

# Mental Health News

## Community Asset Mapping

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

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In readiness for the launch of the next phase of mental health policy *New Horizons* later in 2009, there is a clear need for the regional system to mobilise toward a well-being and promotion agenda for local people, those in care services and those not in need of such supports.

NHS North West and key partners are looking to support local organisations in building capacity to determine local community needs and assets that create and sustain well-being in communities. Specifically, NHS North West via MHIPs Commissioning Programme and with Department of Health North West are keen in extending the use and capacity in asset-based working and testing its application in the context of local system reforms that enables improved commissioning for wellbeing outcomes. Understanding the available assets will enable a broader perspective to be offered into strategic planning that is not solely focused on needs arising out of deficits and continuous reliance on professionals and service provision. It will build a broader mental health outcome focus linked to community solutions.

An Asset, in the context of a community, might include: the skills, capacity and knowledge of local residents, social capital or networks and connections in a community or the physical and economic resources of a place that enhances wellbeing. An Asset Approach focuses on those factors that create and sustain mental health; these include: 1) identifying the health enhancing assets in a community, 2) promoting the creation and extension of community networks, relationships and friendships and 3) supporting individuals' mental health and wellbeing through self esteem, coping abilities, resilience skills, relationships, friendships, knowledge and personal resources

MHIP and Department of Health North West are about to launch a regional initiative that brings commissioners and those tasked with key development programmes together to enable skill sharing, demonstrate and disseminate good practice in asset mapping look to how such methods can enhance local and joint strategic assessment and commissioning decisions. If you would like to find out more please contact: [Simon.Rippon@Northwest.nhs.uk](mailto:Simon.Rippon@Northwest.nhs.uk) (0161 625 7451) or [Jude.stansfield@northwest.nhs.uk](mailto:Jude.stansfield@northwest.nhs.uk)

\*\* Look out for an update on this project which will include the Minister of State for Care Services press announcement! \*\*\*

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