Health Inequalities Cross Party Group Minutes March 21st 2013

Welcome and Introductions Malcolm Chisholm MSP

(See appendix for MSP and Non non MSP attendance and apologies.)

AGM
Co convenors re-elected
Malcolm Chisholm MSP
Murdo Fraser MSP
Jim Eadie MSP

Secretariat re- elected Jacquie Forde- The Wellbeing Alliance

Annual Return completed and will be uploaded to Parliament website

Speaker One

Eric Carlin .Since July 2012, Eric has been Director of SHAAP (Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems - www.shaap.org.uk). Based out of Birkbeck College, University of London, Eric is also currently completing PhD research which includes a case study in Pilton, Edinburgh analysing young people's experiences of transitions to adulthood against theories about social exclusion and resilience.

Young 'Piltoners', 'social exclusion' and 'resilience'
 The concept of 'social exclusion' emerged from the 1980s as a term to define the multifaceted nature of contemporary poverty. It seeks to describe[1] exclusion from:
- Gaining a livelihood
- Social services, welfare and security networks
- Consumer culture
- Political choice
- Bases of popular organisation and solidarity
- Understanding what is happening to society and self
- Shelter
- Personal interaction.

Eric discussed his research with young people in Pilton, Edinburgh, suggesting that it is inaccurate to describe any of them as 'socially excluded'. Despite experiences of significant challenges and disadvantages, many young people in Pilton are engaged in dynamic figurations both within their own community and peer groups and with broader 'mainstream' society. Many develop strategies to become "invisible" so as to survive in difficult circumstances. This might be deemed to be 'resilient'. However, such 'resilience' should be seen, at best, as a harm reduction outcome measure. Public policy must not be diverted away from addressing structural disadvantages and stigma which require young people to develop 'resilient' coping strategies simply to cope with the daily challenges that they face.

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[1] Smith J. 2005, "Risk, social change and strategies of inclusion for young homeless people," in Barry M. (ed), *Youth Policy and Social Inclusion*, Routledge, Abingdon, pp. 161-182.

David White is currently Asst. General Manager of Edinburgh ECHP. His role includes responsibility for Tackling Inequalities, Third Sector liason, primary care support services, Public Involvement, Community Planning together with direct service management.

Within Edinburgh CHP, staff who are working to tackle inequalities are increasingly convinced of the need to address complex ('wicked') problems by working in partnership with other relevant agencies. The currently siloed organisation of public services does not work well for areas with high levels of complex needs or indeed vulnerable individuals or families. We believe there are readily accessible ways of thinking about the challenge to public services which would help us to design and work with high need communities much more effectively.

- Public services don't think of inequalities/ health inequalities/vulnerable people/complex people as a distinct design and community engagement challenge which **requires** partnership working and different solutions, highly related to place.
  - This is a distinct challenge from delivery to 80% of the population, which we do (broadly) very well and efficiently using existing organisational structures.
  - Whilst policy implicitly acknowledges this understanding, the main public services concentrate on service delivery which does not sufficiently respond to the need to vary and integrate the service offer, for small populations with high concentrations of complex need.
  - The challenge is most readily understood at the individual level. Complex, vulnerable people are commonly offered a plethora of disconnected services which they are unable to use effectively to secure desired outcomes, either for themselves or services (Pinball)
  - Public services neglect this area because we understand it to be peripheral to the key service delivery challenges (mainly now understood as the growing number of elderly). If the true cost of 'additional' services to a small group of very vulnerable people was appreciated, this challenge would be better understood and better managed. The true extent of expenditure and siloed working with this group remains free from constructive scrutiny, largely due to the weak powers of Community Planning and its subservience to dominant organisational interests.
  - Treating expenditure on areas such as substance abuse, child protection, community policing and diversion, gender based violence, welfare benefits, community development/social capital building/co-production, housing and environmental support aimed at deprived areas, criminal justice etc, - as inequalities or complex needs expenditure, would allow us to frame the challenge and available resources and expertise in a much more effective way.
  - Public services currently approach areas of deprivation, with no common understanding of the challenges, opportunities or strengths(assets). We suggest a 10% - 40% - 50% categorisation would allow a much more coherent and less fragmented approach across local public services. (Critical academic support in further testing of this simple model would be welcomed).
  - We are very excited by the potential of 'Total Place' to offer the community engagement approach, local decision-making and understanding of resource (c£200m for 50,000people) which might allow us to explore how to support (rather than simply deliver services to) areas of deprivation.
  - We also suggest a 5 part model of effective intervention with deprived communities which could be used as an accelerator of, or separately to, Total Place.

- Any objective analysis of current fragmentation of approach and delivery to individuals and communities with complex vulnerabilities would conclude that we are currently poorly organised to succeed.

Attendees

Malcolm Chisholm MSP
Jim Eadie MSP
Murdo Fraser MSP

Secretariat

Jacqueline Forde   The Wellbeing Alliance

Speaker/s
David White
Eric Carlin

Attendees

Malcolm Clubb
Matt Barclay
Aileen McLeod MSP
Anne Marie Barrie
Helen Reilly
Fiona Barlow
Claire Stevens
Muriel Mowat
Emma Anderson
Tracey
Gillian Smith
Helen O'Reilly
Ian Forbes
Andy Hockey
Adele Gardner
Emma Papakyriakou
Jane Cox
Andy Fenton
Henry Featherstone
Apologies

John Howie
Alison Campbell
Bill Paton
Gil Mitan

Keith Irving
Vicki Crichton
Maddy Halliday
Jane Cox
Esther Cumnock
Lindsay Paterson
Joanne Mc Grath
Jacqui Young
Richard Simpson MSP
Katherine Smith
Greg Quinn
Bruse Whyte
colin mair
vivki Crichton
Pauline Craig
Stewart Douglas
Michael Mc Mahon