



Self Management Fund –Special Report

Skills Development and Employability

January 2011

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Overview and Background

'Gaun Yersel' the Self Management Strategy for Scotland¹ recognises that people living with long term conditions, and their unpaid carers, should be involved in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of the services that are intended to support them.

This became a key criteria of the Self Management Fund, and the 81 successful projects all have the lived experience of people living with long term conditions, and their unpaid carers, at their heart.

The Self Management Fund has been available to voluntary organisations and community groups throughout Scotland since March 2009. The Self Management Fund has been set-up and administered by Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS).

The Self Management Fund has been made possible through funding from the Scottish Government. £4 million was available over two financial years - £2 million across 2009/10 and £2 million across 2010/2011.

The aim has been to improve work to expand the capacity of people living with long term conditions to learn more about the management of their conditions and to become active partners in their own care.

Skills Development and Employability

The Self Management Fund supports a wide range of projects and organisations. Many support people living with long term conditions, and their unpaid carers, to work in partnership with health and social care professionals.

This Special Report looks at how the Self Management Fund has supported the development of new skills leading to increased employability for people living with long term conditions, and their unpaid carers.

This report is the second of a series of Special Reports which highlight some of the key themes of the Interim Evaluation Report launched in October 2010². A full evaluation report will be produced at the end of the current funding period, June 2011.

¹ http://www.ltcas.org.uk/self_man_gaun.html

² http://www.ltcas.org.uk/self_basics.html

Skills Development and Employability in context

Employability consistently emerges as a key concern for people living with long term conditions. This is becoming even more the case with the tightening labour market and welfare reforms. While employment is not the right thing for everyone living with a long term condition, most people can work and want to work.

The far lower employment rates among people with long term conditions reflect a lack of equal access to the labour market and more needs to be done to;

- support people to maintain/enter work
- improve the way in which employers deal with/support employees/candidates with long term conditions

Principles of Self Management

The Principles of Self Management (see appendix 1) were developed by LTCAS to encapsulate the core messages of the Self Management Strategy.

The Principles provide a useful tool for underpinning any work being done to support self management. The Principles reflect the approach people need from services and practitioners to enable them to take on the responsibility of self management.

For many people living with long term conditions, employment is a major issue. Many of the skills and capacity that people are able to develop through self management can also address barriers to work related activities, for example rebuilding self confidence and self esteem, focusing on what you are able to do, and learning new skills.

The second of the Principles is;

'I am a whole person and this is for my whole life'

The Principles also form the basic criteria of the Self Management Fund for Scotland.

Self Management Fund

The diversity of ideas and innovations found across the 81 Self Management Fund projects has been a key to their collective success. All the projects work in a person-centred way to promote

self management and many of the projects have sought to additionally develop skills and employability for those involved.

The Self Management Fund itself has so far

- Created **104 jobs** in the voluntary and community sector
- Created at least **386 volunteering opportunities** throughout Scotland

Skills development and employability are reflected in projects in a variety of ways;

- by illustrating the importance of peer support
- by encouraging people to develop new skills
- by illustrating the value of 'dual support' – developing skills to support a person's own self management as well as others
- by recognising the impact of emotional and psychological support

The 81 funded projects, and other examples of self management support across partnerships within the voluntary, health and social care sectors, have illustrated an assets based approach to skills development and employability.

People with Long Term Conditions – Employment

Employment is one factor that lies at the heart of the relationship between socio-economic and health outcomes. People with long term conditions not only experience higher levels of unemployment, they are also more likely to occupy lower-status, less secure jobs.

Common barriers to employment include: limitations as a result of a person's condition (sometimes resulting in no longer being able to do the job they are qualified for or experienced in); lack of flexibility making work unsustainable alongside medical appointments or fluctuating symptoms; and lack of understanding, negative attitudes and discrimination from colleagues, employers and potential employers³.

Skills Development and Employability Support

Skills Development Scotland

³ [LTCAS Manifesto Evidence Report](#) 2011

Created in 2008, Skills Development Scotland⁴ is a non-departmental public body which brought together the careers, skills, training and funding services of Careers Scotland, ILA Scotland, Get Ready for Work, Modern Apprenticeships, Skillseekers, learndirect Scotland, the Big Plus, Training for Work and the skills intervention arms of Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

Job Centre Plus Condition Management Programme

The Condition Management Programme⁵ aims to help people better understand and manage their long term conditions. It uses the principles and approach of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Health professionals deliver the programme and tailor it to meet people's needs.

The future of this programme is currently unclear.

Volunteer Development Scotland

Volunteer Development Scotland⁶ leads the way in informing and modernising approaches to volunteering policy, enhancing practice and improving the quality of the volunteering experience for people living in Scotland.

Employability Framework for Scotland

Workforce Plus⁷ is the Scottish Government Employability Framework and was launched in 2006. It sets out a framework to support partnership working at a local level to tackle long term unemployment and in particular hard to reach groups. The framework contains a number of key strands of activity:

- Local Partnerships
- National Partnership - Scottish Employability Forum
- Funding and Innovation
- Policy Linkages - health, young people
- The Workforce Plus Team

Workforce Plus sets out the approach to helping people in Scotland move from welfare to work. It made a commitment to provide national leadership and support local action to address the challenges facing us all to improve people's employability through a range of services.

⁴ [Skills Development Scotland](#) website

⁵ [Pathways to Work](#) web-page

⁶ [Volunteer Development Scotland](#) website

⁷ [Workforce Plus](#) web-page

Learning from the Self Management Fund

Peer Support

'It's great to be in a group with others who understand – I'm not the 'only one' living with this' – Revive MS Support course participant

The value of peer led support, education and awareness raising can be seen directly and indirectly in many projects. Many participants of the projects report that they gain strength and inspiration from sharing and learning with other people with similar experiences – see **IntoWork West Lothian** and **Carr-Gomm Scotland** case studies.

Some further examples of are;

- **Healthy Valleys** have developed a stress management programme and made it available to those living with any long term condition. On completion of the course participants have three options; to be trained as course facilitators, join a regular Tai Chi course run by a local instructor from the centre or to attend peer support group
- **Solar Bear** are running a therapeutic theatre programme for young people living with mental health conditions, their friends and families
- **Dunoon Link Club** have formalised their mental health outreach service, peer support and one-to-one counselling support. Volunteers who run the programmes currently will be given formal training to ensure sustainability of the service

Developing New Skills

'Pink Ladies has helped me in so many ways to find the strength and confidence in me to rebuild my life I have learnt that it is ok to be myself and have actually begun to really like the person I am' – Pink Ladies course participant

Many projects are encouraging people to learn new skills that will benefit their everyday lives, support their self management and equip them to work towards re-entering employment – see **Carr-Gomm Scotland** case study.

Some further examples are;

- **Speakability** have developed a programme which supports people living with Aphasia to communicate effectively using computers. The organisation has worked collaboratively with technology and speech therapy experts from Queen Margaret University to create the programme. The course enables those with little or no communication abilities, as the result of a stroke, to self manage using specialised technology
- **Castlemilk Stress Centre** are developing their existing self management programme to give participants the opportunity to train and deliver certain aspects of the new course
- **Mental Health Aberdeen** have set up an independent living skills programme for those making the transition from hospital or supported living to independent living

Dual Self Management Support

'Being one of the hub editors has been such a great experience for me. Its given me hope and built my confidence in my own ability, I am learning new skills and hope to use my new experiences to help me return to work'. – Rebecca Young, Action for M.E. project participant

Several projects have developed initiatives which allow people living with long term conditions to develop their skills not only to support their own self management, but to then go on and use the skills and experiences to support other people to self manage – see **SKS Scotland** and **Carr-Gomm Scotland** case studies.

Some further examples are;

- **EdMEsh** who are developing a programme in which people living with M.E. in Lothian are trained to deliver complementary therapies which are known to benefit people with the condition. These individuals then use their new skills to provide therapy sessions to others living with the condition
- **Drumchapel Disabled Action 2** are improving the physical capabilities of adults with physical disabilities through music and movement sessions
- **Diabetes UK Scotland** are working to increase awareness of Diabetes self management among the South Asian community

of Glasgow by supporting people living with diabetes and their families to be 'community champions' for self management

Emotional & Psychological Support

'Your Call has made me stronger. It has helped me deal with emotional issues and overcome my fears. It has boosted to my confidence' – Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living Service user

For many people living with long term conditions, the emotional and psychological impact of their condition creates a barrier to them maintaining or finding jobs.

Many projects are working to support people to raise their confidence, raise their self-esteem, reduce their anxiety, reduce feelings of depression and realise their potential – see **SKS Scotland, IntoWork West Lothian, and Carr-Gomm Scotland** case studies.

Some further examples are;

- **COMAS** are running a 'serenity café' for those living with an addiction in addition to mental health conditions, offering formalised peer support, information and advice on self management
- **Pink Ladies** have developed peer-led self management programmes for women living with anxiety and depression. The group has run two successful courses and has had an overwhelming response for courses which are due to run later this year
- **Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCIL)** who are developing their national peer led telephone counselling service to encourage people living with long term conditions to self manage through better understanding of the physical, emotional and psychological aspects of their conditions

More details of all the improvement tools used by the funded projects, and the results they produce, will be available in the Final Evaluation Report for this allocation of the Self Management Fund after June 2011.

Conclusions

The Self Management Fund for Scotland has enabled projects to look at a range of initiatives to support people living with long term conditions to develop their skills and employability. The Fund is capturing the learning from these projects, and has so far shown the value of;

- involving peers in delivery, support and sharing of experiences
- encouraging people to develop new skills, and to realise skills they had neglected
- encouraging people to 'give back' by developing skills for their own self management, and to support the self management of others
- recognising the emotional and psychological impact of living with long term conditions, and the support that is required to develop people's skills and employability

Living with a long term condition will have a profound impact on many aspects of life. On average, someone with a long term condition is:

- less likely to be employed, have savings or own their own home
- more likely to have fewer educational qualifications and a lower household income
- more likely to live in areas associated with deprivation
- more likely to experience financial difficulty including debt and inability to meet health related costs

The statistics suggest that almost everyone living in Scotland will, at some stage in their life, be affected by long term conditions.

It is vital, therefore, that support and services for people living with long term conditions continues to be person-centred, built upon positive community assets and involve people themselves in their design, delivery, evaluation and implementation.

For further information about LTCAS - our work and our membership – the Self Management Projects and the continued development of the Self Management Fund for Scotland, please see our website www.ltcas.org.uk

Case Studies



The following Case Studies illustrate the impact, emerging themes and learning points that the Self Management Fund in relation to skills development and employability.

- SKS Scotland
- IntoWork West Lothian
- Carr-Gomm

The Case Studies also demonstrate the impact that LTCAS has had on shaping, expanding and sustaining these themes.

SKS Scotland



SKS Scotland is an independent social enterprise supporting the third sector to achieve its goals, promoting joint working across sectors. The objective of SKS Scotland is to be able to provide employment options for people living with M.E and other long term conditions.

Shona Sinclair, Director, SKS Scotland

Shona Sinclair set up SKS Scotland building on her own experience of living with M.E. since 2002. SKS Scotland provides a wide range of business support services to the third sector on a contract and project led basis. The delivery of the work allows for people to work flexibly in terms of when and how they do it, a large part of their work can often be carried out in a home environment at times that suit the individual. This meets the needs of people with M.E. in self managing their condition.

'I felt emotional when I saw the Self Management Fund details – this is what I'd been doing for years without any recognition' – Shona Sinclair, SKS Scotland

Shona knew from her own experience, and from talking to members of M.E. groups around the country, that people living with M.E were aware of self management skills such as pacing and planning, but these approaches were not easy to employ in the work environment.

'In employability terms, people living with ME became invisible – if employers can't understand the issues they can't support anyone' – Shona Sinclair, SKS Scotland

97% of people diagnosed with M.E have their employment affected as a result of their condition, with 69% having to stop working altogether. SKS Scotland found that even when people successfully engage with self management strategies to allow them to return to work, their current working practices may not support their self management. Their action research project looks at the barriers and potential solutions to these to allow flexibility in work and working patterns which will enable successful employment outcomes.

'How can you engage socially again if you've been sleeping for 20 hours a day? I just wasn't sure how to build myself up again' – project participant

Shona contacted the LTCAS Grants Officer for some advice and support prior to submitting the application. Although the core idea was strong, Shona realised through discussion with the Grants Officer that she needed to take a step back, engage with local M.E. groups and organisations and clarify the steps she proposed to take to achieve her goals.

'I knew what I wanted to achieve, but without Jen's help I could never have found a clear pathway – she helped me to see the bigger picture and supported me to get there' – Shona Sinclair, SKS Scotland

In addition to demonstrating that a more flexible, person-centred model of employment can work for people living with M.E. and other long term conditions, SKS Scotland want to influence the attitudes of employers. If the model can be shown to work in a realistic way for both, SKS Scotland will be able to provide a beneficial vehicle for work opportunities, and a learning platform to share good practice linked to employability. SKS are committed to demonstrating that people living with long term conditions can be productive employees, remaining in control of the management of their condition and outputs at work.

'I feel strongly that we should look at issues from a personal experience viewpoint – I really want to lead an organisation that can truly support people at the end of the day' – Shona Sinclair, SKS Scotland

For more information please visit www.sksscotland.co.uk

IntoWork West Lothian



INTOWORK

Intowork West Lothian offers support to people with mental health issues, autistic spectrum disorders and acquired brain injuries. Using the Supported Employment model, the project is able to assist people significantly distanced from the labour market move into employment, or to offer support to individuals who become ill whilst in employment.

Anne Reid, Jim Campbell, Lorna Wood, IntoWork West Lothian

IntoWork West Lothian support people with complex needs to realise their potential, recover their quality lives and employment. IntoWork West Lothian had identified that 'wellbeing' was much more than an absence of symptoms, and more about people having the tools themselves to take part in their care. They applied to the Self Management Fund for their 'Getting Started' course which looks at self management techniques and employability related skills over eleven weeks.

'Within minutes of realising that the people in the room were in the same position as I was the nerves lessened'
– course participant

The funding has allowed IntoWork West Lothian to address the overall needs of the person, by bringing a mental health specialist, an Occupational Therapist and previous participants as volunteers into the team. Together they researched tools and techniques that would support people to feel less isolated, less negative and to combat feelings of despair.

'I now don't feel like an outcast, I learnt how to communicate in a group again' – course participant

Throughout the project, participants have been supported to identify new skills, and to value transferable skills that they possess already. IntoWork West Lothian offers ongoing support to encourage people to learn coping strategies to overcome barriers to progression. These barriers range from continued education and money management to advocacy and job search skills.

'I'm a lot more confident than before, I feel I am able to reach my goals and I know I am ready to start looking for work' – course participant

IntoWork West Lothian have found that having an Occupational Therapist as part of the team gives participants an instant access to clinical interventions, as opposed to joining lengthy NHS waiting lists. Participants are supported to make decisions for themselves and to access other services which are integrated, flexible, proactive and responsive to their needs.

'I've found goal setting and not being too ambitious most helpful, maybe previously it has been too stressful jobs that have brought on ill health' – course participant

Participants have benefited from having a basic structure to their day or week, as well as being able to interact socially with a group of people in a similar situation. Sharing these experiences has encouraged participants to feel more confident, to raise their expectations, to feel that they 'are worth something' again and to understand themselves, and their conditions, better.

During the project, IntoWork West Lothian have seen an increase in demand. As a result of the links made by the Occupational Therapist, there has been greater 'buy-in' from the NHS. This strong, integrated partnership has given the course more credibility and ultimately more benefits to the people they support.

IntoWork West Lothian would like to build on the success of their project by developing their ideas and taking forward their learning to continue to support their 'harder to reach' group.

'I now work 16 hours a week and I still have the added bonus of being able to call the team when I falter, when anxiety creeps in or I feel down' – previous course participant

For more information please visit www.intowork.org.uk

Carr-Gomm Scotland



Carr-Gomm Scotland

Person-Centred Support, Supported Living and Community Care Services

Carr-Gomm Scotland is a person-centred organisation that supports people to lead their lives safely and to do the things they want to do: in day-to-day living, in planning for the future and in realising dreams. Carr-Gomm Scotland do this by providing support at home and in supported services.

Kevin Fullerton, Community Development Worker, Carr-Gomm Scotland

Carr-Gomm Scotland provide support for people to find self management strategies which suit them best, encouraging people to take control of their own lives. They received feedback through focus groups and forums that people wanted to learn more about food and cookery. Carr-Gomm applied to the Self Management Fund for £9710 to deliver their 'Healthy Kitchen' project to support people to increase their food knowledge and cookery skills in Glasgow.

'I feel this has done a lot for my confidence, mixing with other people and getting out of the house' – project participant

Carr-Gomm Scotland wanted the course to be as peer-led as possible. They identified someone that they supported to be the chef on this project – supporting his own self management and employability. The chef was able to use his own lived experience in a real job opportunity. Carr-Gomm Scotland knew that by showing people how to cook the types of food they wanted to eat, there would be a higher chance of them using the skills at home. So, the types of food that the chef supported people to learn to prepare were decided by the group themselves.

'Before becoming involved in the Healthy Kitchen I just stayed in bed all day – I felt very self-conscious about meeting people and talking to them – I have now joined other workshops and have things to do every day' – project participant

People involved in the project have reported that they have made positive changes to their diet, and that they have felt confident to cook at home for themselves, and for other people. Many of those involved have had issues with social anxiety. People involved in the project have developed a sense of camaraderie, which has in turn led to people choosing to participate in other activities together.

The Healthy Kitchen was promoted through the local CHCP's in Glasgow and other mental health networks that Carr-Gomm Scotland are linked to. The project has offered people the opportunity to increase their cookery skills. During a regular slot each week, participants feedback to the group about what they have cooked at home. This builds on their team work, decision making and group discussions as part of the course. Carr-Gomm Scotland have been able to see the benefits for people re-acquainting themselves with social situations and building personal confidence.

'The Healthy Kitchen is important to me because it builds up my confidence and communication with others – this social anxiety has been a big part of my life' – project participant

The Healthy Kitchen has attracted interest from other parts of Glasgow and around the country. Carr-Gomm Scotland are looking at funding options to deliver their project in other locations. Carr-Gomm Scotland are looking to develop their learning from this project by investigating the possibility of creating a food based social enterprise. This project has helped them to understand how best to involve the people they support in future ventures.

'This project has opened up possibilities for people – in employment or volunteering and in developing their skills and confidence. The group support each other to get through their anxieties' – Kevin Fullerton, Community Development Worker

For more information please visit
www.carr-gommScotland.org.uk

Principles of Self Management

July 2008

Principles: Self Management Health, Social and Voluntary Sectors

"Be accountable to me and value my experience"

Evaluation systems should be ongoing and shaped by my experience. They should be non judgemental and focus on more than medical or financial outcomes.



"I am the leading partner in management of my health"

I am involved in my own care. I, those who care for me and organisations that represent me, shape new approaches to my care.

"I am a whole person and this is for my whole life"

My needs are met along my life journey with support aimed at improving my physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing.

"Self management is not a replacement for services. Gaun yersel doesn't mean going it alone"

Self management does not mean managing my long term condition alone. It's about self determination in partnership with supporters.

"Clear information helps me make decisions that are right for me"

Professionals communicate with me effectively. They help ensure I have high quality, accessible information. They also support my right to make decisions.

Appendix 2

Useful Links

Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland

www.ltcas.org.uk

Gaun Yersel – the Self Management Strategy for Long Term Conditions in Scotland

www.ltcas.org.uk/self_man_gaun.html

Long Term Conditions Action Plan

http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2009_23.pdf

Long Term Conditions Community

www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/ltc.aspx