



Highland Mental Health Delivery Group

Welcome to the Summer Edition of our Newsletter

A warm welcome to our first edition!

This newsletter aims to:

- Spotlight examples of excellent practice happening in areas across Highland to support wellness and mental health recovery
- Highlight training opportunities being delivered by a range of partners.
- Summarise a diary of local and national awareness raising events for you to look out for
- Update you on the priorities being focussed on by the MHDG as part of the Highland Community Planning Partnership

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Mental Health Awareness Week - May 2021 - Why Nature?



"It was as if we were re-discovering at our most fragile point our fundamental human need to connect with nature"

Mark Rowland, Chief Executive - Mental Health Foundation

In his explanation as to 'why nature'?, Mark Rowland reflects on the value we placed on nature; walking; green spaces, as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic.

[The foundations research in February 2021](#), looking at coping strategies highlights that:

- 59% of us went for a walk
- 42% of us valued green space
- 44% of us used that contact with friends (48% family)



This year, Mental Health Awareness week coincided with Green Health week and in this edition we highlight just one activity in which our Green Health partners had Highlanders of all ages creatively sharing their green space and what it means to their mental health in every day life.

Pop It On a Postcard invited us to share (draw, write, talk, photograph) our stories of nature in daily life. Pop over to [Think Health, Think Nature](#) to see, read and listen to postcards from across Highland using the fun interactive map.

Final Word

"Sometimes when i don't want to go outside but i have to, I feel better after i go outside and it makes me smile"

This little person's postcard highlights the impact of green health and nature on our mental wellbeing perfectly don't you think? Clearly it's worth mustering the energy.

Contact - Ailsa Villegas, Green Health Partnership, Senior Development Officer

Ailsa.villegas@nhs.scot

www.thinkhealththinknature.scot

Highland Young People and Highlife Highland



Focussing on mental wellness and overcoming inequality

East Sutherland, Dingwall and Fort William saw young people engaged in the inaugural Youth Work Education Recovery Programme which aims to achieve;

- health and wellbeing
- engagement in learning
- school attendance



1 - Funded by the Youth Work Education Recovery Fund

Running between March and October 2021, this targeted initiative offers young people opportunities through outdoor learning and expressive arts with the aims of supporting them to build confidence, enhance their sense of wellbeing and address the inequality related attainment gap.



Validation of Learning

The programme was designed and build around the 5 ways to Wellbeing and awards such as the SQA Wellbeing Award, the John Muir Award and other outdoor certificates were up up for grabs.



Achieving what it set out to do?

"Doing something you enjoy and learning a new skill are 2 positive ways that can help towards our overall well-being"

HLH Young People 2021

Contact - Fiona Richardson, CLD Support Officer

fiona.richardson@highlifehighland.com

Nigel Brett-Young, Youth Work Manager

nigel.brettyoung@highlifehighland.com

Paddle Well - in partnership with Police Scotland



Taking to the water for good mental health

How Does Being Around Water Help With Health and Wellbeing?



Sticking with the coloured health theme, we turn to 'blue health'.

Blue Health

Based upon the concept and commonly held belief that spending time near or in water is good for us, the positive impact of time spent in, on, under or beside water is becoming more evident in maintaining good mental health and supportive recovery.

Benefits of blue health do not just come from the sea, lochs and rivers, even thinking about water can affect wellbeing e.g. listening to the sound of the sea for relaxation etc.

Likewise we do not have to partake in swimming, sailing, kayaking, paddleboarding etc. Benefits can be had by just walking or being close to water

Paddle Well

Paddle Well is an innovative new pilot to support police officers in their journey towards better wellbeing and managing the day to day mental strains and stresses, through the water based activities of paddle boarding and kayaking.

NHS Highland health improvement team have been supporting Paddle Well leaders around mental health training, so that group leaders feel confident around talking about mental health.



<https://sway.office.com/AxWDwaddG1uz1W5k#content=21ohf5ORV9RvNE>

Contact - Siobhan Leen, Health Improvement Specialist, NHS Highland.

siobhan.leen@nhs.scot

in partnership with and on behalf of T/Chief Inspector Ali Garrow, Police Scotland Highlands and Islands Division

Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources



Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit

All partners in the Mental Health Delivery Group (MHDG) supported the development of this single resource which primarily signposts individuals and communities to trusted sources of support for mental health and wellbeing including: where to get help in a crisis; resources/weblinks to support our mental wellbeing; and learning tools to build skills and confidence in conversations about mental health and suicide prevention.

Follow this link to access the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit](#)

Suicide Prevention App

Available for both Android and iPhone



If you need urgent help with suicidal thoughts call:
Samaritans on 116 123 or
Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87

The app allows you to complete a 'Prevent Suicide' safety plan on the app can be completed with the help of a trained listener on a helpline such as Breathing Space, a health professional or with a friend or family member.

It also includes telephone numbers for local and national helplines which can offer support in some situations where people are feeling distressed or suicidal and there is guidance on what members of the public can do to help someone they suspect is feeling suicidal.

Android phone users can download the app from the Google Play store and iPhone users can download it from the Apple App store

Highland Overdose Prevention & Engagement

HOPE App



A source of information for people with drug and/or alcohol problems, and their families or friends, that helps prevent overdose and encourages engagement.



Available for both Android and iPhone

Our colleagues in the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership have developed this 5 star reviewed app as an information source for people with or affected by drug and/or alcohol problems.

Much is written about mental ill health being a key risk factor for those who use drugs and/or alcohol.

Coming Up in Our Autumn Issue



- Mental Health Training - what's available to people across Highland?
- Focus on SIPP (suicide intervention and prevention) Training
- MHDG - priority indicators

Mental Health Delivery Group (MHDG)- Background



The MHDG is one of 5 thematic sub groups of the Highland Community Planning Partnership (HCPP). The overarching aim of this group is that **all people in Highland will benefit from good health and wellbeing.**

The [Highland Community Planning Partnership](#) brings together public agencies, third sector organisations and other key community groups to work collaboratively with the people of Highland to deliver better outcomes.

Feeding into the HCPP are 9 local community planning partnerships **and** the 5 regional thematic sub groups which are:

- mental health and wellbeing (MHDG)
- community safety and resilience
- infrastructure
- community participation and dialogue
- poverty reduction.





CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Chairperson - Cathy Steer, Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland

Nature Scotland

Cattie Anderson and Liz McLachlan

Highland Third Sector Interface Representative

Gwen Harrison (RASASH)

The Highland Council

Psychological Services Bernadette Cairns

Policy, Equality & Opportunity) Rosemary Mackinnon

Occupational Health Gena Falconer

Health, Safety and Wellbeing) Jim McCreath

Connecting Carers

Rosemary Connolly

NHS Highland

Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Helen Eunson

Public Health: Val MacDonald, Sally Amor, Siobhan Leen, Maggie Hume

Fire Scotland

Jill Graham

Police Scotland

Partnerships Judy Hill,

Partnerships Lindsay Tulloch

HighLife Highland

Lynn Bauermeister

Scottish Ambulance Service??

Michael Adams

University of Highlands and Islands

Lynsey Mason