PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

World Mental Health Day Call to Start Conversations in Scotland

MENTAL health is part of everyone's day to day life, it affects all of us and we all need to talk about it, starting on World Mental Health Day.

See Me, the national programme to end mental health discrimination, has called on communities, workplaces, schools and care providers in Scotland to lead the way in showing that we all have mental health and should all talk about it.

They have made the call around this year's World Mental Health Day, on October 10th, where people are being encouraged to speak more openly about mental health.

Lynsey from Scotland, who volunteers with See Me said that speaking about what you have gone through, can help other people experiencing something similar.

She said: "Since I was diagnosed with an eating disorder I have felt comfortable speaking about it and I am not ashamed about it at all. I like to share where I was and where I am now and be able to speak about the journey I have had.

"However I did experience stigma, in my workplace my employer did not understand my illness. No help was given to me and I was so unwell I was almost hospitalised.

"They did not appear to bother about me in this capacity and in my opinion ignored my illness as I performed well for the business.

"This area needs improved without doubt. I know help is available and urge anyone in a similar position to seek help as soon as possible in order to get full health and remain well.

"Mental health conditions are so important therefore the need for them to be discussed is crucial and I feel by speaking about it openly and through social media and press releases this will help."

To make a real change See Me are also calling for people to join them in a movement to end mental health discrimination. This could involve taking action, ranging from directly challenging someone they see discriminating, to supporting someone who is struggling due to a mental health problem.

Calum Irving, See Me director, said: "We all have mental health and it impacts on every aspect of our lives, including where we live, learn, work and receive care, but when we struggle with our mental health we often face stigma and discrimination.

"However we each have the power to make a positive difference in the lives of our families, friends and colleagues when they are affected by mental health problems.

"This World Mental Health Day we want people to join a social movement to end mental health stigma by taking action and pledging your support."

Maureen Watt, the Scottish Government Minister for Mental Health, echoed the call, saying: "For all of us, positive attitudes to mental health can have a really helpful impact on the people around us.

"See Me has been vital in efforts over the last several years to promote improved attitudes to mental health and mental illness and, as we have said in our Mental Health Strategy, we will ensure its work continues and develops."

You can find out more and join the movement at https://www.seemescotland.org/our-movement-for-change/join-the-movement/.

ENDS...

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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.