

LIVING WELL

with **MENTAL HEALTH**

in **SCOTLAND's**

LOCAL COMMUNITIES



**OUR MANIFESTO FOR THE SCOTTISH
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2021**

About the Scottish Mental Health Cooperative

- The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative was set up by and for local community-based mental health organisations in 2010 to promote partnership working and collaboration that is based on a shared and common purpose of supporting people, families and unpaid carers affected by mental ill-health in Scotland. We obtained charitable status in 2019.
- We are governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership of local mental health organisations.
- We currently have six active partner organisations – **East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health (EDAMH); Flourish House; Glasgow Association for Mental Health (GAMH); Health in Mind; Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health (LAMH) and Recovery Across Mental Health RAMH).**
- Between the partner organisations more than **16,000 people received direct support and, when factoring in additional informal support to their families and unpaid carers, this brought the total to approximately 64,000 people during 2019-20.**

Our partners currently operate in **Glasgow City and Greater Glasgow and Clyde; East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire; North Ayrshire; East Dunbartonshire; North and South Lanarkshire; Edinburgh City; East, Mid and West Lothian; the Scottish Borders.**

- Between the partnership organisations, **502 people are currently employed** in varying support roles, plus **42 trainees and students on professional placement**, and **427 volunteers** recruited, trained and engaged in local social and community activities with service users.
- Our partner organisations provide person-centred activities and services jointly agreed with clients, which are outcome focused using approaches that build and support self-resilience and self-confidence enabling people to live independently.

THESE INCLUDE– *Counselling Distress Briefing Intervention Housing Support Peer Support and Self-Management Therapeutic support for women and children affected by Domestic Abuse Out of Hours Crisis Support Social prescribing Peer Mentoring for Carers/ Carer Support COVID Helpline Trauma Support Physical Health Mental Health Information CLUB HOUSE MODEL - wellbeing, social activities, employability and training programmes.*

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative's strapline - *Serving locally, Linking Nationally* reflects our partner organisations' origins, growth and development in local communities across Scotland, culminating in over 250 years working experience. Forming links and building bridges across like-minded mental health organisations, through collaboration and partnership working, is the hallmark of our key charitable objective.

At the heart of all that we do, together and independently, are the people we support, their families and carers. Listening and learning from our clients about their personal experience of mental ill-health and understanding what is important to them, and how we can help towards improving their self-resilience and recovery, is the cornerstone of our partner organisations' approach

Stephen McLellan, Chair, Scottish Mental Health Co-operative, and CEO of Recovery Across Mental Health (RAMH)

The Changed Mental Health context – Post Covid-19

Covid-19 has thrown the spotlight on mental health as a major public health concern in ways that we could not have previously imagined. It has been a causal factor of anxiety relating to the fear of the virus itself, and the devastating experience of personal loss and bereavement felt by thousands of people and families across the UK. Lockdown and social distancing measures, introduced to control and manage risk of contracting the virus, presented significant challenges for the general public affecting all manner of how we live and work, and also for community based mental health organisations, such as our partner organisations.

In the course of their day-to-day work with people affected by varying types of mental health needs, conditions and illnesses, our partner organisations are only too acutely aware of how recovery and resilience is impacted by socio-economic factors, health inequalities and dual diagnosis, and also the part stigma and discrimination plays in deterring people from seeking help earlier, if at all.

Covid-19 led to surges of new referrals of people not previously known to any mental health services which could easily have outstripped support were it not for the ability of third sector, community-based mental health organisations. It was a huge credit to third sector organisations, such as our partner organisations, to adapt and respond to these unprecedented demands.

This must also be recognised in the context of workplace lockdown restrictions resulting in transitioning regular service practices from in-person to remote, home-based working (except for the most vulnerable clients). Ensuring health and safety measures for social care staff and client in their own homes, such as acquiring the most basic of protection, namely PPE was hugely challenging and costly. Without adequate protection staff could transmit infection to their own families upon returning home from work.

As we come out of lockdown restrictions we must take this immediate opportunity to renew the focus on mental health and recognise it as a public health concern that impacts on everyone across communities and society. The impact of Covid-19 will remain with us for years to come in terms of economic, health and social challenges and, from mounting health indicators, there will be significant numbers of people living with long-term effects of Covid-19.

ACTION ONE

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

PLEDGE TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN, and we call for the creation of a **CROSS-PARTY WORKING GROUP, partnered with Health & Social Partnerships, NHS Scotland, COSLA and Third Sector Mental Health Service Providers** to re-evaluate the current Scottish Mental Health Strategy.

We believe this is now the time for a clear and comprehensive **SCOTTISH COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FRAMEWORK** that is inclusive of Health and Social Care Partnerships, Primary Care, Community Mental Health Services, Adult Social Care and Children's Mental Health Services, and third sector, local mental health service providers.

“As a co-founder of the Scottish Mental Health Co-operative it was our vision to create opportunities for local mental health service providers to work together by sharing their knowledge, skills and experience for the common good of people affected by mental health difficulties.

As partners, we openly exchange and share information about national and local developments in policy and service, as well as investing in ideas of what and how we can collaboratively work together to address mental health inequalities and provide appropriate support when needed.

Working directly with the CEOs of partner organisation members provides additional benefits because of the mutual informal peer support offered which lends itself to creating positive, productive and enduring professional relationships.”

Hugh Cairns, Treasurer, Scottish Mental Health Co-operative and CEO, Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health

ACTION TWO

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative with its partner organisations wish to see a clear statement of intent to fully integrate third sector community based mental health service providers within an integrated approach to mental health and wellbeing in Scotland.

We call upon the next Scottish Government to go beyond political rhetoric and tokenism to ensure that **THIRD SECTOR MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS ARE RECOGNISED, VALUED AND INCLUDED IN ALL PLANNING, DESIGN AND DELIVERY ASPECTS OF LOCAL PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND FACTORED INTO FUNDING**, taking full account of the social capital and community assets they actively generate.

LIVING WELL with MENTAL HEALTH in SCOTLAND'S LOCAL COMMUNITIES

H O M E I S B E S T

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative exists to promote, develop and support local, community-based mental health organisations working across various local authority areas, health and social care partnerships and health boards in Scotland through collaborative and partnership working.

Our new three-year strategy, **LIVING WELL with MENTAL HEALTH in SCOTLAND'S LOCAL COMMUNITIES** is underpinned by commonly shared values and principles that can be described as follows – **Accepting people as they are** – non-judgemental, caring, enabling and supportive of those seeking help, their families and carers; **Valued** and **Respected** being treated well, understand their **Rights to Exercise Choice and Control of their Services and Support**, and to **Be Supported**.

Our partner organisations share a common identify of being 'locality-based' but there are many differences between them, in part or whole. These differences are in geopolitics (human and physical) and how areas are classified - rural or urban, neighbourhood or village, city or town, or a combination, as well as the interplay between socio-economic conditions and political factors. How this influences and benefit's people's quality of living well in local communities and how to support population mental wellbeing and address health inequalities in availability and easy accessibility of appropriate mental support services for people at time of need.

ACTION THREE

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

Commit to **INVESTING RESOURCES** and **FUNDING to DEVELOP 'MENTALLY FRIENDLY', RESILIENT AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES**, inclusive of good housing options, integrated transport, access to health and social care and employment opportunities.

LIVING TOGETHER

Families and Partner Households, Unpaid Carers and Children

The role of families, partners and unpaid carers in supporting those closest to them affected by mental health difficulties is an essential part of any service or social care package. This is important for working with, and alongside, health and social care professionals to augment their support. Where one or more persons within the same household have mental health difficulties, independent of each other, or when there are diagnosed complex or co-morbidity of health conditions, including physical health, which can impact on the home environment affecting all other members, including children.

The inter-familial dynamics and the consequential stresses upon wider families and partners of supporting and caring for those with mental health difficulties on a day by day basis can be relentless and, without recognition or support, lead to fractious mental wellbeing for all.

ACTION FOUR

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

PROTECT the **INTERESTS, CONCERNS and SUPPORT NEEDS of MENTAL HEALTH CARERS** through better and improved carer needs assessments undertaken simultaneously with related client referral assessments and reviews. It should be conditional to take into account of the needs of any children within the household who may hold carer responsibilities.

ACTION FIVE

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

PROMOTE and **DEVELOP** conditions for all clients, their families and unpaid carers impacted **TO HAVE FULL INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN SEEKING HELP AND SUPPORT WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.**

Caring in the Community

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative's partner organisations are all registered charities and without exception, current partner organisations, share long histories having evolved from **GRASSROOT COMMUNITY ACTION** and **DEVELOPMENT** to set up support activities and services for people experiencing mental health difficulties. It is within these same communities that **SOCIAL CAPITAL** that, which brings people to work together effectively to achieve a common purpose which enables them to operate as a whole through shared identity, trust, norms and values, and build mutual relationships. Importantly, it is how local third sector mental health organisations collaborate locally with others working in wide ranging areas, such as employability, housing, advice and information, and poverty, to name a few, that adds value and, which together, promotes a holistic approach to people's improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.

ACTION SIX

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

Set up a **NATIONAL REVIEW** that includes the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and Scotland's Third Sector Interfaces **TO REVIEW DIFFERENT MODELS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENGAGEMENT** that will be focus on maximising social capital, **CREATING BETTER SOCIAL COHESION NOT DIVISION.** We would expect local mental health organisations to be part of this review.

ACTION SEVEN

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

REVIEW FUNDING TO THIRD SECTOR, COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS to ensure open, fair and equitable distribution of statutory funding that is inclusive of core costs and, and which promotes greater flexibility and autonomy over delivery.

Community-based mental health services

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative comprises third sector, community-based mental health organisations with longstanding traditions in local communities and which co-exist alongside statutory and independent health and social care providers. As constituted charities, they fulfil social care provision through formal commissioning and contracting with services independently regulated by the Care Inspectorate. They also provide much more by way of support to local people, their families and unpaid carers that is commonly expressed by going 'the extra mile'.

To contrast delivery between regulated and unregulated care is akin to the difference between night and day, the latter operating in more flexible and responsive ways than what is generally experienced with the former. 'Time and Task' are formidable constraints to forming good holistic approaches that inclusive of positive inclusion of the wider family and household, unpaid carers and signposting/linking to other local support groups.

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative broadly welcomes the recommendations of the recently published Adult Social Care Review (2021), which considered the future delivery of social care in Scotland and which we strongly believe should be clearly focussed on significant shifts towards contributing to cohesive community-based services. To this end, we would expect collaborative working with the next Scottish Government in respect of the scoping proposals for Primary Care and Mental Health, published September 2020.

ACTION EIGHT

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

TO COMMISSION A REVIEW OF COMMUNITY-BASED, THIRD SECTOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS, taking account of the full extent of their activities and services provided within and across local communities, how funded, and positioned with any future developed Scottish Community Mental Health Framework.

We believe this would provides valuable data and understanding about the extent and type of support being delivered, over and above that, which is directly funded through statutory commissioning and contracting.

To disregard how third sector mental health service providers provide additionality towards supporting people, families and unpaid carers and working towards creating mentally healthy communities, and not take into Covid 19, is to blindside the huge contribution of the third sector.

Workforce Planning

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative's partner organisations employ between them over 500 staff, the majority of which work in housing support, community and social care, plus over 40 trainees and students in the fields of social and community work, and counselling psychology. In common with other social care providers, we seek to ensure fair and safe working practices, that staff are able to access appropriate training, support and professional development. Importantly, that they continue to see working in the third sector for mental health as a positive employment outcome.

ACTION NINE

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

PROMOTE GROWTH OF THE THIRD FORCE SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE through recruitment, professional training and development that offers fair pay and secure conditions of employment.

Volunteering

Caring communities include hundreds upon hundreds of local people engaging in local volunteer activities that range from, for example, befriending and mentoring, advice and information giving, conservation, supporting carers, day care to serving as trustees of local charities, fundraisers, single issue champions and ambassadors. This is by no means an exhaustive list. Seeing local people as **COMMUNITY ASSETS** is hugely important, if not essential, in creating caring communities that seek to dispel stigma and discrimination of mental health, that embrace equality and diversity, and a strong sense of personal belonging.

ACTION TEN

The Scottish Mental Health Co-operative calls upon all newly elected MSPs to the Scottish Parliament, representing local constituencies and regions, and those MSPs forming the next Scottish Government to:

COMMISSION A REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE VOLUNTEERING, the role that local people play in supporting community-based mental health support services that is based on an established set of principles and values, quality standards and accreditation.

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