

April 2012 - March 2013



April - June 2012

AMH NOMINATED AS ASSEMBLY CHARITY OF THE YEAR



The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission nominated Action

Taking Action on Mental Health





Mental Health as its first ever Charity of the Year. The appointment followed the Commission's approval of a new Charity Policy.

Following a proposal by the Speaker, the Commission chose mental health as the theme it wanted to support for the year and selected Action Mental Health as its nominated charity for one year.

Chair of the Assembly Commission and Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly William Hay MLA said at the launch, "In December last year, I used the annual switching on of the Christmas tree lights to recognise the work of mental health charities. We heard some inspirational stories at that event and I am therefore delighted that Action Mental Health is our first nominated Charity as part of this new Policy to provide some additional profile for that cause. Good mental health is fundamental to the health and well-being of every person in this society." David Babington, Chief Executive of Action Mental Health, said he was delighted to accept the honour on behalf of the charity's staff and clients:

"We are very pleased that the NI Assembly Commission has chosen to focus on and support mental health and well-being this year and we are delighted to be named as Charity of the Year. Our team in AMH is already hard at work organising a number of fundraising activities and events here at Parliament Buildings, and we look forward to working with, and having the support of the Assembly staff as well as the MLAs. We will also be running a number of joint initiatives with the Assembly to raise awareness, tackle stigma and promote positive mental health, in essence taking action on mental health."

During Mental Health Awareness Week, Action Mental Health visited Parliament Buildings to give mental health advice to MLAs and staff.

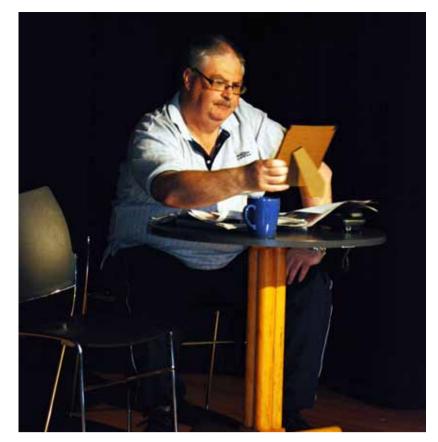
The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission had recently nominated AMH as its first ever Charity of the Year, and it was important to make Assembly staff aware of the dangers of stress, which can trigger more serious mental health problems, and introduce massage as an example of a "stress buster". 2 | April - June 2012

AMH New Horizons clients celebrate their achievements and showcase their new play "Behind the Mask" at the Old Courthouse Theatre, Antrim

A host of special guests joined Action Mental Health at The Old Courthouse Theatre in Antrim to celebrate the achievements of our Antrim clients over the last year. Guests were also treated to the premiere of the theatre group's newly written play "Behind the Mask".

The "Lights, Camera, Action" Project was funded by South Antrim Rural Network and Enkalon Foundation. Our clients worked alongside Patricia Downey from Spanner in the Works Theatre Company to write, produce and enact their play, "Behind the Mask" which aims to raise community awareness of the negative effects that loneliness and social isolation can have on an individual's mental health.

The Certificate Presentation followed the play and clients were rewarded for all their hard work over the past year. Certificates were presented by honorary guest, David Ford; MLA for South Antrim.



Rory Named CCEA NI Winner



Rory Farren, one of our talented clients from AMH New Horizons Foyle, was named NI Winner in Creative Crafts at the 2012 CCEA Celebrating Achievement Awards ceremony which was held at the Lisburn Island Centre. At this awards ceremony CCEA acknowledges those students who have excelled in skills-based, work-related and life-long learning gualifications.

Fermanagh's Day of Celebration

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE VISIT



Pauline Flanagan, Client Development Co-ordinator, from AMH New Horizons in Fermanagh, was invited to the opening of the new South West Acute Hospital and was delighted to be introduced to the HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and receive a royal hand shake!

Pauline was part of the Community Liason Forum which acted in an advisory capacity to the hospital's design team.

Some of our clients from AMH New Horizons in Newtownards joined the thousands of people at Stormont, for the Queen's Jubilee Garden Party and were able to present the Queen with some flowers.

John carries the Olympic Flame

This year the special guest at the Award Ceremony for clients attending AMH New Horizons in Enniskillen was Cathy Mullan, Public Health Agency.

A total of 209 certificates were presented to 58 clients, these were achieved over the six month period from October 2011 to March 2012. Certificates ranged from OCN Level 1 and 2 in courses such as Introduction to IT and Floristry to ECDL Advanced. Clients who had recently completed the Alcohol Awareness programme were also presented with certificates.





AMH Works is launched at Stormont



Action Mental Health, launched their new consultancy and training service, AMH Works, at an event in Parliament Buildings, attended by local business people and MLAs.

AMH Works is a bespoke service for local employers which will help improve the productivity of their staff while safeguarding their well-being.

AMH Works could be the first step in creating an open, supportive environment where employees can speak up about their stress and mental health problems.

Sponsors of the breakfast event were MLAs; Mickey Brady, Conall McDevitt, and Jim Wells. Speaking at the event was Gary Kane from AMH Works; Stephen Smyth, Servis Air; Newry Businessman, Peter Fitzsimmons and Jayne Forster from CIPD.

AMH - Highly Commended WEA 2012



Jim Wells MLA opens AMH Garden Centre





The Garden Centre in Downpatrick moved to its present site from the Downshire Hospital 17 years ago. The relaunch followed the first re-development of the centre since 1996, at a cost of £45k. AMH raised the funds, with additional support from the Garfield Weston Foundation and the John Acheson Foundation.

Local MLA, Jim Wells, was treated to a tour of the garden centre, and had a chance to chat to the staff and clients who work there. After officially opening the centre, he joined guests for tea in the sunshine.

Recognising AMH Volunteers

Companies representing sectors from pizzas to packaging, architecture to insurance, power to post, were lauded at the sixth annual Irish News Workplace & Employment Awards in the spectacular Titanic Belfast. AMH was highly commended in the Work Life and Well Being Category for Small and Medium Organisations, with GE Energy walking off with the top prize.



A special volunteer recognition event was held for clients at AMH New Horizons Downpatrick, to celebrate Volunteering Week. Special guest was Chair of the Social Development Committee, Alex Maskey MLA.

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A Great Day of Golf

AMH held the AMH Classic Golf Challenge in the beautiful setting of Warrenpoint Golf Club. Organised by the staff and clients of AMH Newry & Mourne with the help of Newry Employers' Forum and sponsored by McKeown's Solicitors, nearly thirty four-balls took part and there were plenty of prizes up for grabs - including a Mercedes for a hole in one! The weather was on our side - with not a drop of rain, but the wind on the 6th proved to be too tough for those competing in the hole in one competition for the Mercedes Saloon - better luck next time!

Golfers were treated to a BBQ at the 9th and dinner and entertainment at the 19th! Thanks to all those who took part, to all those who sponsored a tee box, donated prizes, gave up their time to organise and help out, to Agnew Mercedes Portadown and our sponsors McKeown's Solicitors.

All money raised will be used to continue the work AMH New Horizons do to enhance the quality of life and employability of local people with mental health needs.



AMH OPENS IN BELFAST CITY CENTRE



Premier Inn at AMH



AMH took part in a recruitment drive for the Maiden City's newest hotel - Premier Inn at Crescent Link.

AMH New Horizons Foyle hosted a Premier Inn Information Session for the disability sector. Approximately 60 people attended the session. Edyth Dunlop NIUSE introduced guest speaker Cathy Hopkins, Cluster General Manager for Premier Inn, who gave a presentation on the background to Premier Inn, the types of jobs available and qualities they are looking for in their staff for the new Inn.

The information session was aimed at potential applicants with a disability to hear firsthand what career opportunities are available at Premier Inn and to ask any questions.

Mark H Durkan visits AMH

Health Minister, Edwin Poots officially opened the AMH New Horizons service in Belfast City Centre's Fisherwick Building.

Action Mental Health Chief Executive David Babington said, "The Belfast service's re-location from Duncrue Industrial Estate to the city centre, enables us to attract clients from all over Belfast, it also gives us the opportunity to promote AMH in a prime city centre location and already we have seen an increase in enquiries. The new location has helped us to source more appropriate training placements and employment opportunities for our clients".



The Granite Challenge



Even though we say so ourselves, the Granite Challenge was great! Over 70 cyclists took part in the 55 mile route over the Mourne Mountains, and were rewarded with a tea stop at the top of Spelga – with homemade traybakes – and a warm bowl of homemade soup at the finishing line. Lots of money was raised for AMH, so a big thank you to all who helped out and took part. Due to its success this will be an annual event every October. We're having lots of requests for more cycling events – so watch this space!

"Thanks for a great cycle today. Organisation was first class and it was only surpassed by the buns, soup, scones, pancakes and much more." Daryll Madine "Great route, very well organised and a nice bowl of homemade soup at finish. Hopefully this will be on again next year!" Damian Fegan

World Mental Health Day - "Challenging Stigma, Raising Awareness and Promoting Discussion"

To celebrate World Mental Health Day, on 10th October, four mental health charities; Action Mental Health, Aware Defeat Depression, Cause and Mindwise joined forces with the Royal College of Psychiatrists in N.Ireland to host an event in Queen's Riddel Hall.

The packed programme provided an opportunity for each organisation to contribute an item and the issues were explored through a range of different media, including drama, film and mime. The event ended with a discussion about the essential role journalists play in the public perception of mental illness. Taking part were psychiatrists and representatives from the local media with questions from the audience. The event was opened by the Minister for Health, Edwin Poots MLA.



Runher with Health in Mind





Some of the ladies from AMH (Tricia Browne, Amanda Barrett, Sandy Webb and Bernie Best) joined their Health in Mind Partners – Aware Defeat Depression, Libraries NI, Mindwise & Cause for the Runher event at Stormont. The 5k and 10k run was a ladies– only event and was a great way to kick off World Mental Health Week!

6 | October - December 2012

Sweeping away stigma



This year, AMH had a host of events taking place all over Northern Ireland during the week of World Mental Health Day including "The Great Push for Mental Health - Don't Lose Your Marbles" event in the Great Hall in Parliament Buildings.

"Don't Lose Your Marbles" was a fun event, created by our clients in Foyle, in which teams and individuals had to steer their way through an obstacle course while holding on to their marbles!

Each cone represents one of life's obstacles such as debt, bereavement, or illness – events which can have a detrimental effect on our mental health. The event was an interactive way of celebrating World Mental Health Day and raising awareness of mental health. By being aware of our own mental health, we can build resilience to; and learn to cope better, with what life may throw at us.

MLAs and Northern Ireland Assembly staff joined in the fun with clients from AMH as well as some Ministers! Speaker of the Assembly, William Hay, MLA opened the event, and Chair of the Health Committee, Sue Ramsay MLA acted as commentator!

WMHD in Fermanagh



HEALTH IN MIND EVENT!



Health in Mind, a partnership between AMH, Libraries NI, Cause, Mindwise and Aware Defeat Depression held a celebratory event to mark World Mental Health Day in Finaghy Library.

The 5 partner organisations are funded through the Big Lottery Fund Live and Learn Programme.

Guests had the opportunity to browse a range of information stands highlighting the practical support that is available to people with mental health issues and their carers. There were talks on a range of well-being themes from Nutrition – Mood & Food to Stress Management and Relaxation; there were also taster sessions of Laughter Yoga and Zumba to enjoy and Rhythm and Rhyme for the children. Patricia Canning from the Reader Organisation also read aloud from inspiring and thought-provoking books.

Jonathan Bell MLA opens AMH Central



AMH New Horizons Fermanagh had a whole week of events planned to celebrate World Mental Health Day. They kicked off with a Health Fair, followed by a Carer's Event, Workshops for Young Adults, a Volunteer Celebration Day and rounding off the week with a CSE celebration event for clients and staff – Phew! Local MLA and Junior Minister Jonathan Bell officially opened the new AMH Central Offices adjacent to the AMH New Horizons service in Newtownards. The Central Offices will house the support functions of the organisation – HR, Communications, Finance, IT and the Chief Executive's office.

Jonathan was given a tour of the offices and visited the New Horizons service where he had a go at archery, baking and IT.

Protecting Life



AMH MensSana and PIPS Newry & Mourne were awarded the contract to provide the Protect Life service, helping individuals and community groups with suicide and self-harm prevention in Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Dungannon and South Tyrone, and Newry and Mourne.

The Protect Life Resource Service has a signposting element, providing individuals and community groups with a valuable point of contact and sources of support regarding suicide and self harm prevention and mental health. The Service is funded by the Public Health Agency.



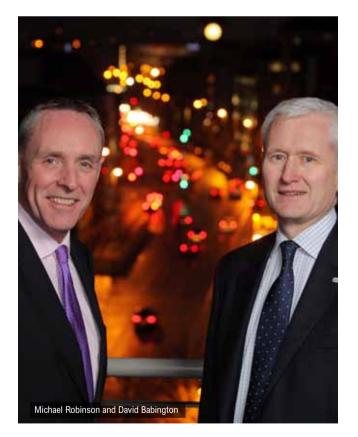
STRESS AWARENESS DAY 2012

Stress affects us all and no more so than in the workplace. According to nidirect, 1 in 5 people suffers from workplace stress, with half a million people reporting that they have become ill as a result. With the economic downturn, stress management has never been more relevant than it is today.

Stress Awareness Day aims to promote awareness of these challenges, and to help individuals and organisations in changing behaviours and lifestyles which may lead to excessive stress. Unmanaged stress can develop into mental illnesses, which affect nearly 12% of the world's population – about 450 million people – with one out of every four people around the world experiencing a mental illness.

This year Action Mental Health hosted a lunch time workshop to mark Stress Awareness Day in Newtownards Town Hall in conjunction with Ards Borough Council.

Law Society NI's Charity of the Year



Employment and Learning Minister, Dr Stephen Farry, formally launched a new disability employment programme entitled Work Connect.

The Work Connect programme, offers an individually tailored programme providing pre-employment and short-term in-work support, as well as specific help with confidence building, job searching, motivation, work experience and short training personal development needs.

The programme is delivered by Supported Employment Solutions (SES), a consortium of seven specialist disability organisations.

Action Mental Health jointly leads the consortium with The Cedar Foundation. Mencap, NOW, The Orchardville Society, RNIB (NI) and Action on Hearing Loss are the other partners.

The President of the Law Society NI, Michael Robinson nominated Action Mental Health as his Charity for 2013.

At the launch, the President of the Law Society of Northern Ireland, Mr Michael Robinson said; "The Law Society of Northern Ireland is delighted to be working in partnership with Action Mental Health as our chosen charity of the year. We look forward to working with AMH to raise much needed funds to support the invaluable work which they undertake".

AMH Research Launch



AMH launched research findings demonstrating social and economic savings made through client engagement with their New Horizons programme.

Investment in such programmes could help address as much as £50 million of the cost of mental health problems in Northern Ireland annually.

The magnitude of savings to the Health Service and the Exchequer, presents a very strong case for changing the way services are funded; requiring recurrent, mainstream Government investment in these cost-saving programmes which both improve mental health while reducing costs. This is particularly relevant in light of the Review of Health & Social Care in NI report Transforming Your Care, with the move towards providing services in the community and a greater level of involvement of the third sector.

Action Mental Health believes that, in these times of economic downturn, it is even more important to focus what resources are available on quality programmes that can produce benefits in the long-term to health, wellbeing and the economy as a whole.

Ahead of the event, CEO David Babington said, "Prevalence of mental illness in Northern Ireland is higher than in the rest of the UK and in light of the current economic environment, it is predicted that demand in services will only continue to increase. Our New Horizons programme ticks many of the boxes "Transforming Your Care" has set out for the future shape of services, for example; reducing the need for health and social services, reducing hospital re-admissions, improving mental health, increasing employment rates and reducing welfare benefits. Our programme also provides a hidden but valuable gain in the form of respite for carers. We now have hard evidence that investment in AMH is a better use of the limited public funds we have to help people recover from mental ill health".

The launch took place in the Stormont Hotel. The Key Note speaker was Professor Hugh McKenna from the University of Ulster and authors of the research report, Dr Karen Casson and Dr Derek McLaughlin, also from the University of Ulster, presented their findings. The event was opened by Health Minister Edwin Poots. You can download the full research report and executive summary from the AMH website.

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

This year Action Mental Health held their Tughan Employment Conference – Building Resilience in the Workplace – at The Belfast Harbour Commissioner's Office.



This year the key note speaker was Professor Derek Mowbray. Derek is a Chartered Psychologist and Chartered Scientist, with a doctorate in the psychology of leadership. He specialises in the primary prevention of psychological distress at work, with a focus on promoting well-being and performance.

Also joining us from London was the CIPD's Jonny Gifford. Johnny joined the CIPD in London as Research Adviser in 2012. His research covers a number of aspects of employment relations, people management and organisational development.

Our Conference Chair was BBC's Mark Sidebottom and Special Guest Speaker was Dr Stephen Farry MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning.

The event finished with an insightful panel discussion and the audience was also treated to a session of Laughter Yoga!

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Shine A Light Campaign - Shining a Light on Mental Illness at Christmas



The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission and its charity of the year – Action Mental Health (AMH), helped to "Shine a light on mental illness" at Christmas.

"The Shine a Light" Campaign was launched by William Hay MLA, Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, on World Mental Health Day in October. Hundreds of lights were sponsored, by members of the public as well as those working in Parliament Buildings. Following the Assembly's annual Christmas Carol Service at Parliament Buildings, Assembly staff and MLAs gathered to place the lights in Stormont Estate in front of Parliament Buildings, each light symbolising a Christmas message of support and hope to those living with mental ill health.





Merry Christmas from Fermanagh!

AMH New Horizons Fermanagh kicked off their Christmas Festivities with the lighting up of Northern Ireland's most unique Christmas tree - a spectacular 8ft tall, hand knitted craft



AMH's Joanna Miskelly meets Fr Eugene O'Hagan one of the singing Priests!

In December the Church of St George in High Street, Belfast was alive with the sound of music as The Law Society Choir – "The Pro Bonos" – performed in their service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

The concert was followed by a retiring collection for Action Mental Health, chosen by The President, Mr Michael Robinson as his charity for 2013, with many generous envelopes collected by AMH staff in their "Santa Sacks!" An after party and supper was held in The Ivory Bar and Restaurant at Victoria Square.

extravaganza.

The Fermanagh service, which was also celebrating its 20th anniversary, created the breathtaking Christmas tree as a symbol of positive Mental Health and Emotional Well Being. The tree which was handcrafted by clients in the Multi Skills department in New Horizons Fermanagh was created from knitted squares, with each square representing every client which New Horizons Fermanagh has supported over the past 20 years. Following the Christmas festivities the tree was dismantled with all the knitted squares being used to produce baby blankets for the Smile Foundation which supports babies in the orphanages in Romania.

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"What's Your Story?" City of Culture



AMH New Horizons Foyle was awarded funds through the Big Lottery and Arts Council for Northern Ireland to create a piece of art made from... books!

The funding which was made available through the "Culture for All" grants scheme was a unique opportunity for people from all over Northern Ireland to contribute a book for inclusion in the "What's Your Story?" sofa.

The donated books will all share a link; how each book reflects our cultural heritage through the generations. There has been lots of publicity to generate donations of books of all shapes and sizes with collection/drop off points in businesses and shops across NI.

The final art piece, which has a target date of August for completion, will then be displayed in a prominent location to celebrate the City of Culture. Funding has also been secured to ensure that the piece is able to travel to several different locations outside of the City area.



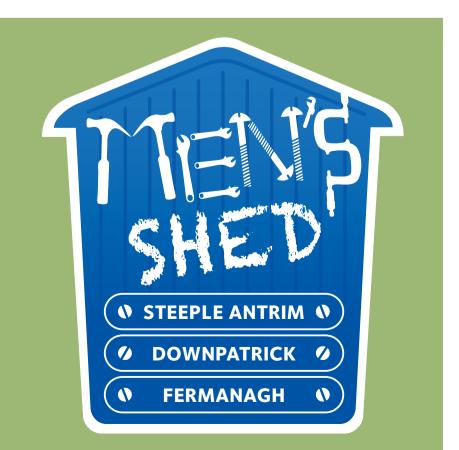


AND THE WINNER IS...



... Managing The Challenge, winner of the Innovations in Parkinson's Disease Award.

The Northern Ireland Healthcare Awards took place at the Europa Hotel in Belfast, giving healthcare professionals in NI the opportunity to highlight their own work and to be applauded by their peers for their achievements. "Managing the Challenge" is a licensed self management course, funded by the Western Health and Social Services Trust, managed and delivered by Action Mental Health and supported by the Long Term Conditions Alliance Northern Ireland.



Men's Shed

To boost the health and self esteem of older men in Fermanagh, Antrim and Downpatrick, AMH were awarded a grant from the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Out: Connecting Older People Programme. AMH has established Men's Sheds projects in the three areas. Men's Shed brings together men age 60 years and over to share their skills, have a laugh and a cup of tea while working on practical activities of their choice.

AMH will work in partnership with Age NI, Volunteer Now and local Health and Social Care Trusts for more information log on to our website www.amh.org.uk/mensshed and follow the Sheds on Facebook.

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Style Comes To Stormont



On a beautiful Spring evening in March, AMH hosted a glamorous night of fashion in the prestigious surroundings of the Great Hall in Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

"Style at Stormont" was supported by some of Northern Ireland's best known names in the fashion and beauty world including retailer House of Fraser and Tracey Hall's Style Academy models who were prepared for the catwalk by the talents of the Peter Mark hair team, award-winning make-up artist Paddy McGurgan, (after a lovely facial treatment from the therapists at Creme de la Mer!) and House of Fraser Stylist Jemma Cousins.

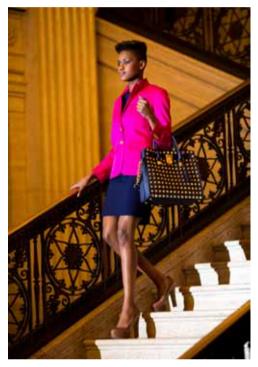
The fashion industry is one based on beauty, judgement and perfection. As a result, the industry often carries the burden of blame in society for propagating negative self-image (of young women in particular). However, a growing number of women are finding solace from their mental health issues in the worlds of fashion and the internet, as exemplified by the rise in "blogging". One such local blogger, Gemma-Louise Bond (21), bravely spoke at the event revealing her own mental health challenges and the role her blog played in her recovery explaining: "It keeps my morale up and gives me a great focus."

The event was opened by our CEO David Babington and Pam Brown, MLA and member of the Health Committee. The night began with a drinks reception and entertainment provided by James Huish, Belfast's very own "Bublé" who serenaded some of the guests.

Jason Shankey, Peter Mark, Zen Restaurant and Aura Day Spa were among many local businesses who donated raffle prizes. All proceeds were raised in aid of AMH.









The fashionable audience comprised of some local fashion writers and bloggers including Louise Vance who held a "Best Dressed" competition for guests and delighted the winner with a hamper from Dolly's Retro Sweets and a handmade necklace from Rebro Jewellery.

AMH staff took part in every aspect from organising and promoting the event, to volunteering on the night as ticket agents, ushers and model dressers. Two staff members and two clients from the Newtownards unit also dressed to impress in dinner suits from House of Fraser to help the models down the marble staircase in the grand finale.

Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, volunteered and supported this special event!

Social Media

You can now follow us on:



For more information and contact details visit







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