



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **Dad Runs 1000 Miles To Help Daughter**

A DAD is running 1000 miles for his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday to change the way people think about mental health, after seeing his daughter struggle to get help.

Jim McClung hadn't seen his daughter Margaret for 27 years after family circumstances kept them apart, but instantly recognised that she was struggling with her mental health.

However Margaret had been finding it difficult to tell people how she was feeling, worried about the reaction she would receive.

Although Margaret had experienced anxiety since she was in school she hadn't been able to get the help she needed and eventually developed an eating disorder, linked to the death of her grandparents.

Recognising that Margaret was struggling Jim was the first to ask her if she was okay, and encouraged her to get help. But after seeing the stigma around mental health stopping Margaret from telling anyone what was going on, Jim decided that he wanted to do something to get people talking.

With his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday coming up he decided to run 1000 miles over 2017 and linked in with mental health organisation See Me, to show that it is okay not to be okay. This weekend he is running the Edinburgh Half Marathon, and Margaret is joining him, running the 10k.

Machine operator Jim, 49, from Ayrshire, said: "A couple of years ago I met my daughter for the first time in 27 years. Having met her and talked to her I knew that physically and mentally she was unwell.

"It was really difficult for Margaret to speak about it, she was worried that she would be seen as an attention seeker. So I told her she could speak to me. From there we got her to her GP. She was experiencing a few things, but was struggling mainly with her eating.

"Margaret is a very clever girl but she has had a lot of problems through her life which she didn't have coping mechanisms for. We didn't see each other for 27 years, I think that contributed.

"She wasn't encouraged to speak about how she was feeling or to get help."

Margaret, 30, said: "From being at school I have always had problems.

"My grandparents had a huge role in my life and after they died I felt like I couldn't cope any more. I didn't know what to do and the eating disorder got much worse. Eating was the only thing I had control over, I couldn't control that the people who brought me up weren't there anymore.

"Seeing my dad after that length of time was good, but I was really nervous. For a long period I had thought I was fine and no one would notice I was unwell, but he saw straight away that something wasn't right."

With Jim's help Margaret is now in recovery, and has started joining him on runs, finding the structure it gives helps her mental health and gives the pair time together.

Margaret said: "I have felt better in myself this year and better about running. I'm feeling really positive about doing it and it is something to focus on.

"I'm excited, it is really good for me and dad to be doing stuff like this together."

Calum Irving, See Me director, said: "Jim and Margaret's story shows how important it is that we are all confident speaking about mental health. It only takes one person to make a difference and get someone the help they need.

"But there are so many people, like Margaret, all over Scotland who are worried about telling anyone what they go through because of the reaction they will receive.

"We all have mental health, so we should all be able to speak about it and support each other."

Jim is fundraising for See Me and you can donate here  
[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/James-Mcclung2](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/James-Mcclung2)

**ENDS...**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**NICK JEDRZEJEWSKI [Communications Manager]**

**0141 530 1049/07710 387 517**

**Nick.jedrzejewski@seemescotland.org**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. See Me is Scotland's National programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination, enabling people who experience mental health problems to live fulfilled lives.

### **We do this by:**

- Mobilising people to work together and lead a movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination
  - Working with people to change negative behaviour towards those with mental health problems
  - Ensuring that the human rights of people with mental health problems are respected and upheld
2. Follow See Me on Twitter @seemescotland or find us on Facebook: Facebook/seemescotland, <http://seemescotland.tumblr.com/>, <https://medium.com/@seemescotland>, or at [www.seemescotland.org](http://www.seemescotland.org)
  3. See Me is managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation and funded by Scottish Government and Comic Relief
  4. We work in partnerships with VOX, the Scottish Mental Health Cooperative and the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival to bring about a meaningful change in behaviours.

