

Changing Lives External Communications Group Meeting

12 September 2007, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh

Attendees:

Neil McLeod, Voluntary Workforce Unit
Yvonne Leathley, Scottish Social Services Learning Network - North
Jan Murdoch, Scottish Consortium for Learning Disabilities (SCLD)
Kirsten Gooday, Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS)
Ranald Mair, Scottish Care
Ben Coburn, Scottish Government
Luke Manley, Scottish Government

Apologies

Shona Main, ADSW
Nicky Scott, SSSC
Sandra Burke, Care Commission

The following Items were discussed:

Membership

Ranald felt an exercise to look into why certain organisations are not represented on the group would be helpful. Jan also felt we need to look at why these groups aren't represented.

Yvonne felt membership could be a core group but that people from specialist areas could attend if the meeting related to their area.

Kirsten stated that a larger number could still be manageable as people will always drop out and that it's easier to manage a large group through electronic communication methods. She also felt that we should wait until organisations had missed a second meeting before contacting them again.

Jan stated that we need to come back to the big issue – what we want to get out of the group and start to do things people are interested in and want to be involved with.

Learning Networks

There are 4 Learning Networks and they are involved in many groups so Yvonne has been asked to be the only representative from the Learning Networks and will feed back to them

Centres of Excellence

Neil felt that the Centres of Excellence other than SCLD would be keen to have representation on the group.

Jan will feed back to the other centres of excellence but can't represent their interests as their work varies greatly. She felt it may only take a couple of people from the Centres of Excellence to represent them all. It could also be a possibility to get Lisa Curtice (SCLD) to facilitate between the different Centres of Excellence.

Yvonne stated that on October 18 the Learning Networks have a meeting with the Centres of Excellence and could put this issue on the agenda.

Action: Ben will contact all the Centres of Excellence

CoSLA

Ranald and Neil both stated that it would be helpful to have CoSLA representation. Yvonne pointed out that CoSLA link with a huge section of the workforce. Ranald suggested David Kennedy is a useful contact at CoSLA. Everybody agreed that they would be happy to make contact with CoSLA to discuss representation on the group.

Unions

Ben stated that we need to also consider the unions. He felt it may be hard to find the right one and that if you invite one, the others will ask why they were not invited.

Yvonne felt we could just let them know what we're doing. Engage with them but not necessarily invite them on the group

Kirsten felt we should wait until we have tangible tasks before contacting them

Jan stated that if we're open with them they won't feel left out

Action: Ben will keep the Unions informed

User Carer Representative

Kirsten stated that she felt a service user representative or someone whose job it is to communicate with service users would be helpful to have on the group.

Ranald said he could see it as part of our task to communicate to users and carers. He pointed out that there are many different carer organisations but no umbrella organisation.

Jan felt a representative from the User Carer Forum would help and their knowledge of Changing Lives would mean they'd be hitting the ground running although it would be a big ask to then get that person to communicate back to other service users. She also felt that something like the website review would be a good way of getting users involved.

Action: Group to look at how we communicate to users and carers.

Others

Yvonne mentioned other potential members could include the Sector Skills Councils, HEI's and SASCOT (Daniel Stodart?)

Group Remit

Ranald suggested that a key element of the group remit could be to demonstrate the values/achievements of Changing Lives and to sharpen the language around gains/values etc. He felt that mapping the existing communication linkages between the organisations involved in Changing Lives would be a good idea. He also emphasised raising awareness to a wider range of stakeholders and promoting the joined-upness of the Scottish Government.

Neil suggested the remit could include asking the question of what Changing Lives has meant for each different organisation. He also said he hoped his organisation would gain a culture of knowing where to go for information as it makes life easier.

Kirsten felt the group should make sure we're giving members as up to date info as possible, the freedom to just pick up the phone and call anybody else in the group and the opportunity for each member to improve their communications skills.

Yvonne felt the group should offer a two way process – for the member organisations to link with Scottish Government and as a way of them getting feedback from the Change Programme policy leads.

Tasks

Website

Ben informed the group that we are currently looking to review the Social Work Scotland website and that he would like other members input through a website questionnaire.

Jan said it would also be helpful if people looked at the SCLD website and fed back. Neil said the SSSC may also be interested in a website review, as he believed they were currently looking at revamping their site. Ben said that if we were to look at the SCLD website and provide feedback it would prove to people that the group benefits all and not just the Scottish Government.

Ranald said he felt it was important that we need to use the same language on each of our websites.

Action: Group members to complete website questionnaire in the next couple of weeks.

Publications

Ben stated that we plan to publish a new Changing Lives newsletter in October.

Kirsten felt it would be a good idea to call the next Changing Lives newsletter Autumn/Winter edition, as opposed to October, as it will extend its shelf life. She also mentioned that we should bear in mind that large mail distributions present ecological issues and we should use electronic communication when possible.

Ranald said he would be keen to look at the possibility of producing flyers/leaflets on Changing Lives – a possible 'idiots guide'. He also mentioned that Carers Scotland are distributing a publication to 13,000 members at the end of October and this could represent an opportunity to also include the Changing Lives newsletter with this.

Action: Share each others circulation/mailing lists

Stakeholders

Ben felt it would be beneficial to put a number on the amount of stakeholders our combined lists comprise.

Action: Identify the type of stakeholders each organisation reaches and the numbers.

Group Statement

Ben stated that he felt it would be beneficial for the group to have a group statement and would also like to put together a brief of what each person does.

Yvonne said a group statement should espouse the strengths of the various organisations in the group.

Ranald said he felt it would be easier to have the Scottish Government prepare a group statement than just have individual organisations making their own contributions.

Action: Jan agreed that she would prepare a paragraph long group statement.

Communications Strategy

Yvonne stated that she would like to see the Changing Lives Communications Strategy.

Action: Once the strategy is agreed then Ben will share it with the group

Next Meeting

1 November 2007
10am – 1pm
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh