

Scotland's Mental Health First Aid – Young People

Year 2 Final Report

Rationale

The Scottish Government's 'Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2012 – 2015' details the main challenges facing Scotland around preventing mental illness and promoting mental wellbeing, and sets out a range of mental health improvement commitments. A number of these commitments relate specifically to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Services/Mental-Health/Strategy>). Scottish Government is currently reviewing its mental health strategy, but within their vision is a recognition of the need to support young people's mental health particularly in terms of prevention.

Furthermore, in November 2014 the Scottish Government pledged a £15 million spending boost over the next three years for mental health services. This investment will see the establishment of a Mental Health Innovation fund which will "look at better ways to deliver services, particularly at primary care level, and ensure services are working together to help people who are in distress, or experiencing trauma. It will help people get better help at an early stage of their illness and also improve quality through training and development".

Schools have an important role to play in promoting mental wellbeing and in identifying and providing initial support for children and young people who are experiencing mental ill-health.

Education Scotland, in partnership with NHS Health Scotland, has funded two years of training in Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People nationally in secondary school communities.

It is acknowledged that local authorities have a range of initiatives and approaches to support mental health and mental wellbeing already in place. Therefore, it is intended that the support provided through the strategy and project will complement this.

Curriculum for Excellence

Curriculum for Excellence identifies some aspects of Health and wellbeing as responsibilities of all that should be developed across learning and as part of the whole school ethos:

"The responsibilities of all include each practitioner's role in establishing open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where children and young people will feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives; in promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure;... and by being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person." (Curriculum for Excellence: Principles and Practices: Health and wellbeing across learning paper, p. 2).

It goes on to state that "members of staff are often best placed to identify even minor changes of mood in a child or young person which could reflect an important emotional, social or mental health issue with which that child or young person needs help or support. It is important that children and young people feel that they can share their anxieties with an appropriate individual who has the skills, rapport, responsibility and the time to listen and to help, or can identify appropriate sources of support." (Curriculum for Excellence: Principles and Practices: Health and wellbeing across learning paper, p. 2).

This project embraces the above philosophy and encourages local authorities and schools to identify members of the school community who are best placed to identify that a pupil might be struggling with a mental health issue. School community members might include the school's management team, the teaching staff, the support staff (including administration and janitorial

staff) or others working to support the school community, e.g. after school care workers or youth workers.

Getting It Right For Every Child

As with Curriculum for Excellence, Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) has the wellbeing of children and young people at its heart. The values and principles of GIRFEC reflect the necessity of effective partnerships amongst professionals and with families, and call for “**a competent workforce to promote children and young people’s wellbeing**”.

(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background>)

Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People is placed within Tier 1 of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20383/48321>

It “offers basic general information about mental health problems. The knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helps to remove stigma and fear and to give confidence in approaching a young person in distress.” (<http://youngpeople.smhfa.com>)

Year 1; The Pilot Project

Five Local Authorities were identified as being in most need of immediate support, based on the Scottish Index Of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and on figures provided by NHS on the number of professionals trained in ‘Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People’ within the Authority:

- West Dunbartonshire
- North Ayrshire
- Renfrewshire
- Clackmannanshire
- North Lanarkshire

This was successfully evaluated in January 2016.

Year 2

In Year 2 a further 5 local authorities were identified to take part in the next phase of funding. They were identified as being in most need of immediate support, based on the Scottish Index Of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), suicide rates and on figures provided by NHS on the number of professionals trained in ‘Scotland’s Mental Health First Aid: Young People’ within the Authority;

- Shetland
- Highland
- Argyll & Bute
- Dumfries & Galloway
- Scottish Borders

Each Local Authority was awarded a grant of £2400 to target support and training to school communities in most need, thus improving outcomes for learners in the most deprived areas or from particular vulnerable groups. Spending was as follows:

| Authority | Spending |
|-----------------------|--|
| Shetland | 2 Staff to attend training on the mainland Flights, accommodation and cover Planning day for roll out £2400 |
| Highland | Training for Trainers by Health Scotland Staff (Training, travel and subsistence for trainers and team) Implementation Plan Created by Team Initial Training completed by ASG (Travel and subsistence for team and pilot group) On going training targeted monthly £2400 |
| Argyll and Bute | £750 per 2 day course for co trainer costs and for 3 venues £2400 |
| Dumfries and Galloway | Contribution towards Staff Cover Costs – for release of up to 68 staff (£4480) £900.00 Training Costs £ 1500.00 £2400.00 |
| Scottish Borders | <p>Activities Supporting part of supply costs to train trainer - £200 Support each secondary school with supply costs for pastoral staff to attend training - £100 £100 per school 9 secondary schools - £900 Support 10 primary schools with supply costs for staff to attend training £50 per school 10 primary schools - £500</p> <p>Training days 1 training session per month for 5 months 2 days per training session Cost for lunches for 12 people per month - £5.00 per person / £60 per day 2 days per month = £120 per month Total 5 x £120 = £700 Resources - charts/photocopying etc - £200</p> <p>Total spend £2500</p> |

Those undertaking the training experience a 14 hour course, split into three sections:

- Part 1: 1-2 hours online session, covering relevant policies and procedures
- Part 2: 7 hours as a modular course, delivered face to face - a skills practice intervention training day (this can be delivered in 1.5 hour sessions, 2 half days or 1 full day)
- Part 3: 2-3 hours online session, using DVD clips with a reflective log to be completed

The main objectives were as follows

- those undertaking the training (identified members of secondary school staff and partners) will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to approach and give initial help to children and young people experiencing mental health problems
- a greater number of pupils experiencing mental health problems will receive initial support when needed

- support for learners from the most deprived areas and from particular vulnerable groups as local authorities will be able to target support to the school communities that need it most (support will be organised in such a way as to complement existing mental health and mental wellbeing training and initiatives within the local authority)

Implementation and Impact

The Local Authorities were asked to provide a summary of the implementation and a brief evaluation of the initial impact of project:

| Authority | Implementation | Initial Impact and next steps |
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| Shetland | <p>Shetland Islands Council has been committed to making Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People courses available to staff. We have supported 28 staff to undertake the course (delivered locally by NHS Shetland). We held two Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People courses on 26th and 27th October 2015 during the schools in-service days. These were led by Jill Hood, NHS Shetland. 26 members of staff attended the training over the 2 days. In order to ensure the sustainability of this programme Shetland Islands Council now have two teachers (Principal Teacher Pupil Support, Brae High School & Additional Support Needs Teacher, Additional Support Base) trained as instructors for Scotland's Mental Health First Aid: Young People. Their training took place on 03, 04 & 05 November in Glasgow</p> | <p>Has built capacity locally to target support for school communities</p> <p>More secondary teachers trained in SMHFA:YP so pupils should get the support they need</p> <p>More young people now aware of mental health issues so should be more able to get the help they need</p> <p>Evaluations from those who took part will help inform further training</p> |
| Highland | <p>Thus far we have 10 people trained as trainers, but unfortunately one has recently left the service, leaving 9 trainers in Highland, all within the Primary Mental Health Work & Training (PMHW) service.</p> <p>We have delivered training in pairs to ensure quality and</p> | <p>We're targeting all school communities and children's services staff. We are using consultation with staff to guide us towards schools who are 'ready' for this step and are supporting others as appropriate. This support is being embedded into Improvement Plans so that it has a more strategic impact. All PMHWs in post last year were trained as trainers. This has enabled us to deliver the training in local areas across Highland.</p> |

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| | <p>consistency, and have delivered to school teams in 5 locations thus far (since January). There are plans to continue this roll out to schools across Highland through the PMHW service.</p> <p>We have also recently had discussions about training for our family teams (support workers, health visitors and school nurses) and after Easter will have a draft roll out programme for training this group of staff.</p> | <p>This gives us a number of trainers and good coverage across Highland</p> <p>Use of consultation to build capacity in school staff and link this to SMHFA-YP training. We are noticing patterns within this that is able to highlight need. PMHW HEAT targets are being met.</p> <p>The feedback from staff is that they are more knowledgeable and more confident in dealing with mental health issues in children and young people. This is recorded on the Health Scotland website as part of the reflective accounts of participants.</p> <p>Training is being offered to older Young Carers and Care Experienced Young People. Stonewall are also providing resources for us when focusing on LGBTI issues.</p> |
| Argyll and Bute | <p>We have completed one session to date with 14 in attendance over the next two weeks there are a further two sessions with a total of 16 staff signed up.</p> <p>We now plan to add a further session on after the Spring break as all of the initial sessions were full and schools would like to have a number of trained staff.</p> | <p>All 10 secondary schools, 2 primary schools and partners from Police Scotland, 3rd sector Drug and Alcohol and family support groups working in schools had staff trained</p> <p>There are now identified and trained staff in all 10 secondary schools who will take forward this work. In our larger schools there are up to 5 staff trained</p> |
| Dumfries and Galloway | <p>She has advised that each course could take up to 12 people and would require 2 trainers. Approximate cost is £300 per course, which incorporates travel etc. Given that I need to cover supply I am intending to offer this to 20 Pupil Support Staff.</p> | <p>As a result of this training, initial feedback and concerns raised from schools and others discussions have been held with our key NHS partners, regarding the development of a mental health strategy to support schools This will be developed as a multi agency strategy. The purpose of this is to provide schools with clear pathways and guidance to support young people experiencing any one of the wide-ranging mental health issues. It will also identify further key training for staff to undertake in conjunction with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and other agencies. Feedback from Staff indicated that they found the course extremely worthwhile, as it provided basic general information about mental health problems. As well as this they felt that the knowledge presented and understanding developed in the course helped to remove some of the stigma and fear around dealing with these issues.</p> |

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| | | <p>Most indicated that having undergone the training they felt they were slightly more confident in dealing with young people experiencing mental health problems. They recognised the training for what it was and felt that as an initial response and signposting training, it was ideal for them as pupil support principal teachers. Some stated that they found dealing with young people experiencing mental health problems extremely distressing and therefore now felt more reassured in that they did not feel they had to 'sort' the issue themselves but instead now saw their role as providing initial support and signposting the young person to appropriate professional help. Almost all however indicated that they would like further training in this area.</p> <p>Prior to the start of the training all staff completed an online module. Post training there is an expectation that staff will complete a further module. This is currently underway.</p> |
| Scottish Borders | <p>Training days - 1 training session per month for 5 months. 2 days per training session 9 secondary staff trained – one from each school 10 staff from primaries also trained</p> | No response yet |

A number of individual participants gave feedback in summer 2016 through Survey Monkey, covering three of the Local Authorities.

The general feedback on the training is very positive. Comments include:

- Informative
- Interesting
- Worthwhile
- Enjoyed the course
- An excellent course full of practical work
- Beneficial to my client group and my job role
- Think it is worthwhile for teachers who have no previous background in Pupil Support

Before taking part in the training there was a clear need to support participants in developing the skills to approach young people with a mental health problem and to develop confidence in what to say and ask:

- 60% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had very good knowledge and understanding of mental health/wellbeing of young people
- 60% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident at identifying when a young person is struggling with a mental health problem

- 56% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident to approach a young person in this situation
- 45% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident about what to say or how to ask questions to give the young person initial support

After taking part in the training there was a rise in the number of participants who felt confident in approaching young people and felt confident in what to say and what questions to ask:

- 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they had very good knowledge and understanding of mental health/wellbeing of young people
- 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident at identifying when a young person is struggling with a mental health problem
- 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident to approach a young person in this situation
- 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident about what to say or how to ask questions to give the young person initial support

With regard to Curriculum for Excellence:

- 98% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the training met their perceived responsibility to ensure that young people will receive suitable and appropriate support for good mental health now and in the future.

With regard to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC):

- 96% of participants are more aware of how their role can support a young person who is experiencing a mental health problem
- 96% have shared their knowledge and understanding of mental health/wellbeing of young people with another member of staff

At the time of completing the survey (May 2015, around two months after the training):

- 94% of participants had approached a young person who they thought may have a mental health problem
- 94% of participants had used their new skills to provide initial support to a young person in this situation
- 96% of participants had used the confidence and skills they had acquired to support a member of staff

When self-assessing the impact this training has had on participants' practice with young people, comments included:

- Gave me greater confidence to provided targeted support for unmet needs
- I now feel more confident speaking to young people about mental health issues. I feel a lot more confident about speaking to young people who may be thinking about suicide.
- Increased confidence and agreed way of approaching young people

- Increased confidence in dealing with young people who have mental health issues
I have the ability to assist not just young people, but colleagues also and would have no problem asking if they have thoughts of suicide
- Better understanding of issues facing pupils and how it can affect them. I am more considerate in my approach in conversations with pupils.
- More understanding, awareness, openness and greater confidence in talking about issues of mental health and wellbeing.
- Huge - particularly the work around ALGEE and the suicide question. Previously I had understanding, empathy and a commitment to getting it right but I now have practical strategies to support all of that
- I feel more confident in speaking to youngsters on my caseload about mental health issues. My understanding of mental health issues is clearer and I feel less like to get anxious myself when dealing with youngsters in crisis.
- I feel that if a need would arise that my training would be needed i feel that the pupils would benefit from my training massively.
- Reinforcement of existing knowledge and update on skills surrounding asking and giving advice.

This feedback is very positive. It is clear the Local Authorities have identified mental health and wellbeing as an issue for young people and thus an area of development for staff. All the authorities have used the funding to complete the training for targeted staff in areas of need. Staff evaluations appear to be positive with a growth in knowledge, understanding and confidence. The objective of the project to support staff training, especially in areas of deprivation has been met in all five Local Authorities.

Summary

The second year of this project has met its hoped for outcomes related to targeting staff in secondary school communities, especially in areas of need with many identifying how to sustain this training and see it have a wider roll out across the authorities.

It will take time to achieve the aim of supporting more young people, to embed these practices across secondary school communities. More needs to be done in this area as mental health continues to be identified as an area of need, with regards to training for staff and young people's general health and wellbeing. This project tackles these issues locally, with a view to having an impact nationally over the coming years and will hopefully help support the priorities on new Mental Health Strategy.

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