Success at Scottish Health Awards

Penumbra was thrilled to receive recognition of its work with the Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) at the recent Scottish Health Awards where it won the Care for Mental Health Award. The Awards celebrate the exceptional achievements of unsung heroes within health and social care services in Scotland.

Launched in Summer 2019, the DBI programme is an innovative service which provides early intervention to people in distress equipping them with the skills and support to manage the causes of their distress and reduce the possibility of future distress.

Penumbra was chosen by the Scottish Government to also provide the DBI service across the Moray region, becoming the first DBI associate partner.

DBI is a short-term intervention for people in distress/emotional pain who do not need emergency medical treatment, who present in settings like A&E departments, GP surgeries, to police officers or Scottish Ambulance Service staff.

Congratulations to everyone involved!

Penumbra looks at mental wellbeing in the workplace

The modern workplace can be a stressful environment. It can be hard to be open about your wellbeing at work, and it can be difficult to recognise signs that your mental health is beginning to suffer. Everyone has mental health, and everyone experiences highs and lows as a normal part of life.

There is a growing awareness in the workplace that managing and supporting staff wellbeing has benefits for everyone in an organisation: from increased staff motivation and reduced sickness absence, to a happier, more supportive and emotionally responsive team.

Earlier this year, Caroline Ploetner, the Acting Assistant Manager of the Carnyone service, was approached to give a short series of workshops to staff and managers at Glasgow’s Buchanan Street branch of Nationwide Building Society. The purpose of these was to raise awareness of mental health in the workplace and to explore strategies to stay mentally healthy at work.

When we create workplace cultures where people can be themselves, it is easier for people to speak about mental health concerns without fear, and easier for them to reach out for help when they need it. There is still, unfortunately, social stigma around mental ill health, and it can hard to acknowledge, either to ourselves or to managers or colleagues, that things are becoming difficult.

We discussed some of the early warning signs of our mental health taking a dip, and the importance of a safe and open working environment as a preventative factor. It can be hard to recognise these early warning signs in ourselves. A kind word from a colleague can be all it takes to start the process of recognising and dealing with these issues.

Safe, supportive spaces make for a happier workforce. Staff should also be made aware of the importance of practising self-care, of monitoring and caring for one’s own mental health. This can be through eating well, trying to keep physically active, or talking about one’s feelings. It can be hard to find time, or the place, to talk openly about emotional issues.

Regular, confidential supervisions with management, if held in an empathetic and supportive manner, can provide one important opportunity for these conversations; team meetings, too, can provide a valuable space to acknowledge work stressors and for colleagues to feel part of a supportive team.

These workshops were extremely successful, and Nationwide are keen to see them run again. They have also been kind enough to run a fundraising campaign for Penumbra.

Our hope is that we can provide similar workshops for other companies.

Penumbra Chief Executive
Nigel Henderson is pictured with
Rachel Middleton, Service Manager
Penumbra supports 100th person in Angus through suicide prevention service

The Angus suicide prevention service was launched in January 2019 and is available to anyone aged 16+ living in Angus and is experiencing thoughts of suicide. Support is provided by freephone, email and face to face appointments, and there is no application or waiting list. Support is also available for family members, carers or friends of those experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Penumbra’s Angus Support Manager, Ashleigh McLeod, said: “We’re so proud that we have been able to directly support 100 people who are in crisis and feeling distressed or overwhelmed. Our fantastic team here in Angus are kind, compassionate and really skilled at what they do, and whilst we would always work to prevent anyone being at crisis point, we’re here if people need that support.

“The expectation of recovery guides everything that we do, and we want to encourage people to look after their mental wellbeing just as they would their physical health. But asking for support can often be hard for people. We know that everyone’s mental health journey is different and that’s why we work with the people we support to help them to find the tools that work for them.”

“I couldn’t have asked for a better person when I attended Penumbra. Kind, caring, supportive, understanding, sympathetic and extremely helpful are just a few of the words to describe her. An absolute credit to the service.”

Recovery Practitioner, Ann-Marie, added: “Sometimes people can be a bit scared about what to expect in contacting any mental health related support service, but we know from feedback that the people we’ve supported have really benefited from that compassionate support and the fact that they can talk openly in a safe space.”

The service operates Monday to Friday 9am -5pm on freephone 0800 135 7899 or email aspss@penumbra.org.uk

FUNDRAISING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Tesco shortlists Penumbra in Bags of Help Centenary Grants

We’re so excited that Penumbra has been shortlisted as one of the participating charities in Tesco’s Bags of Help Centenary Grants.

From now until the end of December, you’ll be given one voting token per purchase when you shop in Tesco stores across West, Central and South Scotland. The purchase can be of any value and it’s not necessary to buy a carrier bag in order to receive a token. You then cast your vote instore using the token.

Spotlight on challenge events

The Summer months tend to be a busy time for people taking on various sporting challenges in a quest to raise awareness of mental ill health and fundraise for Penumbra. 2019 has been no exception and we are forever grateful to our supporters.

Thank you to Wattcell Futsal Club who donated £1 for every goal they scored during the season. The Club raised a total of £132!

SUPPORT US WHEN YOU SHOP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON


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