

World Mental Health Day 2006

'OLDER MINDS MATTER'

A campaign about depression in older people in Manchester

History and purpose of WMHD celebrations.

World Mental Health Day falls on 10th October each year and provides an opportunity to raise public awareness about mental health and celebrate its positive aspects. In Manchester, we have successfully come together for the last 7 years to celebrate World Mental Health Day, through events, campaigns and the media.

Manchester Public Health Development Service co-ordinates and delivers a programme of work across the city to address Standard 1 of the National Service Framework for Mental Health which challenges us to promote mental health for all and tackle the stigma attached to mental health problems. World Mental Health Day activity provides an opportunity for us to address this challenge. In 2006 the campaign was co-ordinated in collaboration with Primary Care Mental Health Services.

Internationally World Mental Health Day carries an annual theme as its focus which has included physical health and suicide in the past. On a national level the day hasn't attracted much media exposure, and it has fallen to individual localities and regions to develop and co-ordinate their own activity. In Manchester we have developed our own themes which reflect the needs of our city. In 2005 the Manchester theme was 'food and mood'. A very successful campaign was co-ordinated which has continued to deliver spin off work based on this theme to this day

World Mental Health Day 2006 campaign

Older people are a group who are particularly vulnerable to poor mental health due to a variety of complex factors. They face many challenges and can experience multiple losses such as loss of spouse, friends, social networks and health which can affect emotional well being. Older people are a group more likely to experience social isolation, bereavements, loneliness and physical health problems which impact greatly on their ability to participate in community life, resulting in isolation within their homes. Memory problems, depression and anxiety are common in older adults

There is extensive evidence about the under recognition and inappropriate treatment of depression in older people. It has been identified that many older people lack basic awareness of depression and mental health and often do not realise they are depressed and consequently do not seek help when they should. There is also an assumption that depression is an inevitable part of ageing, a view held by both older people and some professionals. Stigma is an issue for older people, who are still not comfortable discussing mental health issues for fear of being labelled mad.

It was agreed that common mental health problems and in particular depression are issues affecting our older population and an area in which mental health promotion could support. Subsequently, 'depression and older people' was chosen as the theme for the 2006 campaign. The campaign was planned on a citywide basis with support at all levels from small voluntary sector organisations running their own events for their elders, to strategic recognition that common mental health problems

amongst older people is a real issue. Indeed, as a result of this campaign the Valuing Older People Network in Manchester City Council have included 'better recognition and response to depression in older people' as an outcome in their performance management framework, and implementing the World Mental Health Day campaign as an action to help achieve this.

Some relevant statistics

The number of people over 65 is increasing in the UK. By 2020 1 in 5 will be over 65.

1 in 4 of us will experience a mental health problem in the course of a year (Office of National Statistics 2000)

The Steering Group

An open meeting was arranged to discuss the campaign, 30 representatives from a variety of voluntary, statutory and community organisations attended. As a result of this meeting a steering group was convened, with a number of other people offering support in an advisory capacity. The steering group consisted of representatives from older people's service providers, voluntary and statutory sector providers and health promoters.

Steering group:

Manchester Public Health Development Service,
North, Central and South Manchester Primary Care Mental Health Services
Older People's Forum representatives
Manchester Libraries
Manchester Mental Health & Social Care Trust
African & Caribbean Mental Health Services
Age Concern
Central Manchester PCT
Valuing Older People (MCC)
PPI Forum
MACC

Review of the evidence

The steering group considered some of the literature and evidence around the topic and three main issues needed to be considered:

- There is a need to develop information about depression, targeted at older people with local contacts offering support.
- Those most likely to benefit from improved information about depression are those isolated or housebound with little opportunity to engage in their community or find information about depression elsewhere. People who are housebound are twice as likely to experience depression as the more mobile. (Bruce & McNamara 1992)

- Depression carries a particular stigma for older people with many reluctant to seek help. Many older people don't recognise that what they are experiencing is depression, and have difficulty expressing exactly what it is they are feeling. 2/3 of older people with depressive illness had never even raised depression with their GP in consultations. In the 1/3rd that did raise it, only 1/3 were receiving therapy or treatment, primarily antidepressants medication (Godfrey & Denby 2004).

In addition, health professionals may fail to recognise depression through lack of awareness, skills or confidence to diagnose. It was felt that the booklet and posters would also be a useful resource for GP surgeries and other health professionals who come into contact with older people.

Objectives

Those issues provided the basis for identifying campaign objectives:

- To produce information and publicity about depression relating to the experience of older people, offering information about recognition, treatment, self help options, and contacts for support.
- To inform older people that depression is an illness which is treatable, it is not a natural part of ageing, and that it is not a sign of weakness to seek help.
- Target publicity towards those older people most vulnerable to poor mental health, in particular those isolated in their homes, with the support of organisations and health professionals who can help us to deliver this information to them e.g. district nurses, community matrons, pharmacies, home care, sheltered housing, meals on wheels.
- To support organisations wishing to hold events, with information, publicity and advice.

The group considered that the Valuing Older People 'Full of Life' festival was scheduled to run 3 weeks before World Mental Health Day. The focus is on holding a series of events for older people across the city. In previous years World Mental Health Day activity included a programme of events. As an objective was to target those who are isolated, and to avoid duplication with the VOP event, the Steering group took the decision to make this an information campaign, rather than offer funding to organisations to hold events, which had been the arrangement previously.

Publicity

It was agreed to plan an information campaign and produce resources targeted at those who are most isolated by partnering with organisations that visit older people in their own homes. Resources would also be distributed widely across agencies and organisations where older people frequent e.g. hospitals, libraries, and G.P surgeries.

A publicity sub group began looking at developing an information booklet with a spec drawn up to include information about recognising the signs of depression, treatment options, self help and local contacts for support. Manchester Public Health Development Service Graphic Design Department designed the publicity with the guidance of the publicity group.

The booklet was piloted by a group of older people who attend the Age Concern Crossacres Day Centre, Wythenshawe to ensure the content was legible and understandable to the target audience. Feedback was positive:

“Older clients who use our centre found the booklet very interesting and easy to read. They also learnt that depression is not a normal part of ageing after all as some previously assumed.” Sally Dervan – Manager. Age Concern Crossacres Day Centre, Wythenshawe

3 elements of publicity were produced:

- An A5 booklet for older people about depression.
- An A3 poster for display. This consisted of basic message that depression is a common problem in later life, it is treatable and to seek help.
- An events listing guide detailing activities across the city

Events

Although no central fund was available for this campaign to fund events, many organisations organised their own events in line with the campaign theme and sourced funds where they could. This highlights a real commitment to the issue and the day. The steering group produced additional publicity to promote these events as part of the wider campaign.

The number of events across the city that we were informed of totalled 20. These were held by a range of voluntary and statutory organisations. Organisers included: the Alzheimer’s Society, Manchester Mental Health & Social Care Trust, Wai Yin Kwan Wai & Chinese Health Information Centre, South Manchester Healthy Living Network, North Manchester Healthy Living Network, Central Manchester Primary Care Mental Health Team, Start, Manchester Libraries, Wythenshawe FM, North Manchester Health Forum, and Ladybarn Community Centre.

Types of event included: coffee mornings, information and pampering, discussions, walks, relaxation, drama, cinema, arts, complementary therapies, and exhibitions.

Venues included parks, libraries, markets, cinema, and community centres. Posters were welcomed to be displayed in some supermarkets across the city.

Campaign Outcomes:

- Information campaign: 50,000 booklets were printed. 33,200 of these were distributed during the campaign primarily on a one to one basis directly to older people who are isolated or vulnerable.
- 20 events took place
- Over 120 organisations came on board and distributed to thousands of people through hundreds of locations, projects, schemes and premises.
- A number of ‘spin offs’ are continuing, including collaboration, presentations and talks with sheltered housing, continued distribution of the ‘Older Minds Matter’ booklet and the production of a similar booklet on dementia.

Booklets and posters were distributed to old and new partners across the city. Considerable time and effort was placed into developing a distribution network that could help us reach older people who are isolated. This involved developing a list of organisations and contacts we wanted to target, contacting them all by telephone and discussing with them what we wanted to achieve. Many of these organisations hadn't been involved with such a campaign previously, so we were able to place mental health onto their agenda as an organisation, as well as work with them to reach our target group. The response to the request for help was positive and well supported, and organisations were happy to distribute for us. In fact, many organisations recognised that this was an issue for their clients and were glad that action was being taken to address it. Each organisation distributed the booklets to their clients on an individual basis. Some of those organisations included:

Manchester Care & Repair Service
Anchor Staying Put Service
3 Age Concern Day Centres and Shops
6 Manchester City Council Day/Resource Centres
Anchor Housing – 18 retirement housing schemes
Pills & Spills projects & community pharmacies
SMILE exercise referral scheme (South Manchester)
Meals on Wheels Service
Wythenshawe Hospital and Withington Outpatients Departments
Assist Neighbourhood Care Group – (cover Withington & Fallowfield)
Chorlton Good Neighbours
Mosscafe Housing
Sheltered Housing, Longsight
Partnership Workers
District Nursing Teams
Neighbourhood Wardens – North Manchester
Active Case managers – South, Central
New Dawn Community Association, Northern Moor
Booth Centre, Manchester
Healthy Living Networks
MCC Housing Services
Tung Sing Housing Association
Northwards Housing Association – North Manchester
Diabetes Team – Diabetes Centre – Wythenshawe Hospital
ARCHS COPD Team – South Manchester Team
Expert Patient Programme – South Manchester

66 Nursing Care Homes / Residential Homes across Manchester were sent a booklet and a poster informing them that these resources were freely available and where to get further supplies. It was felt that this was important as depression in older people living in nursing homes is higher than in the community.

Interest in the campaign came from as far as Newcastle in the form of a request for a booklet from the Quality of Life Partnership.

The booklet will be a resource which will be added to the growing list of mental health resources/self help guides available from the Manchester Public Health Development Service. The Mental Health Promotion Specialist working in the South Manchester area has plans to distribute the booklets / posters into other areas as ongoing work e.g. hospital inpatient settings, clinics etc in order attempt to improve the mental health of people with chronic physical illness which more often affects older people.

Further evaluation will be undertaken on going basis.

Feedback

The booklet is great, we think they will be of benefit to us and our clients - we see many older people who have depression.

Case Manager for Long Term Conditions Manchester PCT

We circulated the booklets to all our sheltered schemes and asked the staff to promote services. We also asked that they identify people with support needs and discuss the options available. We also promoted the events and booklet at our tenant meetings. Residents advised that they found the book informative, easy to read and were comfortable taking copies to share with neighbours.

We also have contact details for your outreach workers who are keen to attend schemes and talk to residents about mental health support.

Principal Sheltered Warden/Caretaking Manager, Northwards Housing

My own views are that it was useful and enjoyable thing to do and that I was surprised at just how many people did approach the stall and seek advice and how many of them had major stressors or their family members had problems/issues. The value was in being able to signpost those people to help.

Joy Wales, Older People's Team, Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust.

The booklets were left in the health centres so people could pick them up – the positive thing is they all went and quite quickly too.

Vikki Malcolm - Partnership Worker Rusholme & Fallowfield

We had a good supply of the booklets which went quickly and they were distributed widely across South Manchester. We felt the information in the booklet was very useful and it was an important issue to highlight.

South Manchester Healthy Living Network

The booklets are excellent in fact we are looking at developing a similar booklet for people with Dementia....Admiral Nurses and other professionals found the booklet very useful.

Manager for Older Age Services, Manchester Mental Health & Social Care Trust

Although the booklets are a good idea it is good for older people to hear about the issue from someone. We would like someone to come and talk to our older residents about depression in person sometimes that has even more impact.

Manager - Anchor Housing Sheltered Accommodation Home, Wythenshawe

We have some older people who are prone to depression. I think the booklet helped them to feel that talking about it would be OK. It is really helpful to have a booklet to put in people's hands.

Jenny Courtney – Assist Neighbourhood Care Group

Further Reading:

- Department of Health (2005) Securing better mental health for older adults. London: Department of Health.
- Faculty of Old Age Psychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists (2005) Who cares wins. Improving the outcome for older people admitted to general hospital: Guidelines for the development of liaison mental health services for older people. Royal College of Psychiatrists.
- Godfrey, M & Denby, T (2004) Depression and older people. Towards securing well-being in later life. The Policy Press.
- Lee, M (2006) Promoting mental health and well-being in later life. A first report from the UK inquiry into mental health and wellbeing in later life. Age Concern & the Mental Health Foundation.
- Mind (2005) Mind's access all ages campaign. Mental health needs in later life must be met not marginalised. Mind.
- Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2004) Mental Health and Social Exclusion. Social Exclusion Unit Report. HMSO
- Office of National Statistics (2003) Psychiatric Morbidity Survey. Better or worse: a follow up study of the mental health of adults in Great Britain. Office of National Statistics

World Health Organisation (2001) The World Health Report 2001: Mental health new understanding. New hope. World Health Organisation.

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January 2007

