

Recovery Matters 2014 Outer Hebrides: Our reflections 25th and 26th August 2014

Introduction

“Recovery Matters 2014” is a baseline intervention for staff, paid or not, at any level of addiction treatment and related services. This workforce development opportunity comes free to ADPs and treatment providers and our experience shows it has greater impact when senior managers and commissioners take part. We use current recovery research, ongoing examples of practice in Scotland and the local lived experience of long term recovery as standard in any of our workshops.

Our aim

1. To contribute to a practice based recovery “paradigm shift” in the workforce
2. To build local learning from the lived experience of recovery
3. To use shared learning and dialogue based tools that respect the wisdom and experience of the participants

Agenda

The ‘brain food’ learning in five sections that each last for ten minutes introduced the participants to:

1. The lived experience of sustained recovery
2. The Road to Recovery – A radical shift in drug policy
3. The acute model/ recovery model
4. The power of recovery and ‘better than well’ effect
5. The next recovery right step – the culture of transformation and individual commitment.

The workshop included dialogue and round table exercises, a film show and a question and answer section.

We facilitated meaningful conversations between treatment providers and recovery activists in the Outer Hebrides from a diverse range of organisations and disciplines. We chose to give small bites of learning we call “brain food” alongside space for participants to dialogue in order to digest their collective thoughts/ learning and ideas.

Event planning

The event

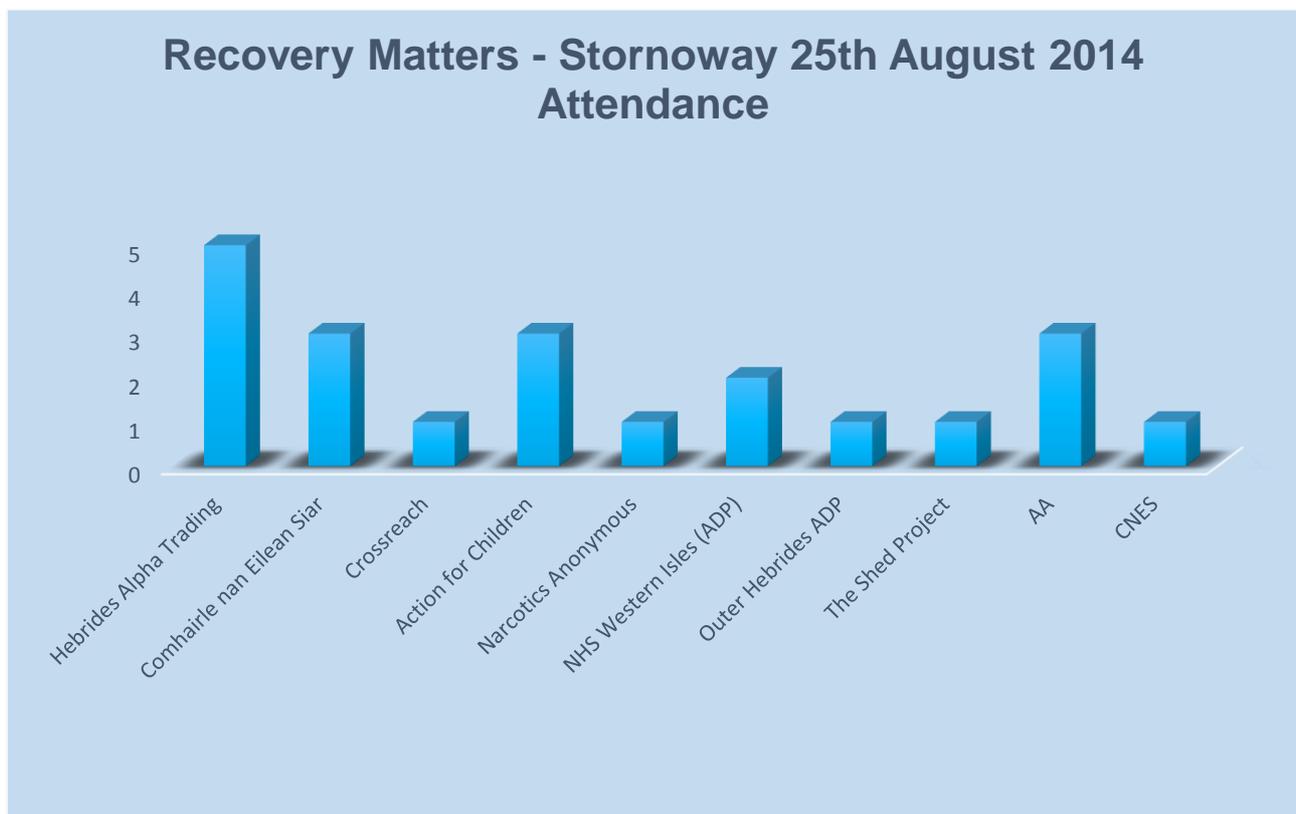
Without a shadow of a doubt personal, face to face connections are definitely much more effective in building relationships. I was at a STRADA event and had the good fortune to sit next to Karen Peteranna, Substance Misuse Development Officer for Outer Hebrides ADP. As the day progressed we discussed the possibilities of the interventions that SRC could offer the Outer Hebrides and Karen took up the gauntlet, and contacted me not long after that to organise this workshop.

It was decided that there would be 2 workshops one in Stornoway (Lewis) and one in Ballivanich, (Uist)

The workshops were really exciting for me personally, for several reasons - I had never been to the Outer Hebrides, but it has always been on my “bucket list”. It also challenged my organisational skills and relationship building. Given there was more forward planning than I would normally anticipate. What is the most cost effective way of getting there, and then linking into Mutual Aid and the people registered, as I had no relationships with either. No site visits, always difficult going into a venue without first having visited to check that all the technical detail and tables etc. are suitable.

For the purposes of effectiveness and learning, I have broken down the two areas of the Outer Hebrides for information.

Stornoway -25 People Registered - 21 Actually Attended - 9 Recovery Commitments



Feedback

Feedback was gathered from a survey monkey questionnaire – 4 responses and 1 postal response - extracts below:

We asked about your experience of the Recovery Matters Workshop?

All respondents found the Workshop “very positive”
One respondent said “it made recovery the focus, not addiction”.

We asked, what if anything, did you learn from the day? You Said:

“It was my first opportunity to meet people from different agencies in a relaxed fashion and find out more about their work and difficulties they come up against”

“That efforts are being made to make the drug and alcohol field less disjointed, more pragmatic and less about petty conflicts between various ideologies”

“That on many different levels we are all working for the same goal”

“All covered was already known. Nothing new transpired”

We asked, Did you see anything differently as a result of the Workshop? You said:

“I was more aware of the differences in others work and yet aiming for a common goal”

“The positive emphasis confirmed”

“No”

We asked, What is your Next Right Step? You said:

“Hopefully I will be spending some time keeping in a drop-in centre for people with alcohol and substance problems”

“To continue to emphasise recovery rather than have an addiction focus within the project”

“No”

We asked for any suggestions. You Said:

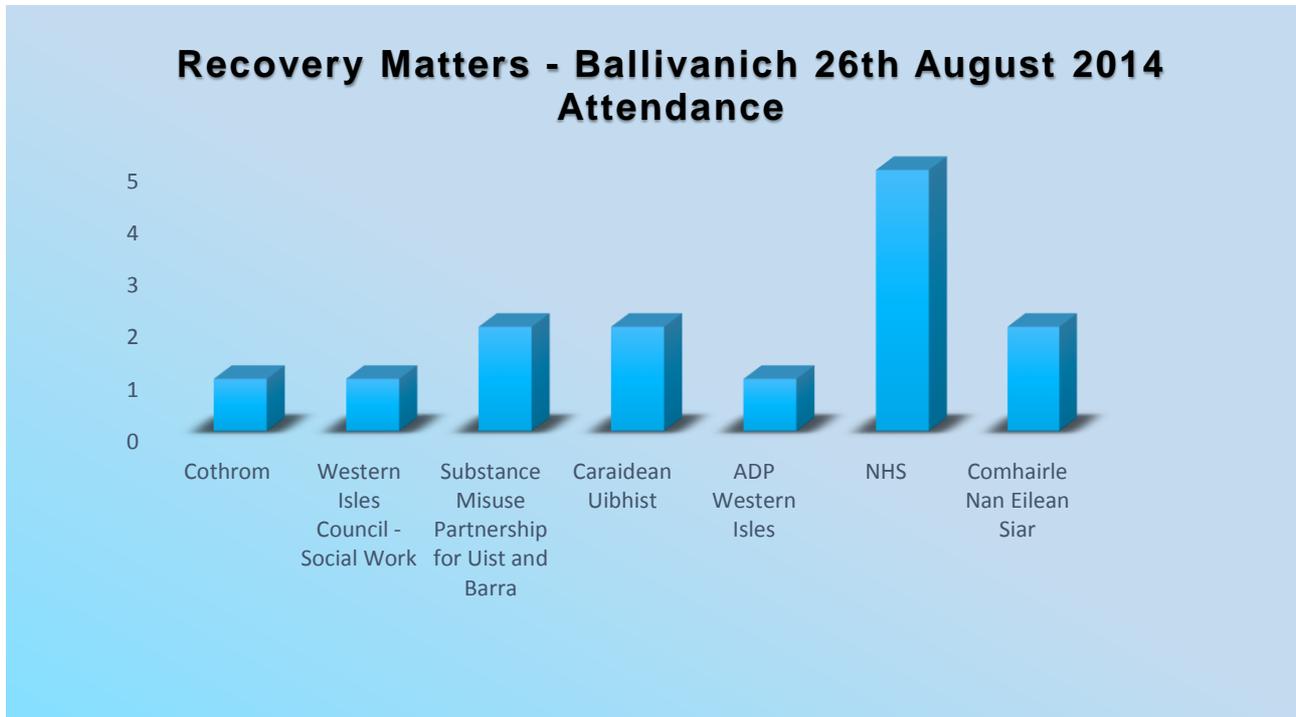
“If you could come up with an A4 Sheet with a “list of inspiring ideas” for people coming out addiction that would be good”

“If you don’t take the first drink you cant get drunk, however, apparently this concept is too simple for a large [art of the addiction field”

“Go into more ways of recovery ie.12 steps”

“This was my first meeting so at present no further comment”

Balivanich – 17 Registered, 14 Actually attended - 13 Recovery Commitments



Feedback

Feedback was gathered from a survey monkey questionnaire extracts below:-

We asked about your experience of the Recovery Matters Workshop? You said:

“I found this to be an excellent learning event. I have recently started working in the field of substance misuse, and really appreciated the insight which was given by Anne-Marie who had lived experience of recovery. She was excellent and inspirational – I could have listened to her all day!”

“The first part of the workshop (before lunch) was intense and exceeded my expectations. It was very helpful with regard to my work in the field of substance misuse to learn about the experiences, thoughts and ideas of a person in recovery, and what made it so special is that this person was actually present – first hand experiences! Unfortunately technical issues with the projector/laptop somewhat spoiled the second part after the lunch which I feel was too long. The videos shown eventually did not meet my high expectations which had built up in the morning against the backdrop of Anne-Marie’s fantastic talk”

“A positive networking experience and lots of knowledge about drinking behaviours”

We asked, what if anything, did you learn from the day? You said:

“I learned a lot about people’s recovery journeys, I was surprised to learn that it takes 5 years to recover from addiction, and realised that most services focus on the first year only”

“People in recovery are likely to be assets to society and in this respect ‘better’ without any dependency issues”

“The importance of maintaining the long term support, the crucial stages of support, reasons why a drinker behaves like they do, that services need to change to provide a long term recovery approach, and that funding needs to adapt to meet this need”

We asked, Did you see anything differently as a result of the Workshop? You said:

“Yes, I will work differently to give additional support (if possible) to clients who are doing well at the moment, and will appreciate more that their needs will continue for several years”

“I have a greater respect for people in recovery”

“Yes, the stages of recovery and support”

We asked, What is your Next Right Step? You said:

“I really want to look into recovery communities in my area, I am not sure how I will do this, but I know it is needed”

“I want to meet more people in recovery and learn from them”

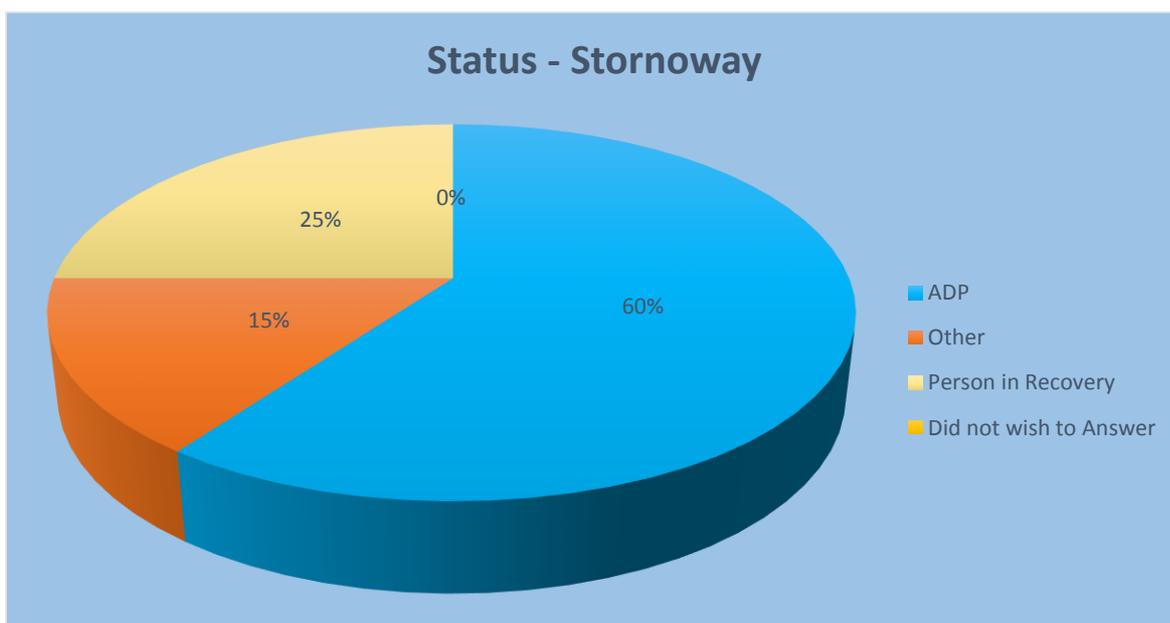
“Support funders and learn more about behaviours associated with addictions”

We asked for any suggestions. You said:

“I only have one negative, as the course was excellent and an eye opening for me. The activity where sticky notes are placed on the timeline of recovery was not helpful to me. Anne Marie explained that often people do not get this part, and I assume it was aimed at showing us visually that our services sit in the early stages of recovery. However the group struggled and we felt different things – some putting down what support was needed in the future – basically we were all confused”

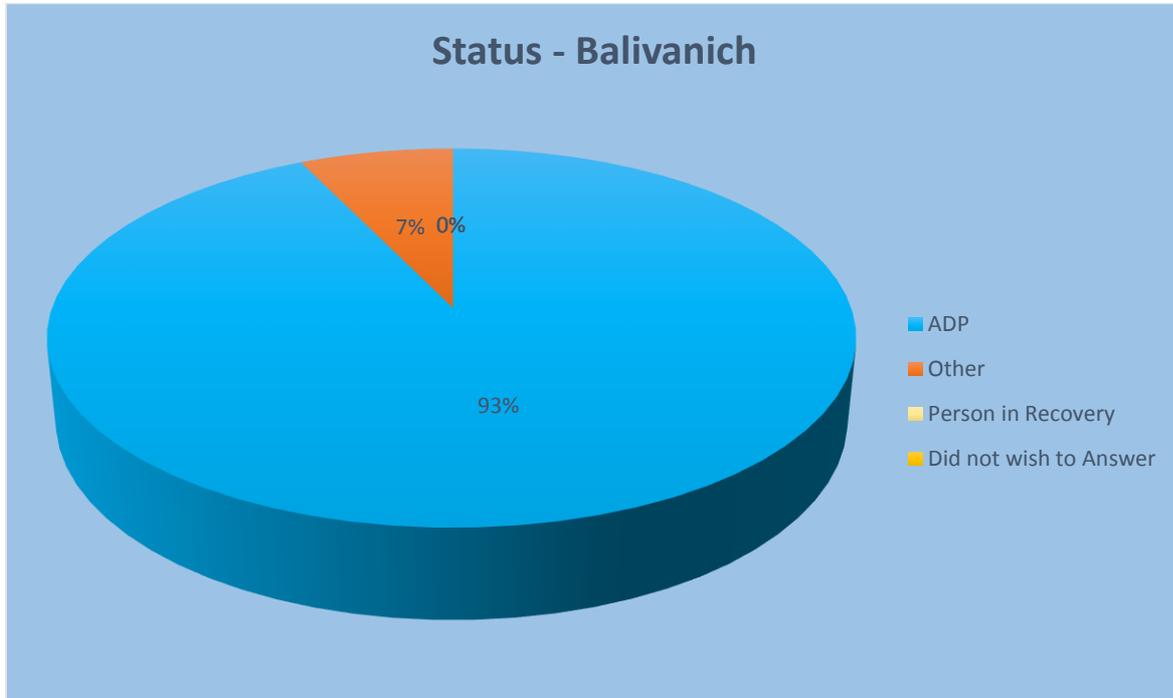
Status

The following is a representation of the status of attendees across the Stornoway



Status

The following is a representation of the status of attendees across the Ballivanich



Visibility: Initial impact

- Dialogue between participants who previously had not met and found the networking incredibly helpful
- 22 wonderful Recovery Commitments were made these are:
 - To re-read Road to Recovery Chapter 3. To watch the Anonymous People video
 - To read the literature on the website. Meet up with the people I met on the course, talk with my line Manager (Recovery Service)
 - I feel now I can develop a deeper understanding of somebody in recovery feels and hopefully I will be able to, in early intervention, better identify early triggers. By understanding processes and recovery we can develop better interventions
 - To work with and develop a better relationship with the Western isles ADP as a person in long term recovery. To become a member of the Alcohol and Drug Partnership
 - To read the entire Road to Recovery (2008). Also to have a focus on recovery and the service user especially in my work with the ADP. To assist local agencies and people to network and develop recovery approaches and communities. To keep recovery at the centre of working practice
 - To do my best to do as much as possible to continue to help myself whilst helping others with addiction problems. I would be interested in taking part in further events/communications, possibly doing the walk in Edinburgh, or other events meetings in Glasgow. Thank you for a great day
 - Had a great day and it was very helpful in my AA Recovery

- To remain well myself and to continue working to improve so that I may be of use to others and give my family and those who love me *rest*
- I already have a drop in but would like to involve people who have life experience to give living in the community. Also to read chapter 3 of the Road to Recovery
- My commitment is to join Mustapha Hocine's Recovery Group as a volunteer
- To make the existing service more attractive and accessible for people with addictions
- To fulfil my own potential of happiness and wellbeing in order to let that shine through to those I support and the work that I do
- SMPU+B To look at whether we are working towards a recovery model, read chapter 3 of the Road to Recovery, be more recovery focused in my work
- Set up a recovery group in the next few months
- My commitment to recovery is to be open minded and read chapter 3
- To read the 'Road to Recovery', take more of a recovery focused approach, encourage other colleagues to follow a similar approach, further my knowledge of recovery
- I will try to create a 'Recovery Community' on Barra by actively seeking out people who have lived experiences of their recovery journey to pass on to others
- Try to become more aware of recovery groups to share information with services consumers, to read chapter 3
- To show continual support and care, not to forget how far someone has come
- Maintain and develop our needle exchange services, cascade my learning about 'Recovery' Services, to colleagues, friends and wider community
- To share and explore recovery experience from today with my fellow team members. This will help to keep recovery at the front of our minds when working alongside children and families. I want to ensure that we always see people as human beings first most - with the capacity to recover

Visibility: Developing impact (the recovery bounce)

As a direct result of the workshop, a participant was able to offer Narcotics Anonymous a room and they have now been able to start an NA meeting in Stornoway. This takes place on a Tuesday night at "The Shed", St. Martin's Memorial Church.

And Steve the "shining light for NA has been invited on to the ADP Recovery Sub Group committee.

International impact

None

What did we learn?

- The challenges facing rural communities
- To ensure clarity on technical equipment when a prior site visit is not possible
- How fantastically friendly and generous of spirit people are (sometimes I forget)
- That the workshop works much better when there is "lived experience" in the room
- In Balivanich there was no lived experience at the workshop so I did the seed for the day, which is tricky especially when you are facilitating. Although I appreciate the kind feedback
- Fascinated to learn Stornoway was built on "drugs money". James Matheson was born in Lairg, Sutherland and co-founded the Jardine Matheson Company in Canton in 1832. Having made his fortune from the Chinese Opium trade, he returned to Scotland and, in 1844, purchased the Island of Lewis from the Mackenzie Trustees for £190,000.

Thank You!

- A huge thank you to all participants, and especially for those completing the survey monkey and for all the Recovery Commitments
- The ADP for hosting the workshop
- Alcoholics Anonymous for coming out in force to the Stornoway Workshop
- To AA's Public Information – Joan for meeting with me the night before pointing me in the right direction for an AA meeting and providing AA literature for the day
- To Steve and his good lady for driving me out to Tolsta for tea and I was able to see some of the fantastic scenery the island has to offer.in particular Garry Beach below.



- To Wendy for picking me up at Ballivanich.

Apologies for the technical difficulties at Ballivanich, unfortunately this was outwith my control as I request what is needed prior to the workshop, and as there was no site visit I had to work with what I had.

Anne-Marie Quigg
1st December 2014