

## STAKEHOLDER COMMENT FORM

### Stakeholder Comments

Please use this form to submit comments or suggestions.

1. Please put each new comment in a new row.
2. Please do not paste other tables into this table, as your comments could get lost - type directly into this table.
3. **Please always refer to section numbers (and not page numbers.)** Insert the **section number** and paragraph (within each section) in the first column (see examples).
4. If your comment relates to the document as a whole, please put **'general'** in this column. (See examples).

**To be considered your completed form MUST be returned by 28 February 2008.**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Norrie Murray</b>
<b>Organisation:</b>	<b>Volunteer Development Scotland</b>
<b>Section number</b>  Indicate <b>section number</b> or <b>'general'</b> if your comment relates to the whole document	<b>Comments</b>  <b>Please insert each new comment in a new row.</b>

<p>General</p>	<p><i>Volunteer Development Scotland believes volunteering has much to offer this agenda and therefore should feature prominently in the Action Plan. There is evidence which suggests that volunteering can</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• help people to experience those things ( social networks, sense of purpose and belonging) which are accepted as contributing to maintaining good mental health,</i></li> <li><i>• be an important part in helping people with mild to moderate mental health issues to better cope and/or recover,</i></li> <li><i>• be a means by which a person can gain confidence, develop skills and knowledge, and get a current reference which might help them out of state benefits into a paid job or education or training</i></li> <li><i>• be a way in which the people of Scotland can actively participate in this agenda by volunteering to support and /or work alongside people with mental health issues</i></li> <li><i>• bring people together( for example from across the mental health continuum or from different backgrounds) so that they can learn more about one and other and at least have the potential to developed views of others based on practical experience.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Volunteering should be viewed as a very practical thing people can do to help maintain and/or improve their mental health and the mental health of others. It needs to be better recognised as an action which can contribute towards better community wellbeing, solidarity and social cohesion.</i></p> <p><i>Helping other people and making a useful contribution to their life is one of the most powerful activities a person can do to improve their own sense of self esteem.</i></p>
<p>General</p>	<p><b>What do we mean by volunteering?</b></p> <p><i>By volunteering we mean activity which a person freely enters into and gives of their time, is not undertaken to achieve financial gain and which seeks to benefit people outwith ones immediate family or to benefit a cause, for example, the</i></p>

*environment.*

*There are four types of volunteering as defined by the United Nations – service giving, mutual aid/self help, civic engagement and campaigning.*

*In Scotland volunteering occurs in both the public sector and in the voluntary sector. Some private sector employers (and public ones too) provide help for staff to volunteer through what is known as Employer Supported Volunteer initiatives.*

*There are two main ways in which people volunteer their time, formally or informally – sometimes referred to as managed or self managed volunteering. Managed volunteering is when a person volunteers through a third party, normally an organisation for example a mental health association or their local NHS or their local authority's social work department. Self managed volunteering is when a person helps another person directly for example helping a neighbour by cutting their grass, doing shopping for them or driving them to GP surgeries.*

*Volunteering is impacted on by its environment. As we experience rapid social, economic, cultural and technological change different models of volunteering are emerging.*

*One example is Time Banking – Time Banking is a tried and tested tool for community empowerment and community engagement. It uses a local time based currency that brings local people together and rewards them for sharing their skills. Time Banking creates opportunities for people to take on some responsibility for their own and their communities well being. This model encourages self help and “makes concrete” the mutuality of volunteering. Self help and mutuality are crucial components in this agenda of achieving a mentally flourishing Scotland.*

*An hour of engagement earns one time credit, a community loyalty point, which can be spent on support services from other local people when needed. Time Banking provides a way to hold local information on who is available, when and*

	<p><i>with what skills to provide a safe, broad based framework for connecting people who would not normally meet.</i></p> <p><i>People relearn that give and take is the basic building blocks of community life and they form strong social networks.</i></p> <p><i>Time Banking is, above all else, an agent for social cohesion. The investment made into each time bank by people who do not normally see themselves as volunteers and have hitherto been labelled 'hard to reach' are witness to all the new social, practical and emotional changes that enrich the lives of everyone. There are successful examples of time banking across the country and 22 other countries across the world. Time Banking can help the co-production of mental health services and local wellbeing.</i></p>
<p><i>General</i></p>	<p><b><i>Policy Linkage</i></b></p> <p><i>Getting volunteering more prominently featured in this agenda can, in part, be achieved by linking the proposed Mental Health Action Plan to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• the recently published Scottish Government, Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in the NHS, which is referenced in the Scottish Government's Better Health Better Care Action Plan, December 2007</i></li> <li><i>• the current Scottish Government Strategy for Volunteering published in 2004, and</i></li> <li><i>• the section on Volunteering in "With Inclusion in Mind" – the local authority's role in promoting wellbeing and social development- Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act Sections 25-31 published in October 2007. The list of actions on volunteering on page 34 of this document should be mapped into the proposed Mental Health Action Plan.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The Refreshed Strategy for Volunteering in the NHS requires all NHS Boards to produce a strategic action plan on volunteering, to seek to have it incorporated</i></p>

	<p><i>within Community Planning Partnerships and to explore with other Community Planning partners the need for a strategic overarching plan for volunteering. Volunteer Development Scotland is aware of work of this kind already underway in some Community Planning Partnerships for example Edinburgh, Angus, Dundee and Glasgow. There is an opportunity to have a more strategic approach to volunteering and mental health by making it a key part of any overarching volunteering strategy developed by a Community Planning Partnership. The development of a strategic approach to volunteering will, in the view of Volunteer Development Scotland, enable Community Planning Partnerships to more effectively progress their power of promoting community wellbeing and link mental health to other policy areas.</i></p> <p><i>The Refreshed Strategy announces that Volunteer Development Scotland is now a strategic partner of the Scottish Government Directorate for Health and Wellbeing. The Refreshed Strategy will seek to encourage people to volunteer in the NHS. But it will also seek to enable patients and ex patients to volunteer. This will include people with mild to moderate mental health issues.</i></p>
<p><i>General</i></p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p> <p><i>The Health Benefits of Volunteering- a review of recent research, Corporation for National and Community Service April 2007. <a href="http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/07_0506_hbr.pdf">http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/07_0506_hbr.pdf</a></i></p> <p><i>This publication drew on 30 other studies. It claims research demonstrates that volunteering leads to better health and that older volunteers are the most likely to receive physical and mental health benefits from their volunteer service.</i></p> <p><i>Volunteering for Mental Health, Institute for Volunteering Research, 2003 <a href="http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/volunteering-for-mental-health.htm">http://www.ivr.org.uk/researchbulletins/bulletins/volunteering-for-mental-health.htm</a></i></p>

*This report summarises the findings of a survey of volunteering by people with experience of mental ill health. The survey gathered accounts of voluntary work from more than a hundred volunteers with direct experience of mental ill health. Although a sample of this size is not representative of a whole population, it yielded a set of findings that provide useful signposts for future development.*

*Respondents said that their mental health difficulties had had a variety of negative effects on their lives, including unemployment, a lack of confidence and motivation, an inability to concentrate, difficulties in trusting people, an inability to make or sustain friendships, and feelings of isolation, frustration and anxiety.*

*Respondents also agreed that volunteering had done much to improve their mental health. Specifically, it had given structure, direction and meaning to their life, widened their social networks, improved their vocational and interpersonal skills and helped them to gain access to employment, education and training.*

*2005 Citizenship Survey, Active Communities topic report, Department for Communities and Local Government, June 2006*

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/452564>

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*“There was a positive relationship between having a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and participation in informal and formal voluntary activities. Higher rates of monthly participation in formal volunteering were also related to trust in local people, but there was not a corresponding relationship for participation in informal volunteering). A third (33%) of those who said that ‘many’ of the people in their neighbourhood could be trusted participated in formal activities at least once a month compared with 24 per cent who said that only ‘a few’ could be trusted. Levels of participation in formal volunteering were also relatively high among people who agreed that local people pulled together to improve the neighbourhood. More than a third (34%) of people who definitely agreed that this was the case undertook formal volunteering at least once a month but this fell to less than a quarter (23%) among those who definitely*

disagreed.

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*People who felt that they could influence local decision-making were more likely to participate in voluntary activities. More than a third (35%) of people who agreed that they could influence decisions affecting the local area had participated in formal volunteering at least once a month in the 12 months before interview, compared with just over a quarter (26%) of people who did not think they could influence local decisions. People who thought they could influence local decision-making were also more likely to have undertaken informal volunteering at least once a month than people who did not think they could influence decisions (42% compared with 35%).”*

#### *Case studies from Scottish Recovery Network*

*“The voluntary work made me get out in the morning and gave structure to my day. I've found that routines are very important and help me take my medication. It has also been helpful to meet people from out with the mental health area. I did many voluntary jobs and it helped that I could gradually take on extra hours. I also met my husband at my voluntary job so it's been good that way!”*

<http://www.scottishrecovery.net/content/mediaassets/doc/AWorkingLife.pdf>

“I got immersed in self-help groups. I started joining local link clubs and local mental health organisations to such an extent that when I had the energy and I was feeling well, I would utilise my energy to that end. I ended up volunteering for the organisation and a few other local organisations. I either became a committee member or director and that actually continued until I got full employment. As my energy came back, my knowledge, enthusiasm and my confidence came back, and I didn't have so many dips. It was a relatively smooth road through voluntary work, to employment and having quite a full and active life.”

<http://www.scottishrecovery.net/content/mediaassets/doc/Doesnt%20timefly.pdf>

Through them I got a befriender and he had a big input into my recovery. When I felt well enough I became a befriender to give something back, as having had

	<p>been there myself, I know what it's like.  <a href="http://www.scottishrecovery.net/content/mediaassets/doc/ToHellandBack.pdf">http://www.scottishrecovery.net/content/mediaassets/doc/ToHellandBack.pdf</a></p> <p>Capital Volunteering is a pan London programme which aims to tackle issues of mental health and social inclusion, through volunteering. The lead partners are <a href="#">CSV</a> and <a href="#">the London Development Centre</a>, and the programme is funded by the Treasury, through its <a href="#">Invest to Save Budget (ISB)</a></p> <p>Quote from Capital One participant</p> <p>“A lot of self-confidence and realisation I can give something back and I do have something to offer the community. It's helped me look at my long term plan and given me steps towards it. The other thing is I don't have to be perceived as someone with issues. The person I support doesn't know my background. It's important it doesn't become mutual self-help. They helped me discover my skills”.</p> <p><a href="http://www.capitalvolunteering.org/db/files/microsoft_word_interimreportsummary1_642.pdf">http://www.capitalvolunteering.org/db/files/microsoft_word_interimreportsummary1_642.pdf</a></p>
<p>Section 9.1  Action1 –  Promotion of  Mental Health</p>	<p>A further action should be added about improving key agencies, practitioners and the general public's awareness of the mental health benefits achieved through volunteering. Key agencies and practitioners should be trained to identify when a person might benefit from volunteering and be able to help that person find a volunteering opportunity. This could involve partnership work with the local volunteer centre and making use of the <a href="http://www.volunteerscotland.org.uk">www.volunteerscotland.org.uk</a> website which contains details of opportunities online. This would be an opportunity for VDS and Volunteer Centres to work, or continue to work, with therapists, psychologists and, for example, the Breathing Space initiative.</p> <p>As volunteering is an important contributor to the mental health agenda more work needs to be done to help children in primary and secondary schools to</p>

	<p>have opportunities to volunteer, to receive help from volunteers, and to have that activity described as volunteering. Using the term volunteering would be a very simple way of enabling children to begin to see themselves as volunteers, to be clear when they are getting help/support from a volunteer and to see volunteering in a positive light. Encouraging children to talk about how volunteering made them feel/helped them would enable children to develop their own thoughts on the impact of volunteering.</p>
<p>Section 9.2 Action 2 – Prevention: Mental Illness</p>	<p>Social prescribing should include GPs and others, for example CPNs, therapists and psychologists referring people into volunteering. GPs are one of the groups of professionals most trusted by the general public so are well positioned to do this work.</p> <p>Some young men who have taken their own lives have been socially isolated. Volunteering offers some young men the opportunity to develop social networks and relationships.</p>
<p>Section 9.4 Action 4 – Support to Improve Quality of Life...</p>	<p>Public bodies, for example the NHS, should better recognise that involving people as volunteers in their work helps to promote better mental health for those people. Public bodies should also be open to involving people with mental health issues as volunteers in their work and see that involvement as part of a person's recovery.</p> <p>Practice Case studies</p> <p>The Castlemilk Time Bank has developed a project with Shotts Prison that could improve the mental health of prisoners. Prisoners from Castlemilk who would normally do voluntary work within the prison are able to earn time credits for the work they do. They can donate these to their families in Castlemilk or the wider community, such as local community organisations. Time credits can be spent on things that the recipients, community organisations or individuals like family members, need done for themselves.</p> <p>In West Lothian the Volunteer Centre ran a New Directions Project with funding from the local Jobcentreplus to encourage people with mental health issues in</p>

	<p>receipt of state benefit to volunteer. The project provided a combination of services designed to meet individual need. This ranged from Pacific Institute short courses - which focused on goal setting, positive self talk and building resilience - , mentoring and volunteering activity and input from the Shaw Trust, a nationally recognised job broker. By the end of the pilot 95 people had been through the project of which 23% achieved employment, 95% participated in volunteering and 42% went on to education or training.</p> <p>Twelve Volunteer Centres have special projects or workers who specifically support people with mental health issues into volunteering.</p>
<p>Section 9.5 Action 5 – Development of a Local Capability to Improve Capacity...</p>	<p>Volunteering needs to be part of any local co-ordination. Local Volunteer Centres should be invited to participate if not already involved.</p> <p>Work needs to be done to ensure/ check that key agencies have the right knowledge and skills to refer people into volunteering and that those organisations who involve volunteers in their work have the knowledge, skills and resources to involve volunteers with mental health issues effectively and positively. Volunteer Development Scotland provides training that helps organisations to prepare for involving volunteers with particular needs which includes mental health issues. Some volunteer centres also provide this training.</p>
<p>Section 9.6 Action 6 Support the Key Role for Community Health (and Social Care) Partnerships....</p>	<p>Community Health Partnerships should develop a more strategic approach to volunteering and be clearer about how volunteering can help them to achieve its intended outcomes.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p><b>Measuring the impact of volunteering</b></p> <p>Gathering more evidence about the impacts of volunteering on this agenda will be important. One way of doing this is by using the Volunteering Impact</p>

Assessment Toolkit. This toolkit measures the impact of volunteering on the volunteer, the intended beneficiary, the organisation with whom the person volunteers and the organisation's wider community across five types of capital including social capital, human capital and economic capital.

Volunteer Development Scotland is currently piloting the Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit in five NHS settings- NHS Lothian; NHS Borders; The State Hospital; Glasgow Breastfeeding Initiative and NHS Quality Improvement Scotland. The results of this work are due to be published in summer 2008.

Please add extra rows if needed.

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