

In memory of the former patients of Hill End Asylum in St Albans, founded in 1899 and closed in 1997, Trestle Community Company staged a moving promenade production recreating scenes in the history of the hospital. The audience were day guests escorted by nurses through wards, clinics and day rooms, observing scenarios based on the recollections of former staff and patients. A short animation film created by Viewpoint member, John Church, was shown expressing how it feels to experience mental illness. Thanks to the collaboration of a great many people, the memories of those who were out of sight, are not forgotten.



*Clip of patient with butterfly from animation by John Church*

## Viewpoint Confidence Building Course

In Spring this year, Viewpoint ran another 8 week 'Building Your Confidence, Identifying Your Skills' course. This was specifically for clients who use Vale House Stabilisation Services in Hertford and was facilitated by people who have experience of substance or alcohol misuse and mental health problems. The aim of the course was to provide a relaxed, fun and supportive environment to explore the theme of recovery and optimism. The course members set realistic, personal goals which were reviewed through out the course. 'At the beginning, I was full of self doubt and felt disabled by my lack of confidence,' said Vanessa. 'Now I have learnt to be more assertive by finding out what I want and being able to express this to others. It was a fantastic course – thank you!'

Viewpoint will be running similar confidence building courses in the future for people with substance or alcohol problems. For further details, please contact Helen O'Sullivan on **01707 328014**.

## Accepting myself

Nature and the countryside and treating people with respect were not the normal young male's interests or actions in the pub scene I was involved in so, as a teenager, I kept them inside. I was worried about my peers' opinions and that changed the way I behaved.

Looking back now though, perhaps the biggest mistake I made was not being myself, not finding friends that could accept me as I was. I just thought I had to go along with everyone else and that ended up with me as a heroin addict. I was drinking and smoking cannabis at 14, taking amphetamines at 17, cocaine at 18 and by 21 I was hooked on heroin. Even though I was brought up in a loving family, it was still peer pressure that had the greatest influence on me.

I found a private doctor working from a basement flat in London to supply me with drugs, no questions asked. I falsified my wage slips to prove I could afford them. I started off taking some of the drugs and dealing the rest but, inevitably, ended up using all of them.

As a result, I lost my job in the building trade. I thought I was in control and could stop anytime I wanted but, in reality, things were going from bad to worse. My family life was in trouble and I was not very welcome at my old home. In the end though, I did try to get clean. I approached a Drug and Alcohol Team who gave me methadone to help me withdraw. No one asked about my mental state but, in turn, I wasn't being totally truthful with the doctors. By 23, I did get clean of heroin but I was still drinking and using other drugs. By this time I had a partner and had had my first child. I found the family pressure to stop using drugs really difficult to deal with.

My in-laws found me a job in their sheet metal company which I hated but I did for years to keep everyone happy. I had a second child and then we had the chance to get a bigger house but I couldn't handle the responsibility. I went back to heroin and, in the end, I lost my job, my partner and children and home. I started stealing and harassing my family. My parents threw me out of their home and I spent the next 18 months living in a car and on peoples' sofas.

I started using crack cocaine. It's a very, very heavy drug – nothing stopped me from trying to get it. I spent time in prison for credit card fraud, burglary, and more, followed by a year on a drug testing and treatment order.

Then, I got a break: I was given a job with a family friend and I cleaned myself up. Then the pressure to get a big car and a big house started again. It was too much. I didn't handle pressure well. All I ever wanted was a simple life and I started dabbling again. It rapidly got out of hand. I was drinking every day, hassling my family and shop lifting which ended with two arrests in one week. As I was sitting in my cell, a worker from the Drug Intervention Programme visited and left me her number.

At home, two weeks later I was at rock bottom and I picked up the phone, and made the call that saved my life. Someone agreed to see me straight away.

The Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) runs a 3 month rolling programme of weekly meetings. I was given a key worker who looked at my needs in a holistic way: housing, social, mental health. I learnt to do an inventory at the end of every day to see how I felt and if I was resentful about something which would make me lie or be dishonest.

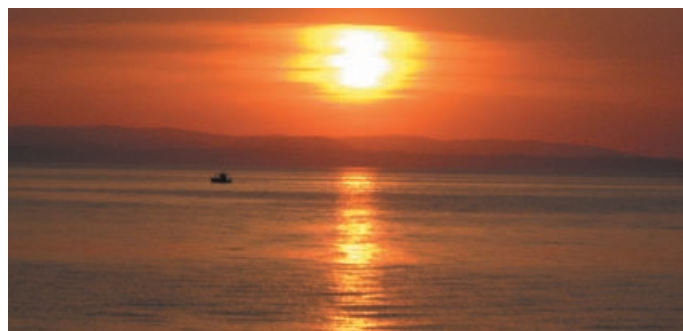
Anything that worried me up could lead me to drink or take drugs. I was taught to look at what had really happened and not to take things personally: to step back from a situation and let it go. I've learnt to understand myself a lot better.

My DIP worker introduced me to the Community Drug and Alcohol Team (CDAT) which helped me to detox and offered me a programme of help which included free gym and swim passes. CDAT referred me to Westminster Drugs Project where I get group and individual counselling as well as acupuncture and Indian head massage. I am also involved in a 12 step programme.

It seems to me that all the organisations are working together. I have a choice about services which is really important. It's better to be able to recover in the way you want as it never works being told how you have to do it.

I don't keep stuff in anymore. I thought being a bloke was all about hiding your real feelings. It's taken me until I'm in my forties to be true to myself and now it's so much easier not living a lie. I'm still in rehab but I haven't used drugs for six months now. CDAT has put me on suboxone which is a new replacement for methadone. It has an opiate blocking agent so heroin has no effect which makes it easier to withdraw from.

Learning from my experience, I think there should be more opportunities in schools for children to talk about their feelings and build up their self esteem. What's working so well for me now is that service providers listen to me, seeing me as a whole person and not just dealing with the physical aspects of my addiction. I hope that more staff training will include talks by people who are in recovery so that there will be greater understanding of the needs of people who misuse alcohol and drugs. I'm so much happier now and my wish for the future is to help others get better too and carry on building my relationship with my family.



### SUPPORT AGENCIES

Alcoholics Anonymous  
National Helpline: **0845 769 7555**  
Calls charged at local rate  
[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Narcotics Anonymous  
National helpline  
**0845 373 3366 & 020 7730 0009**  
[www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

Westminster Drugs Project  
Hertfordshire Drugsline Open Access Services  
Tel: **01992 581 040**  
[www.wdp-drugs.org.uk](http://www.wdp-drugs.org.uk)

Vale House Stabilisation Services (Hertford)  
Tel: **01992 553173**

## A rational answer for a rational man

My hands shake all the time. I was born with a condition called benign familial essential tremor which gets worse as you age. It made social situations very difficult and the more anxious I became the worse it got. There is no medication that can help but I did find my own way of dealing with it: alcohol.

I'm now in my sixties and it wasn't until this year that I found the help I have needed for so long. The catalyst was a car crash. I was done for drink driving and lost my licence for two years. I immediately gave up alcohol and haven't had a drink for nearly a year.

It was time to do something about my mental health. If I could sort out my mind, I would be able to deal with my physical condition. I've always had a good relationship with my GP and he advised me to go for a psychiatric assessment. I decided to pay for a private session and the psychiatrist referred me to the NHS for further treatment. At the end of three months I had heard nothing so my GP then suggested I tried Mind in Mid Herts.

I was seen very quickly by a therapist who gave me eight individual sessions of a treatment called rational emotive behaviour therapy. It was just the right thing for me as it is a logical process and it helped me to think about things differently. For example, the fear of spilling a cup of coffee in public used to overwhelm me. My therapist challenged this fear by asking me to really consider how bad it would be if I did spill a cup of coffee. The reality was; it would be annoying and I may have to get my clothes cleaned but it wouldn't be truly awful. It was natural to have concerns but what was important was the way I handled them.

This approach has given me a great deal of confidence. I had exercises to do between sessions and I liked the organised, co-ordinated process. I was confident that the therapist knew where I was coming from and where I was supposed to be going.



He knew the right questions to ask and everything was confidential. The rationality of this approach has made me think more constructively and given me transferable skills which I can apply to a whole variety of situations so I can now recognise the pressure of outside influences but not be overwhelmed by them.

I would urge anyone who is struggling emotionally, particularly those men who may find it difficult to ask for help, to see their GP. If you can't talk to your doctor, who can you talk to? It's not a shameful thing to do and if I ever needed help again, I would go back straight away. Both my GP and my therapist from Mind in Mid Herts have been crucial in enabling me to deal with life better. *Thank you!*



## Celebrating Creative Personalities

On 14th July, I travelled to Stevenage Arts and Leisure Centre for an event titled as above, devised by the Personality Plus (P+) organisation which was formed in early 2007 to promote a more positive view of people with personality disorder (PD) by encouraging and publicising their artistic creativity.

'Imagine and wish' was the theme. If you have or identify with a PD diagnosis, what cultural projects and opportunities would you like to create in Hertfordshire with P+ support? Outlines of 'light bulbs' printed on sheets on paper were distributed for participants to fill with their bright ideas. Sounds corny but it worked: the twenty or so people present 'illuminated' 30 bulbs by the end of the day. From contributions that were works of art in their own right, down to my own hastily scrawled efforts, a common theme emerged: service users do cherish their own and others' creativity and wish for more opportunities to express it. Whether through pottery or poetry, drumming or dancing, we seek activity which can 'help me live, not exist ... help me to help myself', as one contributor wrote.

Later, Andy, a service user who works with P+, described how the rediscovery of his artistic abilities, long suppressed, had greatly helped his journey from being homeless and alcohol dependent to an artist exhibited at the Tate Modern. A lively discussion followed; some chose to continue this in another room while I and others joined Belinda, creative director of the event, in experimenting with the craft of felt-making – tactile, messy and relaxing.

The final session was a discussion, led by Kath of Borderline UK, which will be placed as an audio podcast on P+ website: [www.personalityplus.org.uk](http://www.personalityplus.org.uk)

More P+ activity in Hertfordshire will be coming soon, so watch out for news of this from Viewpoint and the web address above.

I'm grateful to Andrew Smith of Stevenage for helping to identify a good venue for the event, and to Lin at Guideposts Trust. Many thanks to Julie who came from Yorkshire to facilitate the light bulbs exercise and to Belinda, Stephanie, Andy and Kath for supporting us in who we are and what we want to do.

*Martin Bragg*

### Campaign Against Living Miserably

Freephone 0800 58 58 58

5.00pm - midnight

Saturday – Tuesday

[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

C.A.L.M. is an initiative by the Department of Health to help men suffering from suicidal thoughts, mental illness and drug dependency. Everyone who calls will receive an equal service regardless of age, cultural background or sexuality.

I have found the helpline most useful so I thought I would pass it on. Calls to C.A.L.M. on a landline are free, confidential and anonymous and they don't show up on landline telephone bills. Best wishes and stay well.

Bob Houlston

[www.houlston.freeserve.co.uk/mental.htm](http://www.houlston.freeserve.co.uk/mental.htm)

**Personality Disorder:**  
new self support groups

Herts Mind Network would like to set up self support groups for people who identify with personality disorder. For more information, please call Carol Harris in the Dacorum branch on **08444 772212**.

## World Mental Health Day

10th October 2009

The theme for this year is 'Mental Health in Primary Care: Enhancing Treatment and Promoting Mental Health'. There are events being held all around Hertfordshire, some of which are listed below:

### Bishop's Stortford

**Saturday 10th October 12.00pm**

United Reform Church Hall, Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2JZ

Stalls, band, choir, Mark Prisk MP and Mayor

Tel: Siobhan Nundram, Service Manager, HPFT: **01279 698923**

### Cheshunt

**Friday 9th October 10.00am – 3.00pm**

Wolsey Hall, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, EN8 9AA

The Community Choir, African Drummers, Charles Walker MP, Blenda Venda - cycle to make own smoothie!

Tel: Tara Gouldthorpe, Holly Lodge CMHT: **01992 624600**



The Community Choir.

### St Albans

**Saturday 10th October 10am – 4.00pm**

St Peter's Street, St Albans

Marquee, information promoting good mental health, face painting, hand massage, and other activities.

Tel: Carlton Lomax, St Albans Council: **01727 819455**

### Stevenage & Hertford

**Saturday 10th October**

Mind in Mid Herts will be holding Community Arts and other events in Hertford and Stevenage. For more details, Hertford office: **01992 584 387**, Stevenage office **01438 369 216** or [www.mindinmidherts.org.uk](http://www.mindinmidherts.org.uk).

### Ware

**Monday 5th October 7.00pm – 9.30pm**

Chauncy School, Park Road, Ware, SG12 0DP

Free music concert featuring Ware Brass and local bands

Tel: Jemima Burnage, Cygnet House CMHT: **01920 344100**

### Watford

**Saturday 10th October 2009 10am – 2.00pm**

Herts Mind Network (HMN) is celebrating with the launch to the public of its Centre for Well Being, 501 St Albans Road, Watford, Herts WD24 7RZ.

Contact HMN: **08444 77 22 12**.

## Vanessa's legacy

Lyn Johnson would like to pay tribute to Vanessa Phillip who founded Cheshunt Depression Group (CDG) and played a key role in bringing World Mental Health Day celebrations to the area over the past few years. Sadly, she died in April 2008 but her legacy of hope and recovery lives on. Her main wish was that CDG would keep going. Although apprehensive, Lyn took over the role of Co-ordinator. She had never run a self help group before and it was a steep learning curve. She approached the CVS in Broxbourne and East Herts and found the staff very supportive. She went on various courses and gradually her confidence grew.

'Vanessa was my inspiration,' said Lyn. 'I had to get over my own fears to keep her work alive.'

Lyn has since moved on and CDG is now run by Herts Mind Network. Following discussion with the users, the group has a new name, 'The Well-Being Group'. Contact Elaine Sarikaya in Ware on **08444 772212** for further details.

Lyn kept CDG going in the very difficult days after Vanessa died and when the group lost its premises. The committee of CDG and Herts Mind Network would like to thank Lyn for her dedication and all her hard work.

## Influencing The Commissioners

**Have your say on the issues that affect you**



The Joint Commissioning Partnership meets 4 times a year and oversees the development of adult mental health, learning disabilities, and substance misuse services in Hertfordshire.

The Partnership holds Public Meetings because we really want to hear what you think. The next meetings will include the following topics:

### August

Adult Mental Health – Employment Strategy  
Mental Health Services for Older People – User and Carer Involvement  
Drug and Alcohol – Alcohol Strategy  
Adult Learning Disabilities – Job and Day Opportunities

### 2009 Meeting Details

**Thursday 20 August**  
(6.30pm - 8.30pm)  
County Suite,  
County Hall,  
Pegs Lane, Hertford

### November

Adult Mental Health – Complex Needs  
Mental Health Services for Older People – Commissioning Strategy  
Drug and Alcohol – Drug Treatment Programme  
Adult Learning Disabilities – Commissioning Strategy

**Thursday 12 November**  
(2-4pm)  
Park Inn Hotel,  
30-40 St Albans Road,  
Watford WD17 1RN

If you would like to come along let us know in advance, by email [joint.commissioning@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:joint.commissioning@hertscc.gov.uk) or by calling 01438 843232

For more information about the Partnership please visit our website [www.hertsdirect.org/jointcommissioning](http://www.hertsdirect.org/jointcommissioning).



## New Sports Health Project in Cheshunt!

Watford Football Club has teamed up with Herts Mind Network and Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust to run courses of exercise activities which are free for mental health service users to try out. To be eligible, you need to be under the care of either Cheshunt or Ware Community Mental Health Teams or the Assertive Outreach Team. The courses are being held at Grundy Park Leisure Centre.

- Week 1: Welcome session at Holly Lodge Community Mental Health Team
- Weeks 2 – 9: Sports activities followed by 30 minutes social
- Week 10: Celebration

This is a relaxed chance to have fun and raise your self esteem and confidence. You don't have to sign up for every session. You are welcome to join in part way through and see if you like it.

You can be referred by your key worker or you can refer yourself via Herts Mind Network (HMN). For more information, call Tara Gouldthorpe at Holly Lodge Community Mental Health Team on **01992 624600** or Nicholas Lake at HMN on **01920 486748**.



## Herts Area Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre

Helpline **01707 276512**

We are a women only service offering free and confidential face to face as well as telephone based counselling and advice to women aged 16 and over who have been raped or sexually abused, at any time in their lives.

The helpline is answered by specially trained counsellors on Thursday evenings between 7.30pm - 9.30pm and at all other times there is an answer phone service. Calls are listened to several times a day and a counsellor will ring back anyone who needs to use the service. This service has been running since 1986 and is a registered charity.

Although we are a women only centre, we are happy to give information on where male survivors can obtain help.

## Food and Well-Being

Lost, empty, guilty, anxious, angry?

- Familiar feelings? How can I help myself to feel better?
- What comforts me? Food? Or the thought of food?
- Am I giving too much time and thoughts to food??
- Is my weight affecting my inner well-being?

If you would like to share your feelings and behaviour around food, a self help group is setting up in Welwyn Garden City. To find out more, call the Viewpoint office on **01707 328014** and we will put you in contact with Denise, the Co-ordinator.



## SWING

Bipolar support group  
Hemel Hempstead

Tel: 07733 535979



Swing is a totally informal group run by people with manic depression / bipolar and the people who care for them, based on friendship and support for each other. We like people to turn up regularly so that we can get to know each other, but we understand that it may not always be possible to attend each month. All are welcome, however frequently you come.

At each meeting, everyone is given a chance to express their feelings and talk about their needs. We are a small group, hoping to grow and would very much like to see you. Don't worry about turning up on your own. We *know* what that feels like - one of our aims is to make friends and help people relax. All of our experiences and contributions are unique and valuable.

We meet on the first Saturday of every month from 10:00am 'til 12:00pm at Herts Mind Network, 139 Leighton Buzzard Road, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1HN. Contact Herts Mind Network on Tel: 01442 215117.

Alternatively you can telephone the group leaders, Dave or Roger, via their mobile for more information on 07733 535979.

## 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 training 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 on the back page and return to us.**

*Viewpoint is a registered charity: number 1105423*

## What if?

In the commuter's world of mad rush; blank stares, no time to stop; earphones in, laptops up, newspapers held aloft.

Mobiles beep or burst into the latest pop song.  
Everyone so well connected, communicating NOT!  
Frantically texting, emailing. Let's meet up soon.

Soon very soon: very vague never at noon.  
I wonder as I sit in this fast moving train,  
What if I had said hello to that stranger?

I remember it was not so long ago there were others where the eyes never flickered from the first gaze; the crowd not too thick to press through; the distance not too far to cross over to the one who my soul knows.



*M R V Brown 2007*

Maureen-Rose Brown is a Performance Poet who writes poems on a variety of subjects and performs in a variety of styles that suits her audience. Her specialist performance style is Jamaican Patois.

## My Street

In a council estate  
Where heaven waits  
And nature survives  
With troubled neighbours

A peace descends and  
Silence quietly blends  
While crows scream out  
And cars zoom by

And dust and smoke  
While all things choke  
And the doctor's words  
Relax and soothe my mind

While on the street  
Watching mums chat and  
Kids play with music buzzing  
And birds humming

Life goes on forever forward  
While the silence and quiet  
Are precious moments to be savoured

A freedom from stress  
And a lifetime of duress  
And some confusion  
Leads to this conclusion

Happy, joyous and free  
Is the way we want to be  
So celebrate in life  
Today on this street.

Paul Evans

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 Viewpoint, **FREEPOST NAT8850**, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL7 1BR.

Name:.....

Address:.....

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Tel. number:.....

Email:.....

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

AUTUMN 2009

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