



SLÀINTE AGUS CÙRAM SÒISEALACHD EILEANAN SIAR

Health and Social Care Western Isles



Colleagues

Issue 123

I met this week with Marion MacInnes and Jim Person from Alzheimer Scotland. Many of you will know Marion from our local branch and Jim is their Director of Policy, who was visiting from their Edinburgh HQ. We spoke initially about their recent publication which supported the closure of long stay dementia wards in hospital. It chimes with our own redesign work to support the discharge of patients from the Clisam Ward into residential care. Although I don't agree with everything in the report, it offers a good foundation for debate.

I also mentioned in conversation a recent article from Bill Gates. I found it interesting because as a seriously rich philanthropist, his interest is not in financing research into a cure for Alzheimer's disease but rather to improve diagnostic tests. The argument here is that if we can diagnose more reliably, earlier on, then there is more we can do to slow - and perhaps one day prevent - the progression of the disease.

<https://www.gatesnotes.com/Health/A-better-way-of-diagnosing-Alzheimers>

Cllr Charlie Nicolson invited me to speak to the Goathill Residents Association on Monday of this week. We discussed two broad reforms around the redesign of residential care in Lewis and the redesign of mental health services - which are of course connected enterprises. Once we are able to boost community psychiatric nursing capacity, these professionals will be able to provide more support to care homes and other community care services.

A new study has emerged which further confirms that our population is changing and we need to plan for a much greater number of people aged over 85 with care and support needs. That's not just because of the demographic bubble of the baby boomer generation reaching older age - it's also because with an increasingly global society, traditional family units spanning multiple generations are no longer living in the same community. This means the natural care givers to older adults - often spouses but also daughters and sons - are increasingly less likely to be able to provide natural supports in people's lives. As such, more reliance will be placed on formal state support - but that too is challenged by a reducing working age population, which provides not only the labour force but the tax base to support public spending. Perfect storm? I think so. Our job is to ensure we're as well prepared as we can be.

If you're interested in the source material (it's a technical report) you can find it here:

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(18\)30118-X/fulltext?utm_campaign=lancet&utm_content=76545667&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(18)30118-X/fulltext?utm_campaign=lancet&utm_content=76545667&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter)

The Harris Locality Planning Group met last Tuesday night. We had invited colleagues from the Scottish Ambulance Service to discuss patient transport. The colleagues from SAS are working in very challenging conditions and doing as good a job as possible.

Speaking of SAS, our trusted colleague Malcolm Macleod died this week following a battle with cancer. He was a good man who served his community to the end.

Having come through a busy summer period, we face a range of strategic challenges which will frame our work into the autumn. One area I wanted to describe to you is our plan to strengthen our service arrangements within adult care and support. Our staff have had a particularly challenging summer, with many colleagues working in an environment where we've been short-staffed, at a time when we're seeking to bed-in new service arrangement. The skill, fortitude and perseverance of staff members deserves a special mention.

There are three things that we want to do to strengthen existing arrangements. First, we've set up a short-term working group to look at the core pressures in the service, which will involve representatives of service management, senior management, HR and finance. Second, we want to take a fresh look at the new services we've introduced and take stock of progress, making changes as appropriate in order to meet the needs of both service users and staff. As we move forward, it will be increasingly important that we consider care and support arrangements which are holistic and integrated, drawing on multi-professional input from care professionals, social work, psychology and occupational therapy. The building blocks of these arrangements are already there and we now want to introduce a more structured approach to that to consolidate care planning and coordination across professional interests. Third, we want to develop a new strategic framework for adults with learning disabilities, building on national recommendations and local skills and expertise. This will be an inclusive process which will begin with two workshops in the autumn (one in Stornoway, the other in Benbecula) which will bring together service users, carers, front-line staff, management and board members. We want to embed a philosophy of coproduction, whereby all people with a stake in our local system have an opportunity to influence and shape its future direction.

Progress very rarely comes in giant leaps but in small incremental steps. Over the summer, we took one such step when our OT colleagues moved from the hospital to be co-located next to social work in Sandwick Road. There is a particularly close professional connection between social work and occupational therapy - both are centrally concerned with the task of supporting people to live independently. And for the first time, we have been able to wire NHS and Local Authority systems into a single office. Although it's still early days, it's terrific to see both staff groups embracing the change. Hopefully this is but the first of many similar exercises.

That's all for this week

Ron

31 August 2018

Ragnall Culley | Prìomh Oifigear | Seirbheisean Slàinte agus Sòisealachd | Seirbheisean Slàinte Nàiseanta Eilean Siar/Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | Rathad Shanndabhig | Steòrnabhagh | Eilean Leodhais | HS1 2BW | F: 01851 822706 (211334) | 01851 600 501 - Comhairle | <https://ijbwesternisles.scot>

Ronald Culley | Chief Officer | Health and Social Care | NHS Western Isles/Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | Sandwick Road | Stornoway | Isle of Lewis | HS1 2BW | T: 01851 822706 (211334) | 01851 600 501 - Comhairle | <https://ijbwesternisles.scot>