



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PICS**

#### **For Immediate Release**

### **Walk a Mile in Ayr To Tackle Mental Health Stigma**

THE LANG Scots Mile is set to become a mile to talk about mental health and tackle stigma during this year's Mental Health Awareness Week.

A Walk a Mile event is being arranged by See Me Community Champion, Lesley Maclure, who wants to get people in Ayr talking about mental health.

The aim of the event, on May 14th, is to show that mental health can be a topic of everyday conversations, and we are all responsible for creating positive attitudes around it.

The Walk a Mile campaign was created by See Me with activist Chris McCullough Young, based on his walk around the edge of Scotland, where he spoke to everyone he met about mental health, to change attitudes one conversation at a time.

So far thousands of people have taken part in Walks across Scotland, bringing together health professionals, carers, people with lived experience of mental health problems, students, or anyone who cares about tackling mental health discrimination, to break down barriers as they walk a mile in each other's shoes.

Lesley, who is from Ayr, said: "Everyone is welcome to come along to open conversations about mental health issues and to breakdown the stigma.

"As a long-term mental health nurse, I have always been interested in the stigma around it. Having been a nurse for over 30 years I have been involved since the old asylum days and have seen the vast improvement in the stigma of towards people with mental health issues. But much more needs to be done."

Calum Irving, See Me director, said: "Mental health affects all of us, but there is still a stigma around it. To tackle this properly people need to understand that it is okay not to be okay.

"One of the best ways to change how people think and behave is to make mental health a topic in day to day conversation, rather than a taboo subject people don't want to talk about."

The Walk will begin at 11am from the 'start pole' of 'Lang Scots Mile' next to the Citadel site of the Citadel leisure centre. Find out more at <https://www.seemescotland.org/movement-for-change/events/>.

## **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](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.

