

EQUAL ACCESS



TO EMPLOYMENT *in Glasgow*

e-bulletin

MAY 2007
EDITION 5

Welcome to the 5th Edition of the Equal Access ebulletin. The bulletin aims to bring you up to date with the work of the Equal Access partner organisations to help people move towards and into work.

This issue focuses on the work being done to promote volunteering opportunities in Glasgow, the work of the Re: Focus partnership, an update on the WIN Project, and an account from a service user who was able to take advantage of employability services. The issue also provides an update on work with employers to help support people into, and in work

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you know of, or are involved in relevant work you would like to include in future editions of the ebulletin.



You won't believe what you can do

Volunteering can provide a valuable way of helping people learn new skills, improve confidence and have fun – there's a huge variety of over 500 volunteering opportunities looking for 4,500 people in Glasgow at any one time registered with Volunteer Centre Glasgow.

Opportunities are available in catering, the arts/music, sport, admin, retail, practical/DIY, the environment, care/support, advice/information, advocacy, and many more...and many are only looking for help for a couple of hours per week.

Volunteering should not affect welfare benefits – there is no limit on volunteering hours as long as people still meet the conditions of their benefit and discuss their volunteering with a Jobcentre Plus Advisor beforehand.

It is possible to search for opportunities online or by phoning the Volunteer Centre to book in for an appointment with an advisor. Taster opportunities are often available to try out placements for a couple of hours before committing further.

A quick guide on volunteering is available from:

http://www.volunteerglasgow.org/downloads/pathways_readytovolunteer.pdf

If your organisation is looking for more volunteers the Volunteer Centre can provide you with information, advice and training, and make your opportunities available to over 100,000 online searches each year.

www.volunteerglasgow.org

City centre office – 84 Miller St (4th floor) – 226 3431

Local offices/satellite bases in Easterhouse, Parkhead, Drumchapel, Springburn, Pollok, Toryglen.

Promoting Volunteering in the South East

The Equal Access Manager in the South East has been working with Glasgow South East Regeneration Agency and The Volunteer Centre to develop a short presentation for potential referrer organisations across sectors. The aim is to highlight the benefits of volunteering, in terms of people beginning to think about work or returning to work but who feel unable to undertake paid employment. Many people find volunteering an invaluable experience especially in the key areas of confidence-building, positive activity and increased social contact. Many potential referrers and indeed volunteers, are not aware that the regulations relating to benefits payments have been changed and it is now possible to volunteer for more than 16 hours a week without loss of benefit. There are many different types of opportunities in a wide range of organisations and locations across the city. So, if you or your team are interested in hearing about the benefits of what volunteering could do for your clients and how to access the opportunities, please contact Christine Jess on 634-1024 or email christinejess@easglasgow.com

RE:Focus – Into the Mainstream

The RE:Focus Development Partnership has agreed 4 themes for mainstreaming activity, City Wide Tracking, Culture Change, Empowerment & Shared Practice.

The aim of the City Tracking system is to improve and streamline an individuals' experience in accessing employability services and monitor the performance of the City wide employability infrastructure. The user training for the early adopters of the system has just begun and the system will become operational over the coming weeks.

There are three working groups encompassing members of the DP taking forward the other themes.

The Culture Change Group will provide an overview of the learning across the RE:Focus partnership.

The Shared Practice Group will capture the learning on three areas, engagement with health and care sectors, the pathway to employment and support to employers.

The anticipated outcomes of the Empowerment Group will be published review of where RE:Focus projects maximised the empowerment of service users. It will include policy and practice level recommendations for consideration by the RE:Focus Steering Group and propose how learning in relation to 'empowerment' can be mainstreamed across the City.

The combined work of these groups will ensure that all learning arising from the services and research supported by the Re:Focus initiative will inform future service development.

A celebration and dissemination event for RE:Focus will take place on 26 June in the City Chambers. For further information please contact Joe Dowd: 0141 429 2518

WIN Stakeholder Event

As Re:Focus funding comes to an end and in an effort to highlight many of the lessons learned over the past 24 months, the WIN project has arranged a Stakeholder Event on Friday 1st June. The event is aimed at policy makers and key stakeholders across the city with the aim to showcase how the WIN Project has evolved, and what the project plans to achieve post-June 2007

The event will include a number of speakers, principally service users who have been leading on the design, development and delivery of the project over the past 2 years. In addition, a number of guest speakers have committed to the event, including Kate Lindsay from the Scottish Poverty Information Unit, Joe Dowd, Mainstreaming Co-ordinator with Re:Focus, and David Berry from the Scottish Executive.



Joe Dowd

As a highly innovative service user-led project, WIN has been busy developing a customised personal development training programme for clients across the southwest, who have experienced mental ill-health. Research has shown that in the southwest area, over 4,000 people have a mental health condition; many of whom would greatly benefit from a client-centred approach to personal development. Early indications are that WIN is making a significant improvement to participants' wellbeing, with evidence of increased confidence and motivation amongst the participants. These early indications are encouraging, and the project aims to continue to further develop the service it is able to offer over the next year.

Everyone involved in WIN is excited about the achievements made over the past 2 years, and are looking forward to the future challenges, post-June 2007. The stakeholder event on 1st June will give an opportunity to hear more about these achievements and future plans.

For more further information on the WIN Project, please contact Yvonne or Linda on 0141 445 5044.

In work and loving it

I have moved so far in the last few years, after a 23 year history of mental health problems and caring responsibilities, I'm now back in work and loving it! My life is more positive and I look forward to going to work. I am part of the world again! I often say "Stop the world I want to get on"

Seven years ago while still caring for my mum; I was put in touch with Flourish House which supports people with mental health problems using the clubhouse model. Projects like this give you the time you need to build your confidence and

direction. It (re) introduces you to a work ordered day with staff and members working together to ensure the smooth running of the house. I took the opportunity to get some experience in both catering and administration and got my food hygiene certificate and my EDCL. This enabled me to take up a couple of Transitional Employment Placements (TEP), building up from working for 3 hours per week making sandwiches at a local drop in centre to a 9 month TEP with Greater Glasgow NHS working 8 hours a week. Although I was really nervous working with nurses and doctors, as they were the professionals, I really enjoyed my time there, but at the end of the 9 months felt I wasn't ready for work. I continued to work with Flourish House and eventually felt ready to pick up another TEP with the Health Board and this time I knew was ready to make the most of my opportunities.

I started applying for jobs and the experience I gained through my TEP's helped me secure a part time post I'm now working 20 hours a week with the South West Work Development Team. Seven months on I'm still here and loving it and am even considering full time work. It's taken a while but with support and the opportunity to try out work I have got there.



David Miller, Administrator, South West Work Development Team

For further information on the Clubhouse model and Transitional Employment Placements please contact Flourish House: John Linn Tel: 0141 333 0099. Scotia Clubhouse: Liz Jaconelli Tel: 0141 556 7766



Equal Access and Service User Involvement

Equal Access carried out a Service User consultation in 2006 to ascertain the views of Service Users regarding their access and opportunities to employment. We said we would keep you updated on the progress of the key recommendations and this month we are focussing on the work being undertaken with employers.

The consultation revealed that service users wanted employers to better understand where they were coming from. This month, we will highlight examples of how work being done to address this and how employers themselves are meeting this challenge.

RE:Focus is currently funding two employer projects. **Embracing Diversity** is aimed at supporting employers to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce. The project works with small to medium enterprises to try and establish systems and procedures which will support them to recruit people currently at a disadvantage in relation to employment. The project is being driven forward by Equal Access and Healthy Working Lives (part of the NHS). Other partners include Scottish Enterprise Glasgow.

Dispelling the Myths is a partnership between health, social care and the Employers Coalition. It is conducting a series of seminars targeting employers about the benefits of employing diverse client groups. So far, the project has worked with 20 employers.

These two projects joined forces to produce a literature review of employer's attitudes and a Myth Busters DVD (both featured in last month's bulletin).

Glasgow City Council, Social Work Department is currently considering how it could support long term unemployed people into social care work. The intention is to develop a training programme that will give people the skills, knowledge and confidence to work in social care.

NHS - Working for Health

This well known programme is part of the wider Care Careers initiative in the NHS which aims to provide access, support and training to help people to develop their career in the health service. It is jointly run by NHS Greater Glasgow, Wise Group and Scottish Enterprise Glasgow and is aimed at long term unemployed people. Currently, they are exploring introducing a programme for people leaving care and for people with a learning disability.

More information will be available in subsequent issues of the e-bulletin.

A copy of the summary report or full document can be downloaded at: <http://www.easglasgow.com/ServiceUserConsultationonEqualAccessstoEmployment>

The Equal Access Central Support Team, Managers and Employability Workers have been busy working with partners across the city to implement the strategy, to find about more about what's been happening please visit our website at: www.equalaccessglasgow.com

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