



Newsletter

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Highland Public Services Partnership Equality and Diversity group bringing you items of local interest and equality and diversity news. Contact details for the group are on the back page.

Issue No3 - Summer 2011

Involving survivors of Violence Against Women

Partner agencies want to thank all the women who took part in the Violence Against Women (VAW) survivors survey. Many of you also want to be involved in further work of the VAW partnership. We are now working out a framework to follow over the next few years to make the best use of everyone's enthusiasm and skills. If you missed the survey, but would still like to be involved, then contact:

high-uhb.violenceagainstwomen@nhs.net

Highland Children's Forum and Women's Aid groups also helped us to make sure that young people can shape VAW work. One result of this work is an online guest book. If you are a young person in Highland, please have a look and post something in the guest book at:

www.highlandlife.net/violenceagainstwomen

We'll keep you up to date with progress and together we will tackle Violence Against Women.

Hate Free Highland

Work continues between the partners on the Hate Free Highland campaign. If you or someone you know has experienced or witnessed a hate incident we would like to encourage you to report it. The Hate Free Highland website www.hatefreehighland.org is an online reporting option. Visit the site to report an incident or for more information.



www.hatefreehighland.org

Public sector equality duty in Scotland

A key part of the Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 5th April 2011 with a new public sector "general equality duty" which became law across the UK. The general equality duty requires public bodies to pay 'due regard' in all their work to the need to:

- ▶ eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment;
- ▶ advance equality of opportunity;
- ▶ foster good relations.

The duty replaces three previous duties relating to race, disability and gender, and applies to 'protected characteristics' covered by the Act. These are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

For more information visit:
www.equalityhumanrights.com/scotland/

Launch of EDEN (Employee Disability Equality Network)

Around 50 people attended the launch of EDEN in Inverness, which included a talk by Gillian Shaw, Employment Solicitor with Harper Macleod LLP. Nine public sector partners have come together to support the formation of the EDEN network. Employee-led, EDEN is open to any interested employees in the partner agencies and aims to improve, enhance and promote disability equality in the workplace. The network aims to meet the needs of employees affected by, or with an interest in, disability in the workplace. A survey will be issued shortly by partner agencies to ask for views on how EDEN should develop and to help shape the network.

For information contact: **EDEN@highlandlife.net**

eden
employee disability
equality network

In this edition of the newsletter we feature activities that aim to improve communication support and access to services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Did you know?

Estimates show that:

- Over 1 million people in Scotland have some hearing loss
- 2 million people in the UK use hearing aids
- Around 6000 people in Scotland use British Sign Language (BSL)
- In Scotland there is 1 qualified interpreter for every 200 sign language users
- Every year in Scotland around 75 children are born deaf

At Work

- 70% of deaf people believe they have failed to get a job because of their deafness
- 19% of deaf people are unemployed compared to 5% of non-disabled people
- The biggest barrier at work for deaf people is lack of understanding by employers of their communication needs

Mental Health

- 40% of deaf and hard of hearing people experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives

Scottish Council on Deafness

Deaf Awareness Week: Look at Me

Deaf Awareness Week (DAW) 2011 took place between 2 May to 8 May 2011. This year's theme of 'Look At Me' raised awareness of the many different methods of communication used by deaf, deafened, deafblind and hard of hearing people, such as sign language and lipreading.

www.deafcouncil.org.uk/daw/index.htm



Deaf Culture Support from Heritage Lottery



A 90 minute documentary film has been launched by the Highland Council's award winning Deaf Communication Project. The film documents the life experiences of fifteen older Deaf sign language users in the Highlands and Islands. Funded by the Heritage Lottery, the film is a fascinating mix of both poignant and hilarious stories, which describe both the similarities and differences between Deaf and hearing lives in northern Scotland. It also captures the unique style of sign language used by the older signers – a mixture of 'finger-spelling' and signs.

For further information contact:
jenny.liddell@highland.gov.uk

Deaf Action: Removing barriers to services

Effective communication and engagement are essential for meetings and appointments with people whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language (BSL). Working together, The Highland Council and NHS Highland have a contract with Deaf Action for the provision of BSL interpretation and other communication support to help the Deaf community access health and council services. As with foreign language interpretation, it is the responsibility of staff to book interpreters.



Guidance for staff on how to book an interpreter can be found at: highlandlife.net/interpretation



British Deaf Association in Highlands

The British Deaf Association has appointed Jean Pentland as the new Community Advocacy Officer (CAO) for the North of Scotland. Jean can provide personal and confidential advice, advocacy and support to Deaf people. She can also offer training and support on setting up and running a new or existing Deaf Forum. If you or someone you know would like to discuss any issues with Jean please contact her at jeanp@bda.org.uk

Police DVD: Improving Interaction

Northern Constabulary has issued a new DVD to officers, staff and new recruits to improve the way they interact and communicate with members of the deaf/hard of hearing community. The DVD has been produced by the Force's Corporate Services Unit and the Highland Council's Deaf Communication Project, with the support of the Highland Deaf Forum and Highland Council's Deaf Services Team.



The DVD explains the specific communication requirements and barriers for people who are either deaf or hard of hearing. It gives officers useful tips to allow them to provide a high quality level of service to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. It is hoped that greater awareness will also encourage more people who are deaf/hard of hearing to have the confidence to report crime. BBC2 featured a story about the making of the film on See Hear in May 2011.

For further information contact:
ian.bryce@northern.pnn.police.uk

Support available for Deaf people

Highland Council's Deaf Services based in Social Work provides environmental aids and drop-in services at various locations. The service works closely with other agencies such as NHS Audiology, the fire service, housing providers and telecare to support deaf people in the community. The needs of deaf children are also provided by agencies working together, including, Deaf Education staff, Deaf Services BSL role model/tutor and support workers. Further information from Deaf Services on:

kathryn.roberts@highland.gov.uk

At the NHS, the Audiology department at Raigmore will carry out hearing tests and provide aids to people referred by GPs. For further information contact Audiology at:

Fax: 01463 706355 SMS: 07795 666647
Email: nhshighland.audiology@nhs.net

REMOTE PALANTYPING Supporting Communication

After using remote palantypist services during roadshows in Orkney, the Highlands and Islands Equality Forum would recommend this as a tool to support service delivery to hearing impaired people in rural areas. Palantypists are a scarce resource and earlier attempts by the Forum to use such services were hindered by the high costs of bringing providers to the area. To overcome this, the Forum has successfully used remote palantypists online using Skype technology at a fraction of the cost.

In 2010 the Forum also used technology to deliver a virtual conference. As a result, the Scottish Human Rights Commission recently combined both technologies for an event so that people anywhere with Internet access were able to log in to their online event and view palantyping subtitles at the same time.



For further information, contact
morag.redwood@scvo.org.uk



Interpreters equipped for the job

Many people in Highland do not have English as their preferred language. Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary and the Prison Service work together to ensure their staff can communicate effectively with people who access their services using interpreters. The partners all contract with Global Language Services to provide foreign language interpretation, and staff also have access to Language Line services for telephone interpreting. The interpreters provide a professional and timely service for service users. Partners work closely with Global in Inverness, including attending Global's regular development evenings to make sure that local interpreters know about the services they will interpret for. Further information at: <http://highlandlife.net/interpretation>



To request this information in an alternative format, e.g. large print, Braille, computer disc, audio tape, or suitable language, please contact :
Rosemary MacKinnon on 01463 702094



Mental Health Arts and Film Festival

October 2011 is the third year of Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival events in the Highlands. The Festival encourages people to think and talk about mental health issues. Events include film, theatre, photography, puppetry, creative writing, textile design and a range of hands-on workshops. Many of the tickets are free or low cost so that no-one is excluded. Highland organisers include Highland Council, NHS Highland, Rag Tag 'n' Textile, Birchwood Highland, Zenwing Puppets, TAG Highland, See Me, Eden Court, Moxie Media, HAPIS, Merkinch Bike Shed, HUG, and Depression Alliance Scotland. We are also recruiting ambassadors to help us spread awareness of the festival and we would welcome interest.

For further information contact: highland-info@mhfestival.com
Listen to our podcasts at: <http://www.mhfestival.com/podcast.php>

International Women's Day (IWD) 100th Anniversary

The WEA's Women@Work project worked with a range of partners in March 2011 to organise a programme of events to celebrate IWD100. More than 750 people attended 11 events in 7 towns across the north of Scotland, joining with thousands of women world-wide to recognise the positive qualities of women and remember the many women across the globe who are disadvantaged.

Over £1350 was raised for the Linda Norgrove Foundation to support work with women and families in Afghanistan.

For further information contact:
womenatwork@weascotland.org.uk



LGBT Training



Highland Rainbow Folk

Highland Rainbow Folk is a group of older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) volunteers whose aim is to raise awareness of age-related issues that affect older members of their community. The group provides short sessions to staff groups who deliver health and social care and allows them to engage with the experiences of individuals who are often poorly understood and marginalised within society. Sessions include storytelling, a stage presentation entitled 'The Monologues', factual information including recent changes in legislation, interspersed with humour and opportunities for discussion. The group has also produced a related information brochure.

For further information contact:
highlandrainbowfolk@gmail.com

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of the E&D Newsletter.

We would like to hear your comments and suggestions for articles in future editions.

For further details on the articles in this edition, please get in touch with any of the contacts listed below.

Contacts

- The Highland Council:** Rosemary Mackinnon - rosemary.mackinnon@highland.gov.uk
- Highlands & Islands Enterprise:** Liz Scott - liz.scott@hient.co.uk
- Highlands & Islands Equality Forum:** Morag Redwood - morag.redwood@scvo.org.uk
- Highland & Islands Fire and Rescue Service:** Irene Robertson - EqualityandDiversity@hifrs.org
- NHS Highland:** Moira Paton - Moira.Paton@nhs.net
- Northern Constabulary:** Ian Bryce - ian.bryce@northern.pnn.police.uk
- Scottish Natural Heritage:** Andy Dorin - andy.dorin@snh.gov.uk
- University of the Highlands & Islands:** Isla Cruden - Isla.Cruden@uhi.ac.uk
- Voluntary Action Highland:** Niall Smith - niall@cvg.org.uk