

Now to the Future

Briefing #5: 8 May 2020

We will be providing weekly briefings on different subjects and themes during the C19 Crisis.

There is a lot of thinking and research happening nationally and international. One report that caught our attention this week was the report on “COVID-19 pandemic, financial inequality and mental health” produced by the Mental Health Foundation and partners. You can read more about it below and on their website.

The work that partners are doing across the city, great examples this week from as CHAI and Cyrenians are integral components of how we are responding locally and what we will need to continue to focus on.

We’ve been doing a lot of thinking about what happens next; what have we all learnt to date, what have we reconnected with , discovered ; what new ways of working or being do we want to continue with ; what do we not want to return to. Please share your thoughts, ideas, learning with us – email linda.irvinefitzpatrick@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk.

“You can’t have a better tomorrow if you are thinking about yesterday all the time” Charles F. Kettering

The COVID-19 pandemic, financial inequality and mental health

The Mental Health Foundation in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, Swansea University, the University of Strathclyde and Queen’s University Belfast published a new briefing yesterday focusing on financial inequality and mental health.

We all can experience mental health problems, whatever our background or walk of life, but the risk of experiencing mental ill-health is not equally distributed across our society. Those who face the greatest disadvantages in life also face the greatest risk to their mental health. The distribution of infections and deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, the lockdown and associated measures, and the longer-term socioeconomic impact are likely to reproduce and intensify the financial inequalities that contribute towards the increased prevalence and unequal distribution of mental ill-health. The research briefing discusses the mental health effects of these financial inequalities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It draws evidence from the “*Coronavirus: Mental Health in the Pandemic*” research – a UK-wide, long-term study of how the pandemic is affecting people’s mental health.. You can access it here.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/MHF-covid-19-inequality-mental-health-briefing.pdf>



For the past few months, the Community Help & Advice Initiative (CHAI) has been working in partnership with the City's Mental Health services to develop a bespoke Advice, Information and Representation service for service users.

Steven Campbell and Shahnaz Haq, Advcie, funded by the Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board (EIJB), have been developing key relationships with practitioners and setting up referral pathways.

To date, the project has engaged with 115 new service users, who have attended 225 appointments at a variety of locations, raising 244 issues for which they sought advice. Unsurprisingly, most issues raised (97%) were related to benefit or other income problems, issues which service users reported were having a detrimental impact on their mental health.

Home visits with CPNs, Social Workers and Community Care Assistants are provided, as well as engagement with service users at venues such as Cambridge Street House, Inchkeith House, Ballenden House and the Royal Edinburgh Hospital.

Accessing specialist advice at these times is vital as most issues can be resolved satisfactorily. For example, the two Advisers have, so far, assisted service users to achieve financial gains of £229,499 – mainly through claims for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and resolving Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) issues around Work Capability. Representation can be provided at First Tier Tribunals and at the Sheriff Court or Housing & Property Chamber where housing is at risk due to rent arrears.

The service continues to be available during the Covid-19 Lockdown, although most contacts are now taking place over the phone – with some contact continuing at the outreach venues. CHAI is an Accredited Advice Provider (Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers), and can be contacted on **0131 442 2100** or through chai@chaiedinburgh.org.uk. If you, or a service user, need advice on income, benefit or debt issues we are ready to help.

More than 10% off Edinburgh's population are students....

The national student mental health and wellbeing programme are hosting weekly Skype meetings every Wednesday morning at 10am which are open to all of our Student Mental Health Agreement project participants, and anyone who is working with student mental health support in Scotland at the moment. s a place to share new ideas, resources, challenges and solutions. Two different topics each week are discussed, as voted on the week before, and want to build this platform as a network we can all collaborate on.

If you're interested in joining us, and haven't yet, the link is here: https://join.slack.com/t/think-positive-group/shared_invite/zt-dvbg02au-jKbVX3sci5ZBccx5H9ToEQ

Cyrenians Mediation and Support

Like the rest of the world Cyrenians Mediation and Support have been trying to figure out where we fit in and how, if at all, we can continue our work whilst the current lockdown situation is in full effect. Face to face work, our daily normal and what we are really good at is out! Yet, the truth is the families we work with still need support, many are still requesting mediation with their loved ones, professionals are still referring families to us and our anger management workshops may be more relevant than ever!

So alongside our other Cyrenians colleagues and the Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution we are stumbling forward, adapting our service and listening to the needs of our clients. Face to face meetings including workshops for young people and mediation for families have moved online to that video-conferencing app none of us have heard of before. We are in contact daily through messaging apps and email with those still seeking our assistance and receiving great feedback from families who recognise that we haven't forgotten about them in this chaotic time when it seems like many other parts of people's lives have been put on hold.

The key at this time is to listen to families and respond in ways that reflect their current circumstances. With a huge emphasis on digital online contact, YouTube P.E classes, family art activities and science lessons streamed directly into the home by well-meaning celebrities, people are feeling a bit 'computered' out. Our team are currently putting together offline 'wellbeing' packs for the families we support including family activities, tips and tricks for managing conflict, seed packets for the garden and some wee reminders that we are still here if needed.

And we are still here. We may be miles apart, connected by copper and fibre, but the coffee breaks are still shared, Netflix recommendations are coming thick and fast and the clients who need us most are still receiving support. If Mediation and Support can help you or your clients, don't hesitate to connect with us and see where we can fit in.

Please email mediationandsupport@cyrenians.scot if you require any further information.

Arts As Advocacy – The CAPS project have lots to update on

Pam at CAPS has just set up a brand new Arts As Advocacy Facebook page: for those who use social media <https://www.facebook.com/ArtsAsAdvocacyCAPS>

There will be arts and mental health update shared on it and it can also be a space where people with experience of mental health issues can share their ideas on the arts during lockdown. Have you been drawing, listening to music, making music, dancing? What is it bringing you? You are invited to share your suggestions on the page,

OOSOOM Afternoon Tea Online – Wednesday 20 May, 2-3.30pm

You are cordially invited to have afternoon tea with exhibitors and organisers of '**Out of Sight, Out of Mind**' exhibition. It will take place through an online video call. It will start with several exhibitors sharing artworks they have shown at previous Out of Sight Out of Mind exhibitions at Summerhall. Later there will be a chance to chat together, perhaps share your work and ask people questions about taking part in 2020. Everyone is welcome. Having your favourite hot drink and sweet treat during the call is encouraged!

CAPS are using the platform called 'Zoom', which is free and simple to use. Your computer, laptop, tablet, or phone will need a camera and mic to join the conversation part of the event. Please register in advance by sending an email to pam@capsadvocacy.org. Nearer the time, Pam will send you the joining information and a Zoom link to join the event.

Out of Sight Out of Mind exhibition – October 2020

Out of Sight, Out of Mind is an exhibition of artwork made by people who have experienced mental health issues. The exhibition is held at Summerhall each October and last year 180 people showed their artwork, and nearly 2,000 people came to see the work.

Many of you will be pleased therefore to hear that the OOSOOM Planning Group have been meeting online and are very much hoping to make this wonderful and much loved event happen in October 2020. There are some obvious unknowns with the restrictions resulting from coronavirus affecting our capacity to plan, impacting the venue, and of course, the ability of many of the people who normally contribute their artworks, to make it. However, we would like everyone to know that we **are aiming to make it happen** and hope that we can host as much artwork by made by people with lived experience of mental health issues again this year.

Therefore, although there will be some changes to the submission details, the OOSOOM Call For Art will be shared to all in the next few weeks, by email and on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/oosoomexhibition/>

SMHAF 2020 – still time to catch this week's programme

The National Festival Team are posting new content on their website and Vimeo page **every Monday at 12pm** and this will be available to view until the same time the following week. New content will include a theatre show and a film programme, both available for one week only.

First up in theatre is **Hysteria!**, a political cabaret from SMHAF 2017. Hysteria! was, arguably, the first theatre show of the #MeToo movement, partly inspired by the 2016 US election and the 2017 global women's marches. The show was developed through Julia Taudevin's work with the Mental Health Foundation on a project exploring the impact of sexism on women's mental health, which saw over 100 women interviewed individually and in groups. These conversations were the starting point for Hysteria!, a cabaret-style show that combined sharply satirical songs and sketches with dialogue taken verbatim from those interviews. **Watch Hysteria! here.**

Our **film programme** opens with a pair of experimental short films that resonate deeply with the challenges we are facing in our newly transformed world. **Solastalgia**, directed by SMHAF 2019 award-winner Millefiore Clarkes, and **Knock, Knock, Knock**, from Korean director Arom Choi, will be available for viewing all week.

Conversations or Q&A are planned to take place on Thursday evenings throughout the festival. Check **our listings** for the latest updates. To make them accessible to D/deaf and hard of hearing audiences, all films screened online will be subtitled.

Exhibitions are always a big part of our programme, and a huge amount of work goes into producing artworks for SMHAF each year. To celebrate this work – and create an opportunity for it to be seen by wider audiences – we have created an online exhibition called **SMHAF at Home** that will be developed in the coming weeks in collaboration with the SMHAF community.

The first artworks to go on display are from a solo exhibition by Edinburgh-based artist Jamie King titled **The Mind of Celebrity**. He has painted portraits of celebrities who are known to have experienced mental health issues, using photographs as a reference. It was due to be shown at Edinburgh Palette this May and we are delighted to share it here.

We use spread the word by sharing our events with friends and family and let us know what you think on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**.

mhfestival.com/whats-on-2020



Kate Pestell, Head of Arts Therapies invites you to please check out NHS Lothian Art Therapies self care resources: 'Arts for Challenging Times'

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/ArtsTherapies/Pages/Arts-for-Challenging-Times.aspx>

Mind to Move

Mind to Move Online Classes are movement sessions that focus on supporting mental health and well-being. The 30 minute class involves breathing and relaxation exercises, and movement improvisation, and are open to all. The classes, delivered via Zoom, run **every Tuesday at 12pm** whilst we're on lockdown, and are offered on a donation / no charge basis.

"A lovely meditation. For the rest of the day I have felt peaceful, and having more energy"
"The highlight of my week" "I feel so relaxed! That was amazing"

The classes are led by Julia James-Griffiths, a dance artist based in Edinburgh. Julia toured Scotland in Autumn 2019 with The Box Project; a dance project about raising awareness and tackling the stigma of depression and mental health issues. This project involves delivering free Mind to Move Workshops for those with experience of mental health issues. Further information on Julia and her work, can be found at www.jjgdance.com



Share your love of theatre by creating a square patch that will join hundreds of others to make a **giant new set of curtains for The Lyceum**. This curtain will be used for the theatre re-opening - which will be when it will be...

Find out how to submit your patch : <https://lyceum.org.uk/curtain-up/curtain-up-submission-guidelines>