

## inform, represent, respond and highlight

Welcome to this edition of the Klacksun newsletter - a place where you can get information, give your views and communicate on issues and services within mental health. If you would like to get involved with Klacksun or find out any more about the articles contained in the newsletter please get in touch using the details on page 4. We hope you find the newsletter interesting.

"See Me", Scotland's national campaign to end stigma and discrimination of mental ill health, has launched their annual photography competition. This year the theme of the competition is "Support". As well as a national final there are local competitions. In this area you should submit your photographs to Artlink Central, the local host (email [Julie@artlinkcentral.org](mailto:Julie@artlinkcentral.org) or tel 01786 450971). Happy snapping!

**see me**...

Early in May the keys **All change!** to the first phase of Forth Valley Royal Hospital were handed over to NHS Forth Valley.

Built on the site of the former Royal Scottish National Hospital at Larbert, the new hospital is set to be one of the most modern and well equipped hospitals in Europe and the largest NHS construction project in Scotland costing £300m ([www.nhsforthvalley.com](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com))

Here, acute inpatient hospital services (currently split between Falkirk and Stirling Infirmaries) will be brought together on one site, with other NHS services across Forth Valley being improved at the same time.

In preparation for the move, a new way of working for mental health wards has been put to the test in Ward 18 at Falkirk Royal Infirmary. The model is designed to promote recovery, allowing more time for therapeutic activities, one-to-one support and a better and more consistent all round experience for patients from admission to discharge. The views of staff and patients have been a key part of



the evaluation of the new model and initial results do appear promising. Statistics show that the new model is achieving the desired results and that the number of psychiatric in-patient beds in Forth Valley can be reduced.

We do welcome the positive feedback from patients who have received care under the new model. However, feedback from others, shows that there are still changes which could be made to further improve care.

We will continue to be involved in monitoring ongoing changes and encouraging NHS Forth Valley to seek a wide range of patients views. If you have any feedback on your experiences we would like to hear from you.

Mental health services are scheduled for transfer to the new hospital in September 2010.

NHS Forth Valley is set to produce comprehensive details of all the changes and issue information to the public any time now.

### New support for the Deaf

In April, two Klacksunners attended an RNID (Royal National Institute for the Deaf) hosted event in Edinburgh.

The event concentrated on experiences of deaf and deafblind of mental health services.

The RNID are to be applauded for keeping the subject of mental health services for deaf and deafblind people on the national Scottish Government agenda and at local NHS board level too. They also commissioned Glasgow Caledonian University to conduct a report into peoples experiences, although, by their own admission, some of the report was based on quite a small number of case studies. Copies of that report are available in the Klacksun office

We were also interested to hear that the

Scottish Government has allocated £200,000 to fund the development of a Scotland wide specialist community mental health service which will be hosted by NHS Lothian. This service will focus on providing support to local community mental health teams caring for people who have a sensory impairment and moderate to severe mental health problems.

We also discovered that Breathing Space now operate a helpline for deaf people using webcam and counsellors who are able to communicate in British Sign Language. The service operates two days per week. Log onto [www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk](http://www.breathingspacescotland.co.uk) for more information.



**Read it!**

### Book review

*The Art of Extreme Self Care* by Cheryl Richardson

This book has only just made it to my bookshelf after nine months of living on my bedside cabinet! Not that it's taken me that long to read it, it is only a little book after all. No, it's one of those books that it's good to read and re-read and re-read again.

What is it about? Horror of horrors, it's actually one of those self help "manuals" and what's more, it originates from the good ole US of A! I know, I can't believe it myself! But I tell you, there's no way I would be parted from this little gem.

What I liked about this book was its common sense, back to basics approach. In a world where we live faster than ever, and the pressure is on to be everything to everyone, this book makes you stop, and think. It works on the premise that if you don't look after yourself, what good are you going to be to anyone else.

However, what I would say to you is that it's not a book just to be read. It sets you challenges and tasks and timescales! Don't be put off though, it really is a gentle challenge.

It's not going to be a book for everyone. Guys...sorry, don't think it will appeal to you. It's not written specifically for women but I think a lot of the examples she uses target women. If you get irritated with Americanisms, like the way they use "z" when it really should be an "s" or the fact that the author is an Oprah Winfrey favourite, then maybe you should give it a body swerve.

However it could just be the best £7 you ever spend.

Gina

*Klacksun has a growing library of resources—books, leaflets, dvds, and cds. If you are interested in having a look contact us for a written list or pop into the office.*



In our last newsletter we brought you some facts and figures about mental health services, particularly psychological therapies across Scotland. This time we bring things closer to home with the results of a recent survey of people who receive services from

Integrated Mental Health Services in Clacks. You may have been involved as it targeted a random cross section of people.

The survey results for Mental Health Services were extremely positive. Some of the highlights follow.

The survey had a 30% response rate and of those people surveyed:-

- 93% believe that the service they received was good quality;
- 93% believe that they didn't have to wait too long for the service;
- 90% believe that they are treated with dignity and respect;
- 82% believe they were fully involved in deciding the service they received;

## Getting Better Together

*Better Together* is the Scottish Government's 'Patient Experience Programme' - a national initiative seeking to improve the level of care provided across the NHS. At present, the programme is focussing on three main areas: Inpatient Care (hospitals); Primary Care (GP-based services) and Long Term Conditions (LTC). Information on GP-based and inpatient services has already been gathered - some of you may have been randomly selected and asked to participate in the survey - and information on LTC services will be gathered throughout 2010.

So what? The basic feedback (Provisional Results) from the GP services is now available on the *Better Together* website at [www.bettertogetherscotland.com/bettertogetherscotland](http://www.bettertogetherscotland.com/bettertogetherscotland).

Go to the 'Home' page and click on 'GP Survey Provisional Results'. You can then navigate to your own surgery, or any other, and see how the services have been rated by YOU; the service user. More detailed results will come later in the year, along with those from the inpatient survey and we will keep you posted. Hard copies of the GP results are available through the Klacksun office.

## Driving Forward Change

I read with interest the outputs from Klacksun's development event. It acts as a clear reminder of the importance of user led groups such as Klacksun, and the role they play in service development and future client care.

As the service user movement has developed, it has offered the service a unique perspective to consider, and has caused us to positively question our actions.

It is for this reason that we need to continue to work in partnership to ensure the people of Clacks are offered the best mental health care possible.

Klacksun has 'pushed' its way into many agendas- student training and recruitment, nursing and social work as a few examples, and continues to make a real difference to services locally and wider afield.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise their considerable efforts, driven in no small part by Gina Alexander, User Involvement Worker. Gina and the service users working alongside her have created a high quality team - and one for which I have the greatest respect.

*Jane Menzies - Service Manager for MH Joint Provision*

## How are services shaping up....?

- 90% believe that Mental Health Services have helped them lead a more independent life;
- 71% believe that they were offered a clear plan that described the service they will receive;
- 50% believe they did not have a written assessment of their needs

The Integrated Mental Health Service say that they will now be looking to improve in the last two areas in response to the survey results.

Carers have been involved in a separate survey and staff are currently being given the opportunity to give their feedback.

The service continues to be enthusiastic about sharing information and are continuing to develop the ways in which they get feedback from people they provide services to so we will be bringing you more of this kind of stuff in future issues.

If you have any comments or views, as usual, we would love to hear from you!

## Being Involved in your own care

As promised; an update of the work to date -

The project group has added to the information under key headings such as ; Carers' Information and Your Rights and this has been sent out to service users, carers and providers for comment. Please, send in your views.

Meanwhile, the group met with Helena Buckley from NHS Forth Valley. The meeting was mutually beneficial; Klacksun was able to provide Helena with what it considered to be key phrases that someone with a mental health issue, *but without English as a first language*, would require when seeing a GP for the first time or being seen at A&E ). From Klacksun's point of view, the group benefitted, greatly, from hearing about the project in general. It was very reassuring to know that such a vulnerable group in society is being helped to access vital services and, it caused us to consider how inclusive we are in all that we do.

In addition to this, Catherine McKenzie (Clinical Pharmacist) met with the group and was able to provide some very worthwhile information on medication and pharmacy services across Forth Valley.

Our thanks go to them both for giving so generously of their time.



## The Come back Kid!

I have had Bi-polar for most of my adult life. This I had managed to cope with ok. However in 1996 I suffered an extreme depressive episode that left me house bound and very suicidal. I seldom left my house in 18 months and lost all my self confidence. After then I very slowly started to go out. My life was

getting back on track. I took up golf and started to do a course at the college on a part time basis. I had also decided that in September 2009 I would go to college fulltime. Things, although not perfect, were certainly looking up.

On June 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 at 7am I experienced a pain in my head so acute that I fell to my knees! The next thing I knew I had woken up in a hospital bed with tubes all over me. The doctor came over and told me what had happened. The pain was caused by an aneurism that had haemorrhaged. This had in turn led to a blot clot at the front of my brain that had left a lot of bruising. Also, because my Dad had died of a brain haemorrhage a few years ago it was likely to be hereditary. After two weeks and my insistence that I didn't want to stay in hospital I came home.

I was being sick 6 or 7 times a day, having problems with balance, constant headaches and I couldn't walk more than a few steps even with a walking stick. My speech was not too good and I had the

memory of a goldfish! To say I was feeling scared and very sorry for myself would be an understatement. After 2 months I decided that maybe I was looking at this wrong? I had already learnt how to get well before so maybe I could do the same this time? I set myself a few goals. The first was to walk without the aid of a stick. The second was to get my place back at college and the third was to get my driving licence back.

After 6 months I could walk around the house without the stick. With slowly increasing the length I was walking each day the strength started to come back to my right side. After 10 months I was able to walk outside without my stick. The headaches are now getting less frequent and the sickness only happens now when I get stressed. My speech is almost back to normal except for sometimes getting words mixed up. I have now got my place back at college starting next September. It's been a hard year but I really think things are returning to where I was before this happened. Although I still have not managed to get my licence back I am sure I will soon. I know I have been lucky to survive this and have good people around me to help my recovery.

This quote from Erich Fromm Has really helped me in the last year 'Who will tell whether one happy moment of love or the joy of breathing or walking on a bright morning and smelling the fresh air, is not worth all the suffering and effort which life implies.' The answer is yes it is!  
*Andrew*

## Faith, hope and recovery

My name is Ron and I have been a member of Klacksun for coming up three years.

Back in 2003 I became acutely unwell with anxiety, panic attacks and general agoraphobia. It was quite disabling; I couldn't enjoy the activities I used to.

I went round various GPs and was given anti-depressants which initially helped me with my anxiety disorder, but I knew there were other things which could help me more. I felt I needed counselling and/or CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy).

I moved to Clackmannanshire four years ago and was referred to the Integrated Mental Health Services at Carsebridge. The help I got there was tremendous. The difference in services from where I lived before was like night and day. Soon after I joined Klacksun which gave me confidence in talking to and meeting people and gave my life more structure.

I realised that in order for my recovery to continue I had to conquer my fear of the unknown. The next step was to get back into employment. I identified jobs which would be suitable and started applying for those I had "cherry picked".

At this present time I'm working part-time as a hospital porter in the NHS and have been working there since January 2010. It has made me more confident, able to cope with life's stresses and interacting with other people has helped my social skills.

Don't get me wrong; there are some days I don't feel well but I have enough faith in myself to know that I will get through the bad times!



## Feeling Enlightened!

While on a community placement with Forth Valley Advocacy as a social work student, I was lucky enough to sit in on a Klacksun meeting. The meeting really surprised me, the people there are so passionate and dedicated to the work they do. I really admire their passion to make changes for all, not just themselves. You can clearly see they are, and will be, very influential in policy change. The people I met are a walking advert for the success of advocacy and service user involvement.

During my community placement, one of my mentors took me with her on her ward rounds to visit clients of FVA at Bellsdyke Hospital. It was an eye opener to say the least. I didn't fully understand why advocacy was so important until my visits to Klacksun and Bellsdyke. It was very hard to see people in such vulnerable positions and I can fully understand the importance and need for advocacy everywhere. It's such a valuable tool and I can see how it can become a lifeline for some.

The experiences that I have had on my placement have shown me a world I did not know existed. I am, and will remain, truly grateful for these experiences and will carry them with me into my future career as a reminder that there are people behind the title of 'service user' and 'client'.

*Michelle*

## Contacting Advocacy

Derek Neilson, Advocacy worker for Clackmannanshire is becoming well known to us in Klacksun. If you want to contact Derek telephone Fiona at the Larbert office on 01324 557070. Your details will be passed onto Derek who will contact you. Generally Derek will meet with you in his office base at the Advocacy Place in Alloa.

Got any ideas about what you would like to see in the newsletter? Or have you any views or opinions you would like to raise through the network? Contact us:



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Carsebridge Court, Alloa, FK10 3LQ



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www.klacksun.org.uk



01259 215048  
07779348181 (mobile)

### Mental Health First Aid training

19+20 August 2010

### ASIST (suicide prevention training)

23+24 August 2010

Contact Gina (see above) for more information.

### A point to note...

Happily there are lots of different clinics hosted at the new Clacks Community Health Centre. However, each clinic holds different records, so if your details change, you will need to inform each clinic separately!



### The voice that counts

...is open to anyone in Clackmannanshire who has a lived experience of mental ill health and has received mental health services in Clackmannanshire or from NHS Forth Valley.

Our main aim is to improve mental health services available to local people. We do this by working together with local service providers and ensuring they hear your views.

We are always keen to welcome new people and to hear views about mental health services.

We meet regularly on the **last Wednesday of every month from 10am-12noon** to discuss issues and the things we are involved in.

However, there are many different ways to get involved, for example: office admin, mailouts, research, newsletter production, meeting with service providers to name but a few

Perhaps you would just like to be added to our mailing list which ensures that you are kept up to date with activities and opportunities to give your feedback?

We look forward to hearing from YOU.

### You've been **Klacksunned!**

Handsome, witty and brilliant (*Editors note - he only agreed to be interviewed if I used that introduction*), Euan graduated in Law at Edinburgh University before embarking on a career in Personnel Management and consultancy. Euan is a founder member of Klacksun. His major claim to fame there was that he was one of those responsible - some would say culpable - for recruiting your Editor, not to mention being involved in the reappointment of Sylvie McCleary!



Q: When would you like your TARDIS to land?

A: Jerusalem, just before the Crucifixion. Then I would know the truth about the Resurrection.

Q: Which animal do you see yourself as?

A: Don't know but I'd like to be an Andrex puppy. Everyone thinks they are gorgeous and loveable. They get looked after, fed, petted, walked and don't have any responsibilities or worries.

Q: Would you travel to the moon or around the world?

A: As a science fiction addict in my youth, I'd love to see the Earth from space.

Q: With whom would you like to be stuck in a lift?

A: Marilyn Monroe in her prime - the reasons I'll leave to your imagination!

Q: What three things would you take to your desert island?

A: A Girl Friday plus a stock of non perishable food and drink!

Q: What job would you like to do if you were not doing the job you have now?

A: Writer. I believe I've got the necessary 1% inspiration. With wisdom and hindsight I'd realise the need for the other 99% perspiration!

### The move towards a smoking ban

The Public Health Minister of the Scottish Government has recently promised aid that guidance would be produced to help mental health service providers move towards banning smoking altogether. Recent consultation which turned out to be inconclusive has meant that the Scottish Government has not decided to implement any changes to the current legislation at the moment. However it's clear that the longer term intention is to make Scotland "smoke free" despite the fact that in the consultation process, which Klacksun contributed to, 51% of respondents recommended retaining the current status quo, ie permitting designated smoking rooms in psychiatric units.



A number of hospitals have already removed smoking rooms and the new Forth Valley Royal hospital will have no smoking rooms at all. There will be courtyards available for smokers but since those are uncovered the prospect for smokers might be a chilly one, not to say wet!

\*\*\*STOP PRESS\*\*\*

We have just received an invitation to be part of a panel discussion by the Smoking and Mental Health Working Group, set up by the Scottish Government, on 27th July from 10am-1pm at the Royal Overseas League, Princes Street, Edinburgh. They are very keen to have service user and carer organisations involved in the "lively" debate. Interested? Get in touch.

### Last Word

*"I may not be there yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday"* Author unknown

The views contained in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of all Klacksun members. If you have any comments or queries about the newsletter or information contained in it please contact the editor, Gina Alexander.