

The Highland Public Services Partnership Equality and Diversity Group



Issue No2 - Autumn 2010

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Highland Public Services Partnership Equality and Diversity group bringing you items of local interest and equality and diversity news. Contact details for the group are on the back page.

Hate Free Highland

Public bodies are required to show that they promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment. To contribute to this aim, the partner agencies in Highland have worked together to develop the Hate Free Highland campaign. The campaign is about raising awareness of the impact that these forms of prejudice and discrimination can have on victims, and to encourage the reporting of incidents. It uses a recognisable branding under Hate Free Highland for leaflets and other materials. A key part of the campaign has been to develop ways that people can report incidents in addition to going directly to the police. This includes the involvement of community groups as Third Party Reporting Organisations where incidents can be reported, and the development of an on-line reporting option at:

www.hatefreehighland.org

This campaign gives people a range of ways to report any hate incident that has happened to them or that they have witnessed. A hate incident is any form of abuse on the grounds of age, gender, disability, religion or belief, race or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or social background. This is a local as well as a national issue. For example, we have been told that one in four disabled people in Highland have been harassed or bullied because of their disability. In some cases it may be a criminal offence.

We want to encourage people to report incidents and send a strong message that hate incidents and crimes are not acceptable in the Highlands. Each reported incident helps to build a picture of Hate Incidents in the Highland. This helps all the public agencies to respond to recurring incidents and can also lead to prosecutions.



Visit www.hatefreehighland.org for more information

The Equality Bill

The main provisions of the Equality Act 2010 came into force from October 2010. As different sections of the Act are gradually brought into force, the Act will replace existing equality legislation, providing a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law that will be more effective at tackling disadvantage and discrimination. The Act will cover the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

In April 2011, the Act will also extend the scope of duties on the public authorities and will introduce a Single Equality Duty on the public sector. For further information and guidance please visit the website of the Equality and Human Rights Commission: www.equalityhumanrights.com/





Mam na imię:/My name is
Mówię po/I speak: **POLSKU/POLISH**
Potrzebuję tłumacza, aby zrozumieć co do
mnie mówisz. Proszę o zamówienie dla
mnie tłumacza. Dziękuję
I need an interpreter to be able to understand
what you are saying. Please can you arrange
one for me. Thank you
Dodatkowe informacje na temat usług
tłumaczeniowych na stronie:
Further information on interpretation support:
www.highlandlife.net/interpretation
Staff - Please turn over for guidance on your role.

POLSKU/POLISH

Access to Interpretation

Mam na imię:/My name is **Mówię po/I speak: POLSKU/POLISH**

Sometimes people need information provided in different ways to make sure that there are no barriers to accessing information and services. The Highland Council, NHS Highland, Northern Constabulary, and Inverness Prison ensure that interpretation services are available when they best meet the needs of people who do not speak English as a first language.

The agencies are piloting “calling cards” in a range of languages that member of the public can use to show they need an interpreter to access services or information. The pilot includes cards in Polish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian, Bengali, Latvian, Portuguese and Romanian. There is also a card for users of British Sign Language (BSL). For information **Email: interpretation@highlandlife.net**

Violence Against Women: Routine Enquiry

There are still some areas of gender equality where women are faced with significant challenges. Many women in Highland are affected by gender based violence, for example domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking.

The NHS is in a unique position to respond to the many women facing abuse at home and in the community. All Scottish Health Boards have been contacted by the Scottish Government setting out what needs to be done to continue to tackle gender based violence. As part of this, “Routine Enquiry” of domestic abuse for all women is expected in six priority settings.

Routine enquiry means asking new patients about their experiences of abuse. By asking the questions about abuse early on, options for treatment and support will be able to be better targeted. The six settings are maternity, mental health, substance misuse, sexual and reproductive health, A&E and community nursing. Maternity services have already been asking questions about domestic abuse for a couple of years now, and we are seeing the results in more women coming forward to seek support. Routine enquiry will only ‘go live’ once staff are trained and where support mechanisms are in place. For further information, email: caroline.tolan@nhs.net

On 13 October 2010, the partners involved in the Violence Against Women strategy received a certificate of achievement from Consumer Focus Scotland for involving service users in the development of the strategy.

Disability in the workplace: Valuing and supporting staff

A number of key public sector agencies in the Highlands and Islands held an event on 18th May 2010 on the subject of disability equality in the workplace.

The event explored available support for disabled staff and line managers and interest in a disabled employee forum. Around 120 disabled staff and line managers attended a full day of inspirational speakers, workshops and information stands.

For information, or if you are an employee in any of the public bodies interested in a disabled employee network, email:

DisabilityintheWorkplace
@highlandlife.net

Get Connected & Lead

LEAD Scotland have been awarded funding from the Big Lottery matched by the Highland LEADER programme for their project, "Get Connected and Lead: Maximising the influence of minority voice" across Highland. The project is also delivered in Glasgow, West Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde.



Disabled people will have the opportunity to undertake a new accredited learning opportunity which will equip them with the skills they need to influence change in their communities. There will be also be an integral peer mentoring aspect to this project to encourage disabled people to use their learning to reach out and encourage others to get involved.

For further information email:
ebrown@lead.org.uk

Scottish Inter Faith Week 2010

On 3rd July the Inverness Inter Faith Group held its second annual picnic which was enjoyed by over thirty followers of five main world faiths in Whin Park. They were joined by members of a Skye inter faith group, and by Frances Hume and Maureen Sier of the Scottish Inter Faith Council, who took the opportunity to announce that Inverness would be the venue for the launch of Scottish Inter Faith Week 2010 on 28th November. Inter Faith Week in 2010 will take place from 28th November - 5th December. The theme for the week is Faith in Action which will reflect upon the inspiring actions undertaken by people of faith on a local, national and global level. For further information, please email:
fhume@scottishinterfaithcouncil.org



Highland Rainbow Folk LGBT

History month February 2010



The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community celebrate LGBT History month in February every year. The Highland Rainbow Folk, a group of older LGBT people in Highland, organised an event at the Town House, Inverness supported by Age Scotland and Terence Higgins Trust. The event included a series of monologues and storytelling, and also launched a booklet produced by the group about community care and older LGBT people. The group is also offering awareness sessions for local organisations.

For further info email:
suzy.gentle@agescotland.org.uk

Reciprocal Exchange Network

The REN is a new project from the Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisation (CEMVO) Scotland. It is a project that provides a network for the sharing of skills, resources and best practice between ethnic minority voluntary sector organisations and mainstream voluntary sector organisations. Skills and resources are exchanged between organisations FREE of charge.

For further information contact:
monica.leemacpherson@cemvoscotland.org.uk
or visit
www.cemvoscotland.org.uk/ren/

Highland's new Youth Convener

In September, Gemma Mackintosh became the fourth Highland Youth Convener. The post is a sounding board for youth issues in the Highlands and has a direct line into policy makers and decision takers. Gemma has an interest in inclusion and over the next year hopes to contact hard to reach young people. The Council already supports young people's involvement through the Highland Youth Voice, the democratically elected youth parliament for 14-18 year-olds; Area Youth Forums; and Pupil Councils in all schools. For information, email: youth.convener@highland.gov.uk.



Gemma pictured with Councillor Sandy Park, Convener of The Highland Council

Integrated literacy and numeracy through sewing and craft with Gypsies/Travellers

As a result of a request from a group of Gypsy/Traveller women from the Inverness Gypsy/Traveller Site, a short project was developed during 2010 to offer integrated literacy and numeracy through sewing and craft. It is not easy to commit to a project when living a mobile lifestyle, but this learning experience highlighted that enthusiasm, enjoyment and a willingness to learn can overcome barriers.



The group worked in partnership with agencies allowing for alternative ways to be explored to support a need and interest. The project was funded by the Highland Adult Literacies Partnership (HALP) and supported by the Interrupted Learning Service, Highland Council Education, Culture and Sport Service, the Workers' Educational Association and Rag, Tag 'n' Textile, a Skye based social enterprise company. For further information email: karen.macmaster@highland.gov.uk

We hope you've enjoyed this edition of the E & D newsletter. We would like to hear your comments and suggestions for articles in future editions. OR If you would like any further details on any of the articles in this edition, please get in touch with any of the contacts listed below.

Contacts

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