

Mental Health News

Laughology – serious about humour

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.

View previous news stories by selecting [this link](#)

You can also follow Mental Health News on [Twitter](#)

Research shows that laughter has a significant positive effect on brain chemistry and can help to alleviate depression and increase immunity. Researchers have found that laughter also reduces levels of stress hormones. These affects are the result of activities in different regions of the brain that are triggered by humorous stimuli and by laughter itself. Studies have shown that brain regions normally involved in emotion, cognition, vision, and movement all respond to laughter.

During the last decade more health practitioners have become convinced of the therapeutic power of humour. Laughology are working with NHS Knowsley at Heart to help reduce cardiovascular disease in the community. Laughology techniques are being used in cardiac rehabilitation programmes and the importance of positive mental attitude in the prevention of cardiovascular disease is now recognised. NHS Knowsley has also seen an increase in public interest and uptake in free 'health checks', since working with Laughology.

Teaching people techniques to put themselves in 'good humour' allows people to cope with life's stresses and anxieties in a more positive manner. Laughology is currently being used in an eight-week long programme to improve the emotional health of new mothers at risk of post natal depression; the study is being independently evaluated.

The Laughology model uses humour and laughter to encourage perspective, which allows individuals to gain control over their emotions. It provides a flexible approach that brings about fast, positive change; the techniques and methods can be applied to a variety of situations to help unlock fresh approaches to challenges.

"People who laugh more cope better with the stress of daily life; they live longer and are healthier. It's serious science" says Dr Wiseman, Professor of Psychology, Hertfordshire University.

Laughology breaks down humour and looks at the application of positive humour and laughter to enhance communication, aid flexible thinking and problem solving. For further information about Laughology and the courses they run visit www.laughology.co.uk or call 0844 800 1701

Heard about Mental Health News from someone else? You can receive your very own email by clicking on [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Had enough of hearing about Mental Health News? You can stop receiving emails by clicking on [UNSUBSCRIBE](#) (note this can take up to one week to take effect).

If you would like more information or have any feedback about this news story, or have suggestions for a future news story please email [INFO](#)