



Rhwydwaith Hybu Iechyd Meddwl  
CYMRU GYFAN  
ALL WALES  
Mental Health Promotion Network

# MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION WALES

Working together to improve mental health  
and wellbeing

## All Wales Mental Health Promotion Network Update



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### Initiatives Database

One of the aims of the All Wales Mental Health Promotion Network is to facilitate the exchange of ideas and initiatives. The Network is looking to develop and host a database of mental health promotion initiatives on its website [www.publicmentalhealth.org](http://www.publicmentalhealth.org) which will provide a vehicle for sharing examples of public mental health promotion practice. Practitioners will be able to search the database in order to generate ideas and inspiration as well as access learning from others in the field.

The Initiatives Database will store information on a wide variety of mental health promotion projects and initiatives as submitted by all those whose work contributes to public mental health promotion in Wales. A form will allow people to submit this information easily and submissions will then be reviewed and displayed on the Network's website.

Once the Database is established, the Network aims to consider the development of a 'Promising Practice' Award which could be presented to a deserving project/initiative at the Annual Conference.

Whilst the above is only currently in a development phase, the Network would like to hear about examples of projects and initiatives which could feature in the database. If you have any information you would like to submit or have any suggestions to shape the development of this work, the Network Co-ordinator Kelly Mason would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Kelly by email: [Kelly.mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Kelly.mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk) to telephone 02920 227744.

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To join the network:

Visit the website and complete a short online form.

[www.publicmentalhealth.org](http://www.publicmentalhealth.org)



## Downloadable Resources to Support Mental Health Promotion

The All Wales Mental Health Promotion Network website also aims to provide access to a wide range of downloadable resources. A searchable resources database is currently under development and will signpost Network members to different types of tools (posters, toolkits, leaflets etc) covering a range of different interest areas and themes of public mental health.

If you have any such resources that you can share with other practitioners working in mental health promotion the Network would like to hear from you. Please contact the Network Coordinator, Kelly Mason by email [kelly.mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk](mailto:kelly.mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk) or telephone 029 2022 7744.

## Regional Seminars

A series of regional seminars are being planned by the All Wales Mental Health Promotion Network. The first round of the seminars will focus on mental health promotion for children and young people with a focus on voluntary and community sectors.

Three events will take place in March 2009. Once the arrangements are finalised the information will be made available at [www.publicmentalhealth.org](http://www.publicmentalhealth.org) and will be circulated by email to Network members.

## Website Updates

The Network's website ([www.publicmentalhealth.org](http://www.publicmentalhealth.org)) has recently been updated with some interesting new features and will be further developed over time. These new additions include:

- [Mental Health First Aid \(Wales\)](#): information about Mind Cymru's mental health training programme
- [Europe](#): signposts to relevant European projects, reports and other links and resources.
- [Learning and Development](#): information relating to learning opportunities, skills and qualifications which support practitioners, and other individuals who contribute to mental health promotion, to improve public mental health and wellbeing in Wales. This new section of the website includes information relating to [skills and competences](#) and [training and education](#).

(Follow the links above to view these pages)

## ProMenPol—Promoting and Protecting Mental Health

Mental health is central to the human, social and economic capital of society - however, the incidence of mental distress and disease is increasing rapidly throughout Europe. It is estimated that mental health problems impact on about a quarter of the population at some time in their lives and at any point in time, are being experienced by 10% of adults regardless of culture or country.

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Developing a mental health condition can be catastrophic for the individual and their families in health and social terms - it brings increased risks of persistent poverty, social exclusion and vulnerability to stigma and discrimination. The burden on society is equally severe in terms of lost productivity and treatment costs.

The incidence and costs associated with mental distress and ill health are substantial and rising. There is also a rapid proliferation of 'solutions' and responses at societal, organisational and individual level. This project sets out to identify useful and practical approaches to the promotion and protection of mental health amongst this wide diversity of theories, models and methods, to form the basis for a systematic multidimensional approach to promoting personal mental health and managing the risk factors that predispose distress and pathology.

A significant element of a comprehensive approach to mental health issues in society must involve a preventive and a promotion based approach. Yet for both the practitioner and the policy maker, there are problems in knowing what works.

The ProMenPol project recognises these difficulties and sets out to address the confusion that exists in relation to mental health promotion tools and the lack of knowledge about effective policy interventions. It does so through:

- Developing a classification system for mental health promotion tools
- Developing a dialogue between practitioners and policy makers
- Developing a database of mental health promotion tools
- Documenting field trials of effective initiatives

ProMenPol operates in three settings - the school environment, workplaces and older peoples residences and thus covers most of the lifespan. It is a 36-month project being undertaken by partners from Germany, Austria, Ireland, Finland, Estonia, Greece and Belgium. The project is a Co-ordination Action funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme:

### What PROMENPOL Aims to Do

Working with both specialist and mainstream researchers, stakeholders, networks, professionals, practitioners and representative organisations PROMENPOL aims to:

- **Identify and Re-Package** tools for mental health promotion and protection within three contexts - schools, the workplace and residences for older people.
- **Produce** a systematic and easily navigated knowledge management system populated with useful information, key references and important web links.

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- **Construct** a set of three mental health toolkits tailored to the life span stage of target users and predominant context within which they live their lives i.e. school, work and residences for older people.
- **Organise** a series of pilot implementation projects to evaluate and review the knowledge base and toolkits.
- **Produce** a set of multi-sectoral policy principles designed to promote and support more proactive and targeted mental health initiatives in each of the sectors.
- **Create** sustainable collaboration between the key actors in the project to carry forward the results into the later stages of the project and beyond.

**ProMenPol is now in its third year of activity and has produced a number of useful information sources that are available to the public. These are:**

- The ProMenPol database - this now contains almost 500 tools in multiple languages
- The ProMenPol Toolkits - these relate to each of the three settings of interest
- The ProMenPol Field Trials - more than 60 these ongoing initiatives are due to report in 2009
- ProMenPol membership - a network of more than 500 practitioners and policy makers throughout Europe has been built up by the project

Through the project website ([www.mentalhealthpromotion.net](http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net)), the project offers many benefits to visitors from a range of backgrounds. In addition, it also offers members the opportunity to contribute to what is now becoming a major project (there are more than 40,000 visits to the site every month).

If you want to find out more about the project or to become a member, please visit the site and register. The project still seeks to grow a functioning and viable network and to obtain more information from field trials to which you may be able to contribute.



### Creating an Open Space

Putting together a strategy and action plan in a relatively new area was a somewhat daunting task for Ceredigion's public health team. Mental health promotion has shot up the agenda recently in Wales with the establishment of a network and the forthcoming national strategy, but it is largely unexplored territory for us and our partners.

Fortunately we had stumbled on a process that creates a dynamic space where good thinking can happen. That process is Open Space Technology.

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OST is a simple way to run productive meetings by harnessing the power of self-organisation. It was created by Harrison Owen in 1986 and has been developed since. It has been used successfully in groups from 5 to 2000 all over the world. Geinor Jones, Senior Public Health Practitioner explained why she decided on OST:

“The participative nature of OST appealed to us and we felt it was a good way to raise interest in and explore a complex, far-reaching subject for which we had no clear idea about how to proceed.”

In Open Space all the agenda setting is done on the day by the participants. Anyone can raise an issue for which they feel genuine passion and initiate a conversation with anyone who wants to join them. This happens at the beginning of the day within a planned and structured setting. The rest of the time is spent in conversations where discussions and planning take place. We produced final proceedings by typing up the reports from each group as soon as possible after the day and sent out to all who came.

The values of OST are closely aligned to those of public health: full engagement, ownership and partnership working. It allows everyone to have their voice and speak about the issues that are dear to them. Open Space works on the twin principles of passion and responsibility. This is based on the premise that the only way anything useful gets done is if someone with genuine passion takes real responsibility for doing something.

Although OST can be fairly scary at the beginning (especially for the first-time facilitator) the rewards both immediate and longer term are well worth it. The day was by far the best received event we have organised. Everyone went away tired but buzzing about the conversations they had had, new friends made and about Open Space Technology. This was the first stage in the process of developing our Mental Health Promotion Action Plan. With the group of passionate people born of the first event we will continue to use Open Space as we work on it further.

For more information about Open Space go to [www.openspaceworld.org](http://www.openspaceworld.org) or read Harrison Owen's book 'Open Space Technology: a user's guide'.

Jan Batty, Mind Your Heart (and first time OST facilitator) [jan.batty@nphs.wales.nhs.uk](mailto:jan.batty@nphs.wales.nhs.uk)

### Coping with Isolation

Many people experiencing mental health issues find themselves isolated and alone. Statutory services can provide medical support, but what about your need to connect with others in your situation? Talking to other people on the phone has been found to be very effective in alleviating feelings of being alone. In fact, The British Journal of Guidance & Counselling found that groups on the phone developed 'a deep level of intimacy far quicker on the phone and that the participants can reach issues which are rarely discussed openly in a face-to-face setting'.

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Community Network, in partnership with other charities, promotes the use of telephone conferencing to support those with anxieties in the community. Mind, Anxiety UK, Stresswatch Scotland and No Panic all use telephone conferencing to support isolated and lonely people in the community.

Telephone conferencing is cost effective and easy to use. The participants either phone up or are contacted directly by a Community Network operator. These operators are experienced and friendly staff that are there to make sure your conferencing call is successful. There is a properly trained facilitator managing the call. The facilitator may be a volunteer with a mental health anxiety them self, or a counsellor. Community Network provides training for all facilitators on how to successfully manage a group on the phone.

Here are some of the things people have said about taking part in a telephone conference group:

- 'To everyone at No Panic - I would like to say a very big thank you for everything you have done for me. I was in a traumatic state when I first started phoning the helpline, I am not completely better but a very big improvement. You have got me where I am and helped me get my life back. Thank you'
- 'I have recently finished the telephone recovery programme and found it extremely useful. I really found the hour a week chatting with the leader of the group and others very beneficial.'

For more information, phone 0207 923 5250, or e-mail [enquiries@community-network.org](mailto:enquiries@community-network.org) or visit our website: [www.community-network.org](http://www.community-network.org).

Pat Fitzsimons, Chief Executive, Community Network *Linking groups by phone*

### National Healthy Living Week 2008

Last November we in the National Assembly for Wales welcomed the fourth annual National Healthy Living Week in Wales. Lasting from Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> until Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>, the centrepiece of the week was a successful exhibition event in the Senedd building in Cardiff Bay on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November. It was a cross-party event and all 60 Assembly Members were invited to join in and take part. The Senedd event was open to the public and, as well as from myself as Chair of the Assembly's Cross-Party Group on Healthy Living, saw contributions from Bethan Jenkins, Jonathan Morgan and Jenny Randerson on behalf of their respective Assembly political groups. Jane Hutt, Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, and Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Social Services, both spoke on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Traditionally, National Healthy Living Week has aimed to promote a better lifestyle by encouraging people to be active in whatever way they can, and to eat a healthy, balanced diet; it encourages a positive change and aims to inspire people to do more. It is important to remember that even a small positive change to lifestyle can make a huge difference to personal wellbeing. National Healthy Living Week, however, is not just about a healthy diet and physical exercise - important as these are. Promoting mental health is also a core

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component of the Cross-Party Group's work. To this end, organisations such as Gofal Cymru, Hafal, Journeys and Mind Cymru are all active participants in the Group and contribute to its work.

Too often in Wales, mental health is seen as the 'Cinderella' of the health service and is perhaps not regarded with equal weighting to areas such as dietary and physical health. We know, however, that a person's mental health is pivotal to his or her overall wellbeing, and furthermore it is closely linked to that person's dietary, emotional, physical and sexual health. The Cross-Party Group on Healthy Living therefore likes to take a holistic approach to its work in promoting a healthier lifestyle, and mental health is important within this. Later this year we intend to draft one of our periodic 'Awareness Briefings' (issued once each Assembly term) to discuss and raise awareness of mental health issues amongst decision - and policy - makers, as well as the media, in Wales. I am sure that those organisations mentioned above, as well as those participating in the All-Wales Mental Health Promotion Network, will want to contribute to this.

The promotion of a healthy lifestyle, both physical and mental, is fundamental to the work of the Cross-Party Group. I hope that the events of National Healthy Living Week provided people with the inspiration to make changes to their lifestyle. The Group worked hard on creating an event where people were able to gain information in a comfortable setting on issues that are important. It is vital that we carry on our good work in 2009, and promoting mental health is very much a part of this.

**For more information on the activities of the National Assembly for Wales Cross-Party Group on Healthy Living, please contact:**

Alex Still (Office of Jeff Cuthbert AM) - 029 2089 8314 / [alexander.still@wales.gov.uk](mailto:alexander.still@wales.gov.uk)

### **BUPA Foundation Funding The Social Determinants of Health**

The BUPA Foundation wishes to advance thinking and practice on social determinants of health and are offering up to £750, 000 funding for one or more projects over one, two or three years.

The BUPA Foundation is inviting entries from well designed studies that can increase understanding of the social determinants of health including:

Psychological factors including stress at work; Maternity services and impacts on maternal and infant health; Other socio-economic effects on child health; Income inequality and impacts on life expectancy; National economic environment; Nutrition, diet and health  
Housing and education.

The closing date for applications is 28 February 2009. Further details are available at [www.bupafoundation.co.uk](http://www.bupafoundation.co.uk).



## Forthcoming Events

### Commissioning Mental Health Services Developing integrated, world class mental health services 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009, Inmarsat London

As the National Service Framework (England) comes to an end, 2009 is an important year for Mental Health Policy. HSJ's Commissioning Mental Health Services conference will bring together leaders in mental health to address what World Class Commissioning will look like in mental health. Attend and learn how providers and commissioners can work together to provide better services and improve the mental health promote emotional well being.

Visit [www.hsj-mhcommissioning.com](http://www.hsj-mhcommissioning.com) to find out more.

### Cymorth Cymru Annual Conference & Exhibition 2009

11th - 13th February 2009

City Hall, Cardiff

Cymorth Cymru announces their 2009 conference which focuses attention on two fast moving policy areas - welfare and work and health and wellbeing. Don't miss this opportunity to listen and talk to the key policymakers and deliverers taking these agendas forward.

Nicola Evans : telephone 029 2055 3687; fax: 029 2056 4165 or e-mail:  
[nicolaevans@cymorthcymru.org.uk](mailto:nicolaevans@cymorthcymru.org.uk).

### Children in Wales & YoungMinds: Exploring Infant and Early Years Mental Health

18 February 2009

Llandudno

The one day course facilitated by YoungMinds will use presentation, small group discussion, case studies and DVD to explore: The mental health needs of infants, Attachment, attunement, empathy and the infant brain, Perinatal and infant brain development, The development of emotional regulation and reflective function, What works in supporting parents and carers, Risk and resilience in families and communities, The emotional wellbeing of parents, carers and practitioners.

For further information, please visit [www.childreninwales.org.uk](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk) and download the flyer.

## Future Contributions

If you would like to contribute to future editions of Mental Health Promotion Wales please contact [Kelly Mason](mailto:Kelly.Mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk), All Wales Mental Health Promotion Coordinator, Wales Centre for Health, 14 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LJ, Tel: 029 2022 7744, Fax: 029 20226749.

Please be assured that your details are kept in the strictest confidence. However, if you wish to unsubscribe from receiving **Mental Health Promotion Wales** then please email [Kelly.Mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Kelly.Mason@wch.wales.nhs.uk).