



CAUSE provides peer-led emotional and practical support to carers and families of people with mental illness.

Newsletter Theme

The theme for this edition of the newsletter is 'Training'. Training is of vital importance to carers, mental health service users and healthcare professionals. The appointment of Angie McCabe as **CAUSE** Training Manager means that **CAUSE** is now able to offer dedicated, peer-led training designed for, and delivered to, a range of audiences.

As well as the article below looking at the importance of training future healthcare professionals, other theme-related articles include An Overview of Training in **CAUSE**, Training - The Carers' Perspective and Mental health training - What's Out There?

Comments on any of the articles in the enclosed are both welcome and encouraged.

'Putting meat on the bones'

Below Damien Kavanagh outlines his thoughts on the importance of training those working in the healthcare sector:

In a health system that is changing more rapidly than anyone would ever have imagined, training healthcare professionals - emphasising both carers' needs and their participation in the recovery process - is essential. There is also increasing scope for carer involvement in training, ensuring that we and our relatives get the most benefit from such training.

Money and time may be in short supply within the system, but there are a lot of workers out there with varying attitudes and values towards the notion of partnership in care. This is understandable because we all respond differently in different situations. This is where we can help influence the attitudes and value bases of workers and groups.

Carer and family involvement in training for Mental Health workers has played an important role in bringing reality to the learning and practice setting, 'putting meat on the bones' as we say.

Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Psychologists and Doctors are people themselves, some of whom have relatives who have mental and emotional health, as well as social care, needs.

Training serves as a useful reminder for people of why they chose the career that they did; it offers them an opportunity to reflect back to the time they made their original application to their respective courses; "Why do you want to be a.....?" The sharing of our expertise with practitioners brings a simple, yet powerful, human reality to the health and social care setting, benefitting all involved.

All Change

The next few months will bring changes to **CAUSE** with some people leaving and a number of new appointments.

After many years at the helm of **CAUSE**, Marie Crossin is stepping down as **CAUSE** Chief Executive. A new Chief Executive will be joining **CAUSE** before the New Year. Further details of Marie's time with **CAUSE** will feature in the Winter edition of this newsletter.

CAUSE is also saying Farewell to Helen Kirkpatrick who, in line with the **CAUSE** constitution, is leaving the Board after 4 years, the final year as Chair. Helen first came in to contact with **CAUSE** through the Carers Reference Group - a committee of the Bamford Review. Again in the Winter edition of this newsletter, Helen will reflect on her time on the **CAUSE** Board.

Also leaving **CAUSE** is Damien Kavanagh, Carer Advocate for South and East Belfast & Castlereagh. After more than 3 years at **CAUSE**, Damien leaves to pursue a degree in Social Work at Queen's University. Carer Advocacy services in the area will now be provided by Moira Harper, formerly **CAUSE** Carer Advocate for the Northern HSC Trust area.

The final departure from **CAUSE** is May McCann, previously the part-time **CAUSE** Carer Advocate for Tyrone & Fermanagh. With full-time funding for this post now secured, May is stepping down to pursue her interest in health and mental health through other channels, including an active contribution to the new Patient and Client Council.

CAUSE wishes all those leaving the organisation the very best for the future.

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An Overview of Training in CAUSE

With the recruitment of Angie McCabe as the CAUSE Training Manager, CAUSE is now in the position to co-ordinate existing services, and to explore the need for further training on carer and family issues. Additional training is currently being developed, based on the needs and demands of carers, health service, academic institutions, businesses and wider community.



Angie McCabe

The main training need for healthcare professionals is to ensure they have the information and skills to work effectively with carers and families. Further developmental work needs to be done, raising awareness of carers' issues as well as their statutory and employment rights.

Throughout the Health Service, academia, businesses and the wider community, bespoke training can be provided. This will create awareness and understanding of the issues that carers face, and the attitudes and skills needed to make a difference to their professional practice. These sectors have a responsibility to ensure carers rights are recognised, that these rights are upheld, and that carers are no longer discriminated against.

Our training can be tailored to incorporate a range of topics including the Carers Perspective, Carers Rights at Work, and Carers Assessments, as well as explaining the stages of the Carer's Journey. As CAUSE is a peer-led organisation, our training is delivered by those who have the experience of being carers themselves, and who are trained to design and deliver our programmes.

Training - The Carers' Perspective

Mental illness has a huge impact on the family with many facing isolation. The onus is therefore on organisations like CAUSE to develop training, using the expertise of such carers, based on the carers' perspective.

To date, CAUSE training has been designed and developed in response to demand. It is now imperative that effective training is available, ultimately assisting carers in providing the support needed for their family member. This training should ensure that the carer feels empowered, whilst also looking after their own mental and physical health.

CAUSE has identified the need for information as a primary need for carers, and we currently have a 10-week 'PREP' training programme for carers. One participant described the training she received from participating in the course by saying "this course has given me the strength to cope better in caring for my husband, as well as hope for the future and, most importantly, knowing that I am not on my own - there is help out there if needed".

Other training is designed to help the carer develop confidence in dealing with mental health services and, if they wish, to help them as volunteers to articulate the needs of carers in policy and planning forums.

Supporting carers ultimately means supporting those they care for. The advent of community care some time ago means there is an enormous burden of responsibility on the carer. Therefore, the training provided for carers will assist families in creating an environment in which there is understanding and minimum stress, in order to maintain relationships, keep people well and prevent hospital admissions.

'The Recovery Journey'

Below Paul McFall from the Irish Advocacy Network gives his perspective, as a mental health service user, on the importance of training carers:

"Having been invited by CAUSE on several occasions to take part in the delivery of the 'PREP' training course, I've gained an insight into the carers perspective. I found the experience interesting and a great opportunity to help carers reach a level of understanding that they would otherwise not have achieved. The training gives carers the chance to ask questions they may not be able to ask their loved one, and to hear first-hand about the experience of being unwell.

My contribution hopefully helped families understand the fears, frustrations and indignities experienced by some psychiatric patients, giving them a new level of insight which will help them and their loved one in the future. Relationships are often strained

and families can have trouble communicating their feelings. We would hope that this training would continue to contribute to the re-establishment of troubled relationships and better understanding for the carers.

Above all, however, I feel that the biggest benefit of this training for the carer is the evidence of the 'Recovery Journey'. This gives the carer hope and helps them understand what recovery is, and that it is ongoing and personal to each person. The reality that we all have the capacity to have a life after mental illness is what I hope we, as service users, bring to training".



Paul McFall,
Peer Advocate,
Irish Advocacy
Network

'Really thought-provoking, challenging my values'

Emphasising the importance of training those working in the local healthcare sector, enclosed below is a selection of the feedback received during recent training sessions with trainee Social Workers:

"It was so beneficial to hear first-hand how individuals are affected by how social workers and other professionals treat them. The sessions were really thought-provoking, challenging my values at the same time"

"Listening to these experiences helped me to re-evaluate why I chose this vocation. The best session of the module so far"

"Seeing someone from the 'real world'...made me more aware of the importance of being aware of carers' needs"

"A very personal input...Lectures are good, but hearing things first-hand is very effective"

"Helped seeing the individual before the illness"

"Very interesting. I will draw on these 'stories' when in practice in terms of the importance of communication with service users" (and carers).

CAUSE Training Manager - the first 6 months

Below Angie McCabe reflects on her first 6 months as CAUSE Training Manager:

'The creation and implementation of the Training Manager post was a new and exciting opportunity both for the organisation and for me personally. Although CAUSE had for some time been delivering awareness raising sessions to healthcare professionals and in academia, the time came - due to increased demand for training from healthcare professionals and throughout other sectors in society - to take a strategic approach to the training CAUSE provides.

Now, as I am almost six months in post, this is an opportune time to reflect on what has been achieved so far, and where we will go as an organisation in developing our training services.

Part of my role as Training Manager is to co-ordinate the existing training that CAUSE provides. This is an ongoing process. Currently we deliver training to student Social Workers, Associate Social Workers, Student Mental Health Nurses and a range of Medical Students at local academic institutions, especially Queens University Belfast. These sessions aim to ensure that participants develop their skills and knowledge around supporting carers of people with mental illness.

Another element of my job is to expand CAUSE training services to the wider community. We are in the process of developing full-day workshops and bespoke training for the University of Ulster, the other regional colleges throughout Northern Ireland and the main trade unions in Northern Ireland. Meeting with all sectors within our society - academia, businesses, other community and voluntary agencies - to promote carers' issues through training is very much part of my remit, and promoting carers' rights and awareness of carers' issues through training is a much-needed service'.

'Staying Well with Manic Depression'

A number of books were available to delegates attending the recent CAUSE 'Working in Partnership' Conference in the Spires Centre, Belfast. Amongst the books was 'A Lifelong Journey. Staying Well with Manic Depression/Bipolar Disorder' (ISBN-13: 978-0855723576) by Dr Sarah Russell. Below is a review of this book, available to borrow or buy from CAUSE Head Office:



'Many people with manic depression, also known as bipolar disorder, are living happy and fulfilling lives. How do they manage to stay well? Contributors to this book discuss many different ways to stay well. It is rarely just about seeing a psychiatrist and taking medication. It is often about so much more.

People who contributed to this collection are working as social workers, engineers, lawyers, stock brokers, nurses, builders, general practitioners, factory workers and so on. Many are parents. Each contributor speaks about the illness in a personal and unique way. Together, they provide evidence that people with manic depression can, and do, stay well.

Although there is not a one-fix-fixes-all approach, there are some common strategies that people with manic depression use to stay well. With insight, education, experience and time, people with manic depression learn what works for them, and what does not work.

Contributors to the book use their own life experiences and circumstances to create individual stay well plans. Their examples will help others to create their own stay well plans. This book provides hope for service users, their families and friends. By providing a wellness view of manic depression, this book may also provide important new insights for health care professionals'.

'Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family'

Parents with mental health problems and their families are one of the four groups most likely to be excluded from health and social care provision. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) have produced a new Guide on working with parents with mental health problems and their children - 'Think child, think parent, think family'.

This guidance, overseen by the Regional Health and Social Care Board (RHSCB), is currently being implemented across each of the local Trusts.

Put simply, we already know that parents want good support and freedom from the fear of losing parental responsibility and their sense of purpose in life. Children and young people want more information on their parent's experiences, someone to talk to and a chance to make and see friends. In order to achieve this, services must build on strengths and promote resilience, provide support tailored to specific needs and recognise the individual role of each family member.

SCIE emphasises the notion that changes are required at every level of the system and there are specific recommendations for practitioners, organisations and managers reflected in each of the stages.

The RHSCB has appointed two people to co-ordinate the local implementation of the guidance, and CAUSE is represented on the Project Board.

There have also been a number of local workshops aimed at every member of staff who will have contact with parents and their children. These workshops are designed to encourage staff to reflect on their current practice with a view to incorporating this new guidance into their everyday thinking and work.

The guidance, for 'people who use services and their carers' to 'find useful information on what they can expect from services and where they can go for more information' can be accessed at: www.scie.org.uk/publications

Report from the Regions

'Celebrating Caring' - As part of Carers Week, the Western HSC Trust organised a 'Celebrating Caring event' in the Broomhill Hotel. The event, attended by CAUSE Carer Advocate for the area Annette O'Doherty, featured the launches of the Trust's Carers Strategy and a Carers' Health & Well-Being Information Booklet ('Finding the Balance - Promoting Positive Health'), as well as Lunch and a Comedy Half-Hour!

"And Relax..." - A series of Relaxation Days funded by the Northern HSC Trust at the Comfort Hotel in Antrim provided local carers with opportunity to relax in the company of fellow carers. Feedback included: "The respite day was crucial for me to enable me to continue and keep well myself".

New Daycare Centre for Dungannon - Providing support for people recently discharged from hospital, and for people with mental health problems living in the community, Carland House opened during September. CAUSE assisted with staff training, with one local carer presenting on the carers' perspective.

A Sad Loss

Many in CAUSE were saddened to learn of the untimely and premature death of Clifford Finlay earlier this year. For several years, along with a number of CAUSE staff, Clifford had been an active member of the Eastern Board's Mental Health User & Carer Forum.

Clifford also worked for NI Association of Mental Health in North Down. A Coroner's Inquest in August found that Clifford died as a result of an accident near Mussendun Temple, Castlerock. CAUSE would like to extend our sincere sympathies to Clifford's family on their sad loss.

Waterside Half Marathon Event

A healthy contingent of adults, children and toddlers (and even a few dogs!) participated for CAUSE in September's Waterside Half Marathon.

A team of almost 20 - all wearing special CAUSE t-shirts - completed the 3 kilometre Family Fun Run & Walk in the grounds of Gransha Hospital. Despite the unseasonal heat, CAUSE's very own Mairhi Lyttle also completed the full 13 mile course in a very respectable 2½ hours. Each participant received a special event medal, with the children then enjoying Family Fun Activities in the beautiful sunshine!

Thanks to local CAUSE Carer Advocate, Annette O'Doherty, for her hard work recruiting team members, and all the carers, families and healthcare professionals (and dogs of course!) who participated raising funds for, and awareness of, CAUSE's work.



Pictured above are some of the CAUSE team before the start of the Fun Run & Walk. Also pictured below are 2 of the CAUSE contingent showing off their medals after the event!



Mental Health Training - What's Out There?

The following is a selection of training currently available for local carers and healthcare professionals:

ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) - A two day training course, with an emphasis on 'suicide first aid' and helping a person at risk stay safe and seek further help. Participants come from all backgrounds, including people concerned about family & friends, and workers from a wide range of professional backgrounds.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) - MHFA is the help given to people experiencing mental health problems before professional help is received. The training seeks to promote the recovery of good mental health and limit the possibility of problems developing into more serious conditions.

Positive Steps - A 10-week mental health and emotional wellbeing programme which has been developed by the South Eastern HSC Trust's Health Development Department. This programme looks at how to maximise personal mental health and emotional well being, as well as providing practical opportunities to enhance health.

City and Guilds - The Certificate in Personal Development and Learning for Unpaid Carers is designed to support carers' personal development by developing knowledge and skills relevant to their needs. It helps carers draw up realistic plans for further education, training, employment and leisure, also providing a nationally recognised qualification.

Further information on any of the above training courses is available from Angie McCabe, CAUSE Training Manager at CAUSE Head Office.

World Mental Health Day



CAUSE Carer Advocate Sarah Price and UTV's Lynda Bryans (pictured, extreme left and right respectively) were amongst more than 150 people who attended the launch of World Mental Health Day activities in the South Eastern HSC Trust area. Celebrations included a 'Your Guide to Positive Mental Health' event in Bangor.

Thank You!

Over the last few months, the following have supported CAUSE's work:

- DHL / Exel NI
- D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- Coca Cola HSC
- Lloyds TSB Foundation
- Regent House School, Newtownards

We appreciate the generosity of all of the above supporters, as well as established regular donors, and others who have supported CAUSE. If you know of a local group, company, school, or individual who would be interested in making a donation towards the work of CAUSE, or in the case of individuals contributing from a monthly standing order, please contact Peter at CAUSE Head Office.

Correction

We would like to clarify the content of one of the articles in the Summer 2009 Edition of the CAUSE Newsletter, which looked at the many recent changes in local mental health services.

In the summary of the situation in the Belfast HSC Trust area, the three main service groups within Mental Health were listed as 'Primary Care, Acute Care and Recovery Services'. We have been asked to clarify that these three main service groups are, in fact, Primary Mental Health Care Services, Acute Mental Health Care Services, and Recovery Services.

Corrections to newsletter content are always welcome, and we apologise for the misunderstanding in this case.

And Finally...

... a story of hope, relayed by a CAUSE carer at a recent Support Group meeting:

As a teenager, Kathleen's son had no less than 16 nervous breakdowns. However, with the help of family, friends and healthcare professionals, his life was gradually turned around. So much so that, after recently meeting Mary McAleese, the next big appointment for the family will be a trip to London where Kathleen's son will pick up the MBE (for his services to the community) at Buckingham Palace! So quite a turn-around, and one that should give all carers hope for the future.

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As many of the articles in this newsletter are from external sources, the contents of this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of CAUSE