

KEY MESSAGES



GIVING A VOICE TO SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITY LINK WORKERS

Scottish Community Link Worker Network Peer Support Event Thursday 28 February 2024 on Zoom

Introduction

The Scottish Community Link Worker Network (SCLWN) hosted an online peer support event on 28 February for community link workers from across Scotland. The online peer support events are designed to bring CLWs together to engage with each other on areas of interest related to their role. Roisin Hurst, Project Manager, chaired the event which focused on the tools and methods CLWs use for their interventions and conversations with clients.

Presentations

The Network heard two short presentations from two link workers - Ingrid Sandison who is based in Shetland and Brady Secules who is from South Aberdeenshire. Ingrid's presentation focused on the series of questions she uses when meeting clients to help them to articulate where and how they need support. She tries to use these questions with every client she engages with where possible.

Brady talked about a tool he and his colleagues use which is called Outcomes Star. This is an evidence-based tool that supports and measures change when working with people. Brady and his colleagues generally use the star called the 'wellbeing star'. They will normally focus on trying to improve one area of the star with the client over 6 sessions as it works well as a visual prompt.

If anyone from the Network would like to find out more about using Outcomes Star, they can contact [Keith Grassick](#) from the South Aberdeenshire link worker team as he is happy to provide more information.

Breakout Group Discussions

After the initial presentations, the delegates were split into two breakout groups to reflect on what they had heard from Ingrid and Brady, They were also asked to consider the following questions:

- What do you think about what you have heard?
- Is there a specific model you use to structure your conversations and interventions?
- What tools/resources do you use to engage with a patient?

- What's a good way of starting a conversation with someone who is reluctant to talk?

People were positive about what they had heard from Ingrid and Brady and felt that it is always good to learn about different ways that CLWs approach interventions with their clients. Other useful tools that were referenced by the groups included ONS4 and the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWMWBS).

Flora from the Edinburgh CLW network recommended the 'good conversations' training from the Bromley-by-Bow team. Roisin is meeting with the Bromley-by-Bow training team in March to talk about their training programme in more detail.

Both groups fed back that they don't tend to struggle with clients that are reluctant to talk, although young male clients can sometimes be quite reticent. Brady suggested using music as a good conversation starter with them. The groups also fed back that it can be a struggle in terms of waiting times for clients to access other services which means that they are holding on to them for longer than is ideal.

There was also some discussion around optimal numbers of appointments in the day and how days are structured and interactions conducted. Erika from Orkney highlighted the challenges around structuring their days in a rural environment when travel times to appointments can be quite long. Some CLWs do their interactions online and over the telephone as well as in the person's home, depending on the circumstances in which they are working and whether there is space in the GP practices they are linked to. However, the general consensus from the groups was that in-person works best for interactions with a client.

Roisin thanked everyone for attending the session and reminded everyone to contact Lauren and her to discuss topics and/or format for future peer support sessions.



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