



SLÀINTE AGUS CÙRAM SÒISEALACHD EILEANAN SIAR

Health and Social Care Western Isles



Colleagues

Issue 114

I mentioned last week that we are seeking to understand the views of stakeholders and front-line professionals in terms of the work we're advancing around health and social care integration - and so if you haven't already done so, I would be grateful if you could complete a short online survey. The first half of the survey is about the IJB itself, while the second half is mostly around front-line practice. It should take no longer than five minutes. It is completely anonymous and the information will be analysed by an independent consultant. The closing date is today, 25th May.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/healthandsocialcare2018>

For some months now we have been waiting to hear from the Scottish Government as to its investment in primary care and mental health – and this week we were informed of the resources we'll have to invest. Over 2018/19, we will have £300k to spend on transforming primary care, and our GP colleagues have indicated that their early priorities are around vaccination transformation, pharmacy support and mental health, all of which should help to reduce workload on practices and improve the patient experience. It's complicated though – of the £300k, a third of that is already being spent on pharmacy support, so the growth in capacity will be less than hoped for.

On the other hand, we will have an additional £72k to spend on mental health services, as part of the Scottish Government's commitment to provide funding to support the employment of 800 additional mental health workers across Scotland to improve access in key settings such as Accident and Emergency departments, GP practices, police station custody suites and prisons. We intend to pull all of this together into an improvement plan, which will see direct investment in front-line primary care and mental health teams.

Voices Scotland is a free and flexible workshop that supports people, groups and communities to explore issues that are important to them. It provides communities with the knowledge, skills and confidence to have their voices heard in the shaping of local and national health and social care services. The Scottish Health Council (as a key partner of the Our Voice programme www.ourvoice.scot) delivers these workshops across Scotland with members of the public, community groups and staff working across health and social care. The workshops explore storytelling techniques; how personal experience can shape service improvement; the benefits of and barriers to getting involved; and gain an understanding of health and social care structures.

The Scottish Health Council Western Isles will be delivering these free sessions in Uist and Barra week commencing 27th August 2018 and can arrange sessions in other areas at a time that suits interested individuals or groups. Please contact the local office on 01851 703292 or carmen.morrison@scottishhealthcouncil.org to book a place on the Uist and Barra sessions or to discuss dates for Lewis and Harris sessions.

This might seem like a rather obvious thing to say, but individuals tend to be happier and healthier if they have friends or family with whom to share a meal. Researchers at the University of Oxford last year found that the more that people eat with others, the more likely they are to feel happy and satisfied with their lives. The study also found that people who eat socially are more likely to feel better about themselves and have wider social and emotional support networks. While most of us can attend to our social lives on our own, this isn't always true for older or disabled people living alone. Often community lunch clubs and other social networks that can be a lifeline for people in this category. We continue to learn from our pilot work on tackling social isolation here in the Western Isles.

https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/may/23/the-friend-effect-why-the-secret-of-health-and-happiness-is-surprisingly-simple?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

My colleague Margaret Mackenzie chairs the Health Board's Area Clinical Forum. It met this week and we had a wide ranging conversation that spanned primary care reform, mental health redesign, public service reform, and recruitment challenges for clinical posts. It was good to see all of the professions represented as it's a good place to discuss policy and practice.

On Wednesday night the Stornoway Locality Planning Group met. Our turnout was good but largely restricted to professional representation – other than Hector Macleod (chair), Cllr Gordon Murray and Fiona Macleod (Tolsta). For reasons best known to others, we've long struggled to attract community interest in Stornoway and Broadbay. Hector and I have agreed to reach out to the community councils and any special interest groups to describe our work. If you are interested in participating please let me know.

It was the Advocacy Western Isles AGM this week and our colleague Ernie Garden stepped down as chair after many long years of service. A colleague that many of us will remember from the recent past – Emelin Collier – has taken over the chairmanship. Our job now is to get our Advocacy Plan written-up and agreed to ensure that we have a stable and well-resourced group of advocates in the Western Isles, to help people find their voice in difficult circumstances.

Speaking of long service, my colleague Pat Macdonald retires this week, having worked in the home care service since 1981. I wanted to take the opportunity to acknowledge her many years of dedicated service – all of her colleagues speak highly of her easy going nature and the knowledge and experience she has. Everyone wishes her well in her retirement.

That's all for this week.

Ron

25 May 2018

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