



November 2010

# Cumbria Mental Health Group News

“speaking up for the mental health community”

## C U M B R I A M E N T A L H E A L T H G R O U P N E W S

Special points of interest:

- News from the Chair
- **How are we doing?**
- Criminal Justice Portfolio launches in Carlisle.
- Benefit changes cause for concern.
- Suicide prevention
- Furness News

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### FROM THE CHAIR

The launch of CMHG's new newsletter will help everyone keep up to date with what is happening in our organization; how we are influencing mental health services in Cumbria; and the many activities we are involved in. It also gives you a chance to air your views and challenge the status quo.

We need to make sure our members have the opportunity to take a growing role in how services are developed, commissioned and monitored. This means that all the services we need for our recovery and to help maintain our mental health and well-being are designed around us.

It is fair to say that historically, people who need and

use services have been excluded from influencing and deciding how mental health services are shaped in Cumbria.

Joining Cumbria Mental Health Group in early 2009 and being elected Chairman in October 2010 has been an honour.

We have grown in influence and have made contributions



that have and will improve services in the future.

In these difficult economic times, it is very important for us to fight for the services that we know work well, and highlight the need to improve the services that are not delivering. If we do not do this then we will not be able to ensure that mental health services meet the needs of everyone in Cumbria.

To be effective we need to: be organized; be able work together; have knowledge; and be in a position to work alongside decision-makers as equal partners.

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

The task of any organisation is to decide what it is trying to achieve, how it plans to do it and what are the activities that it needs to do to get there. In 2009 we re-evaluated these and during the year we have shared and developed these at our locality meetings and also at three

team Away Days. From these we have drawn up our mission statement.

We have had some success this year—but we still have so much to do in Cumbria. We can only accomplish this if we keep to our mission. We want all mental health services in

Cumbria to be of the highest standard. This can only be achieved if Service Users and their Carers continue to fight for improved services.

I would like to say a personal thank you to all our staff, volunteers and members and wish you all a well and festive season.

Did you know Cumbria has a suicide rate 20% above the national average?

This regrettable fact is of concern to many people and caring organisations in the county. Consequently over the last 18 months multi agency working groups have been exploring ways of how more lives may be saved and appropriate responses given to distressed people. One group has concentrated on identifying training and awareness, another on risk assessment, whilst a third group looked at care pathways. Other groups included media reporting, social marketing, in depth audit and intelligence including hot spots. Their findings have culminated in a document- "Suicide Prevention Strategy for Cumbria 2010-2012". The full report is available on (website). The strategy is accompanied by an action plan covering detailed responses to issues raised in it.

## S U I C I D E P R E V E N T I O N

Whilst the majority concentrates on prevention and education there is also a recognition that some people will succeed in taking their own lives. Death always leaves a tremendous emotional impact on those relatives and friends left behind. Death by suicide tends to emphasise aspects of those emotions in a unique way. On top of which police investigation, coroner's court, publicity and stigma all add to the trauma which people bereaved by suicide have to endure and contend with. How often in the mental health world do we hear people say "You can't understand it until you've gone through it yourselves". Well John Asher who has been representing Cumbria Mental Health Group on the Suicide Prevention leadership and care pathways group has undertaken to try and help. There is a national self help group which specialises in offer

ing support and information to meet the needs and break the isolation of people bereaved by suicide. S.O.B.S.- Survivors Of Bereavement by Suicide, currently does not have an active group in Cumbria and would like to rectify that. John is hoping to coordinate this arrangement in the first instance by speaking with people who may wish to become involved or receive the beneficial help and support offered by S.O.B.S. If you are personally affected by suicide or know someone who is and would like to both give and receive support from others in their grief and recovery, consider contacting John. He will gladly explore in confidence with you how S.O.B.S involvement may help- remember its ok to talk about suicide.



A County Group of SOBS met for the first time on 18th

November at Keswick. For more information and joining details contact

John on 07896 703757 or John Brown Group Facilitator -- 07572 975721.--Email [sobscumbria@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sobscumbria@hotmail.co.uk) or contact the National

Helpline-0844 5616855.

It has been a pleasure to be involved in the re-launch of our newsletter and I hope that you will enjoy reading the various interesting contributions from all corners of the county. I sincerely hope that the newsletter will grow from strength to strength and this will only happen with the continued support of the mem-

bers and staff of Cumbria Mental Health Group.

If you have any comments or thoughts on future editions then please feel free to speak with your local development worker or e-mail or write to our Kendal office.

We are keen to include

sister organisations in our newsletter and we invite you to submit articles and details of events for publication in our next edition. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all those involved in the publication and design and in particular Becky Murray at DaCE

And my own daughter- Becky, without whom this newsletter would not have been possible. Thank you to Jim and Paul for their input and that of Gilda, Wendy and Gill.

Kevin

## E D I T O R ' S C O R N E R

# WHAT'S OCCURRING ?



## News Flash.....

David Ralph a valued Trustee and friend was involved in a car accident on Thursday 18th November, he is recovering at home and our very best wishes go out to David and his family for a speedy recovery.

## CUMBRIA WIDE MEETINGS

### Carlisle

Locality meeting, Botcherby Community Centre, Wed 12th Jan 2011 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, Botcherby Community Centre, Wed 9th March 2011 2-4pm

### Allerdale

Locality meeting, St Michael's Resource Centre, Workington, Wed 26th Jan 2011 1.30-3.30pm  
Locality meeting, St Michael's Resource Centre, Workington, Wed 23th March 2011 1.30-3.30pm

### Copeland

Locality meeting, Senhouse Centre, Whitehaven, Thurs 13th Jan 2011, 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, Senhouse Centre, Whitehaven, Tue 17th March 2011, 2-4pm

### Eden

Locality meeting, Methodist Church, Penrith, Tue 18th Jan 2011, 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, Methodist Church, Penrith, Tue 29th March 2011, 2-4pm

### South Lakes

Locality meeting, Castle Lodge County Offices, Kendal, Tue 30th Nov 2010, 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, Castle Lodge Tues 25th Jan 2011, 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, Castle Lodge Tues 8th March 2011, 2-4pm

### Furness

Locality meeting, St Mathew's Community Hall, Barrow, Mon 10th Jan 2011, 2-4pm  
Locality meeting, St Mathew's Community Hall, Barrow, Mon 14th March 2011, 2-4pm

Various portfolio meetings and events have been arranged for the coming months, please let us have your contact details to ensure that we can send you information and invitations to these events.

If you would like to include your forthcoming events in this newsletter then please forward details to our head office address.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE PORTFOLIO LAUNCH

March saw the launch of the Criminal Justice Portfolio. This important piece of work is headed by the portfolio holder Evelyn who has a huge amount of experience and interest in this area of Mental Health. And how it can impact on the lives of all those Involved. She is assisted by Tina and between them they have got off to a flying start. The first meeting was held in Carlisle and was attended by Nacro and the Probation

service among others. The group will now meet on a monthly basis and it is hoped to prepare a report on the Criminal Justice System and Mental Health in the Carlisle area .This report will be published in due course .Invites went out to over sixty Statutory and Third Sector organizations and it is hoped that in the coming months some of these groups will participate in research and production

of the report. If interested



please contact Evelyn through our head office.

## Looking at Court Diversion Schemes

*Proposed changes to Benefit's system leaves some feeling suicidal*

## BENEFITS CHANGES

Locality Meetings saw us concentrating on the Benefits System and changes brought in by the former Labour Government to migrate all those currently in receipt of Incapacity Benefit over to ESA (Employment Support Allowance). All new claimants will automatically be placed on ESA but existing recipients of Incapacity Benefit will receive word from DWP to attend a medical assessment to determine whether or not they are fit for work. Early reports

suggest that the assessments concentrate more on physical rather than mental ability and that the assessors give you little opportunity to answer questions in any detail and in any event the questions are worded in such a way as to lead you to the answer. You are entitled to be accompanied but your friend or relative will not be given much if any opportunity to speak on your behalf. There is no date as of yet when the changes will affect those in receipt of Incapacity

Benefit but more information can be obtained from visiting MindDWPvarious websites e.g. <http://carerwatch.com/mhealth/>

Citizens Advice has also published a report on the subject called 'Not Working' You can download a copy from their web site

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Many thanks to Jess Stam for her work in this .**

## MY STORY

My first depressive episode happened when I was just 11 years old. I had hidden it for years until when I was 13 when I broke down. My school counselor at the time was terrible. She didn't address my self harming and didn't really seem very interested in helping me.

Because of this I went to see my GP. She just judged me saying that I was a silly little

girl. I felt guilty but couldn't help carrying on. When I was 15 I had had enough and attempted suicide. I was taken into the children's ward in Furnes hospital However, some called me stupid and selfish. I was even more depressed than ever and they decided to call me that.

Because of my suicide attempt I started therapy sessions at Children and

Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS). This didn't help me at all. I wasn't welcomed in a friendly manner so I never opened up.. I felt like the therapist was judging me for the whole 7 months I was there. I felt uncomfortable every time I went and always tried to get out of it. I still felt depressed and it wasn't

Getting any better so I went back to my doctors. They told me it can't be depression as I was 'too young'. I was devastated, I needed help and the doctors just seemed uninterested. Eventually after time and time again he finally diagnosed me with severe depression and put me on medication. Miss x

To be continued.

# LOCAL LINKS

**Collective Voice**

Collectivevoice@rethink.org

01704 511013/511018

**Cumbria Partnership Direct**

0800 171 2333

24hr helpline

*Cumbria Link*

01228 512513

Email link@cumbria cvs.org.uk

**People First**

Www.peoplefirstcumbria.co.uk

01900 607208

**Carlisle Carers**

01228 542156

admin@carlislecarers.co.uk

**Alzheimer's Society**

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Tel: 01539 742617

(County wide contact)

**Furness Carers**

01229 822822

**CADAS**

**Cumbria Alcohol & Drug Advisory Service**

01228 544140

**Making Space**

Website: www.makingspace.co.uk

Telephone: 017440734891

**Mind Carlisle Eden**

Website: www.carlislemind.co.uk

Email: office@carlislemind.co.uk

enquiries@edenmind.co.uk

Telephone: 01228 543111

**Self Injury Support**

Website: [www.sis-cumbria.co.uk/](http://www.sis-cumbria.co.uk/)

Email: info@sis-cumbria.co.uk

Telephone: 01228 515500

Or 01228 525705

**DaCE**

Website: www.daceability.org

Email: info@daceability.org

Telephone: 01228 606485

Or 01228 606483

Fax: 01228 606437

## NEWS FROM BARROW IN FURNESS

Greetings from the Furness branch of the CMHG. we have recently moved in to our new premises at the CVS building in Hartington St, Barrow. and it has enabled our volunteers & staff to hit the ground running! things are really starting to take shape, our small but enthusiastic & energetic team have been involved in numerous activities in the locality. Janet Bury, Linda Ogilvie, & myself have recently attended a four week course, entitled Conversations for change. inspired by Arch Bishop Desmond TuTU, & a philosophy based on the Bantu tribes ethos of UB-UNTU, which loosely transcribes as, ( I am ok, if You are ok!) A system developed & used successfully in the aftermath of apartheid in South Africa & the horrific crimes that took place during this time! & again in the Genocide that occurred in Rwanda! It helped by

forgiving the perpetrators & healing the wounds of the victims & there loved ones?! This will probably have you wondering , what this has to do in our so called modern day Britain ?I had to ask myself this a few times! but when explained, certainly in my case being some one," like many others" who have suffered trauma in their lives, we quite often forget, that the person who has hurt us, may well have been hurt! that does not heal our wounds, but may reflect on the other persons motives,& that in itself helps us understand! I hope this explains a little of what we have been doing in Barrow ?if not you can find more information on this ground breaking organisation at, [www. the tutu-foundation.org](http://www.the-tutu-foundation.org) ,whilst on the course we didn't waste any opportunities in Networking with other volunteers & charities, making some wonderful friends, contacts,& links, many of whom have

agreed to come & address some of our future Forums& Locality meetings! it also gave our team the golden opportunity to get over the message of the, CMHG & our vision! & put our group firmly on the map!! At our last Forum in Furness, we were lucky enough to be able to invite a speaker from CADAS, The Cumbria Alcohol & Drug Advisory Service. Alcohol & Drugs,( prescribed or not,) can often be a crutch for any one in a vulnerable position & is prevalent in society , & is a major problem in the world today! substance abuse " can often " go hand in hand, with mental health issues! so this link with CADAS, has proved to be a valuable experience once again! also CADAS has offered to run an awareness course, for the Furness group , that we will certainly be following up ! Again more good links with local charities & the community in general, it is also a very positive

move for the CMHG & our future here in Furness! Thanks must go to All our wonderful volunteers, members, staff & all who have made such great effort in making these achievements possible! both in the past & present, whilst not forgetting, our Dedicated, extremely hard working,& much Loved, by all who know her, Development Worker, Wendy Kolbe, whose support is so inspirational to all our team! by the time you read this, Christmas will be upon,& here in Furness, we are looking forward to the new year & all the challenges & opportunities it presents! so I will leave you in the spirit of "UBUNTU", hoping you have, a peaceful,pleasant & happy Christmas & a wonderful, safe, New Year, from all of us in Furness, warmest wishes. Stephen



Stephen  
[www.cswally@talktalk.net](http://www.cswally@talktalk.net)

Early August brought changes to Furness CMHG and new opportunities for our volunteers as we opened a new 'Volunteers office' in Hartington Street in Barrow.

The new office is in the CVS building which means we are at the centre of much of what's happening in Furness, as the building is home too for lots of voluntary organisations promoting health and wellbeing besides the Council for Voluntary Services. We now have a small core of volunteer members who work tirelessly for us, from collating media reports, preparing posters, representing us at meetings and manning (or womaning!) the office. Furness Local Management Team, led by Stephen Wallwork, service user, poet, and excellent Chairman for

## WENDY'S BLOG

our group,( not averse to tea making when called upon), has gone from strength to strength, not large in number, but very motivated, recruiting new members and contacts and spreading the word.

The team want all Furness members and newcomers who would like to be involved to know that they will be welcomed, supported and encouraged to help us to develop our local links, that it is not all hard work and any time you may have to spare can be put to good use.

During the year we have made close ties with the Eden Mind

'Out There Project' which unfortunately is about to finish. It has given our members a chance to meet up in the great outdoors, get physical, with walks, canoeing or mountaineering and sailing. We spent a wonderful day at Tarn Howe's, the sun shone, the views were spectacular, we sat and had lunch overlooking the water, the hills reflected, which lifted everyone's spirits. Our last outing with 'Out There' was again in glorious weather, this time with morning mist rising over Coniston, sending off teams of canoeists down the lake, or over the fells to meet up for celebratory cake and tea by the lakeside.

We are all looking forward to a new year of social events and working together.

## ROGUE'S GALLERY



## CMHG helps keep Yewdale Ward, Whitehaven within local hospital

There had been uncertainty about the future of Yewdale Mental Health Ward in Whitehaven since plans for the rebuilding of the West Cumberland Hospital were being developed in 2009.

Yewdale Ward is in a part of the hospital which is planned to be demolished to allow the £70m extensions to be built.

NHS Cumbria, North Cumbria University NHS Hospitals Trust and

Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust got locked in discussions and we could not find out what was happening. CMHG championed the need for a local mental health ward, as had been agreed in the consultation which we had all worked hard on in 2008.

The climax was at our Whitehaven locality meeting in July when 60 people came and made their views

very clear. This, together with the work of the Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and Cumbria LINK, prompted confirmation that the mental health ward would stay on the West Cumberland Hospital site.

At our November meetings the hospital trust will share their proposed new plans so that service users and carers can have an input into the final design of the new ward.

### Action for change

The NHS has to revise the care pathways for mental health services by the end of March 2011. This is to clarify how the commissioners will pay Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and how the Partnership Trust can do this more efficiently.

We will be talking with service users and carers to establish what the outcomes of these changes should be. CMHG is organising a range of meetings and helping service users and carers attend other related meetings.

Our goal is to ensure that services remain focused on allowing service users to recover and regain control of their lives.

My left foot

My left foot  
Is as it was  
A hundred maybe thirty years ago.  
Standing by its brother  
Mirror image, who could tell  
That it would not conform  
Be sullen, surly and unwholesome,  
Appearing White as snow with  
Rage, or is it something else?  
Messages missing gone,  
Shot off down some  
Unfamiliar path.  
I take off my boot  
Reveal this pedestrian  
Indistinct matchless  
Non-working thing.  
Can I really feel it  
Or do I just imagine  
My left foot

David©Forknall





**COMIC  
RELIEF**

CMHG is proud to have won a three year grant from Comic Relief. This grant will help us to develop our existing work on influencing the mental health services in Cumbria. An example of this is our work on the impact of the changes to the benefits systems, referred to elsewhere in this

newsletter. Our goal is to develop solutions for the improvement of mental health in Cumbria. The heart of this project is a core team to take this work forward on behalf of the thousands of people in Cumbria who need help to regain their well-being. This expertise and knowl-

edge of this group will empower service users and their supporters to argue strategically for change and also to understand what is best for recovery when developing



**COMIC  
RELIEF**

## Gill's Bit

There has been a lot happening this year; with the move to our new office at Castle Lodge; the development of the portfolio work and the related workshops at our Locality meetings. The move to Castle Lodge has been very positive and has brought with it the added bonus of working closely with Manna House (an organisation that provides support to the homeless and vulnerably housed) and having regular contact with the those supported by them. Many of these individuals are current or past mental health service users. A couple of months ago I spent the evening with Manna House clients testing a new game devised

by Jane Mathieson, to help raise awareness of things that effect our wellbeing. It was a fun evening and I was impressed by the many ideas to boost wellbeing and how much each person valued and tried to contribute to bettering the lives of others around them, when these are the people who have faced more misfortune than most.

I would like to thank all the members for all their hard work and support they have given me over the past year in South Lakes and Eden, and wish you all the best over the Festive season and for 2011.

Gill



**MANNA HOUSE**

## Manna House

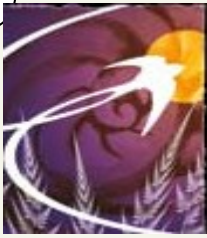
### Contact

Castle Lodge, Aynam Road  
Kendal, Cumbria  
LA9 7DE  
Tel: 01539 725534  
Email: [mannahouse@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:mannahouse@tiscali.co.uk)  
Web: <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/mannahouse/>  
Registered Charity No: 1096164



## Cumbria Mental Health Group

*Speaking up for the  
Mental Health Community*



**C U M B R I A M E N T A L  
H E A L T H G R O U P**

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Aynham Road  
Kendal  
LA9 7DE

Tel- 01539 737012  
E-mail- office@cmhg.org.uk  
Carlisle-07917167408  
E-mail- Kevin.jackson@cmhg.org.uk

*Speaking up for the Mental Health  
Community*

Cumbria Mental Health Group is a service user and carer owned charity. We work at the grass roots level with people whose lives are affected by a range of mental health problems. Our main aim is to help influence and change the way mental health services are delivered in Cumbria. Our small and informal community based meetings are held regularly throughout Cumbria. These are run by our Development Workers with the assistance of our members. Cumbria Mental Health Group also facilitates bi-monthly Locality Meetings which are hosted by the local Development Worker.

#### Joining CMHG

Becoming a member is free. You will receive regular updates on our activities via our website and newsletters. You will also receive invitations to our bi-monthly Locality Meetings where you can come along to discuss any issues you may have regarding local service provision.

### Bluebells Of May

Footlights, of the forest,  
Wowing woodland ways.  
Flowers, of fairy fame,  
Gladdening our gaze.  
Lilliputian lanterns  
Decorating dells.  
Magic of the may time:  
Beautiful bluebells.

**By Robert Armitage**