



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Community Comes Together to Show It's Okay to Speak About Mental Health

SOUP and Pudding have brought the people of Stornoway together to talk openly about mental health.

The Western Isles Association for Mental Health (WIAMH) and national anti-stigma programme, See Me, came together to change the way people think about mental health.

See Me's community champion in Stornoway, Murdo Macleod has been working over the last year and a half to tackle stigma. Last summer he held a Pass the Badge event in Stornoway, where mental health messages were shared in English and Gaelic.

This year Murdo has been working with the WIAMH to arrange A Big Lunch for Mental Health on Saturday (June 17th). It aimed to show that mental health can be a topic of everyday conversation and that it is okay not to be okay.

The event, which attracted 150 people, took place MA Macleod Memorial Hall. To help get the chats going Soup and Pudding was served.

Del Gunn, from WIAMH, said: "At the Association, we think it is important to bring people together and get them talking more openly about mental health. This enables concerned neighbours, friends and families to be more comfortable in helping people who may be experiencing problems in their own communities.

"Bringing people together is a real aid to preventing ill health. Talking with someone else about their mental health creates resilience and a 'safety net', which can reduce potentially harmful situations.

"We are great believers that people can and do recover from mental ill health. We also feel that talking and sharing can prevent a problem becoming a crisis."

Calum Irving, See Me director, said: "Bringing communities together and showing that it is okay to speak about mental health is vital.

“The work by Murdo and the Western Isles Association for Mental Health is fantastic. We all have mental health and all need to be comfortable talking about it.”

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
 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.



