



**Distress Brief Intervention**  
Connected Compassionate Support

**January 2018 newsletter: Issue 4**

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## Welcome

Happy new year and welcome to issue 4 of the Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) programme newsletter.

Since the last newsletter, the DBI Level 1 and Level 2 training has been developed, tested and refined and all four partnership test site areas are now delivering DBI in a controlled and incremental way, with all four front-line pathways (emergency department, primary care, Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service) 'live' in at least one test site area. The programme is now incrementally scaling up.

This newsletter gives a flavour of some of the work involving all the partners across all of the partnership sites.

If you want to find out more about the DBI programme, visit the dedicated website at: <http://www.dbi.scot/>

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## 1: Minister visits Hairmyres pilot

The Minister for Mental Health Maureen Watt MSP visited University Hospital

Hairmyres (UHH) to hear about the first controlled testing in the hospital's emergency department.

While still in its early stages, observations from the pilot so far show it has more than halved recorded levels of distress among those who have taken up the offer of the DBI support.

Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health, who provide the 24 hour to 14 day DBI Level 2 support, highlighted that 100 per cent of those referred for Level 2 were contacted within 24 hours, with almost 70 per cent of the people who received the level 1 support, taking up the offer of the level 2 support. Of those, 85 per cent successfully completed the programme with a finalised distress management plan agreed.

People also rated their distress level when they came in – with 10 being high and 0 low – and it averaged at 7. On completion, the average had more than halved to 3.

Lise Axford, senior charge nurse at UHH emergency department said: "People can often present at the emergency department with an emotional pain which does not require a further emergency service response.

"It can be caused by factors such as relationship issues, loneliness, housing or financial worries, substance misuse and a general struggle to cope with life's challenges.

"Evidence shows these situations don't always require specialist clinical mental health services, but they do need person centred, practical support, quickly.

"DBI now addresses this gap and while staff can and still do refer individuals who require specialist mental health and addiction services, they now also have this additional more appropriate option available to them for those who need it."

For more on the Minister's visit, see: <http://www.dbi.scot/general/minister-for-mental-health-visits-emergency-department-to-see-dbi-in-action/>



**(Above) Maureen Watt MSP with University Hospital Hairmyres staff and members of the DBI project team.**

**(Below) Some footage from the Minister's visit to University Hospital Hairmyres.**



**Minister for Mental Health Maureen Watt MSP meets front line staff.**

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## Let's hear it from the staff

Hear from the University Hospital Hairmyres staff themselves as some took time to explain their experience of the DBI pilot within the hospital's emergency department and how it helped them give better support to those in distress.



Emergency department staff give their views on the DBI pilot.

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## 2: DBI training continues

Training in all the DBI pilot sites is now well underway and being undertaken by the University of Glasgow's Institute of Health & Wellbeing.

Professor Rory O'Connor and Dr Jack Melson are leading a systematic programme of developing, testing and refining both the DBI Level 1 on-line training and face-to-face training, and over 100 front-line staff have already been trained.

All four partnership test sites also now have their DBI level 2 providers in place. These providers have also received their DBL Level 2 training from the

University of Glasgow and are now delivering the DBI Level 2 support.



**Professor Rory O'Connor (left) and Dr Jack Melson (right) with staff who have undertaken DBI level 2 training from The Richmond Fellowship. They join Lanarkshire Association for Mental Health in South Lanarkshire, Lifelink in North Lanarkshire, and Scottish Association for Mental Health in the Scottish Borders.**



**Professor O'Connor and Dr Melson with staff from Penumbra following the training in Aberdeen.**

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### 3: Support in Mind

Support in Mind (SiM) Scotland recently launched the DBI project in the Highlands.

SiM is the lead DBI agency in the Highlands and is bringing together statutory and non-statutory partner agencies including Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, primary care and accident and emergency services, as well as third sector agencies involved in various aspects of support and mental health recovery work.

The project launched on 30 October 2017 and received its first referral on 2 November.

Three new colleagues (below, Helen Moore, Lisa Anderson and Kim Haines) form the core SiM DBI team.



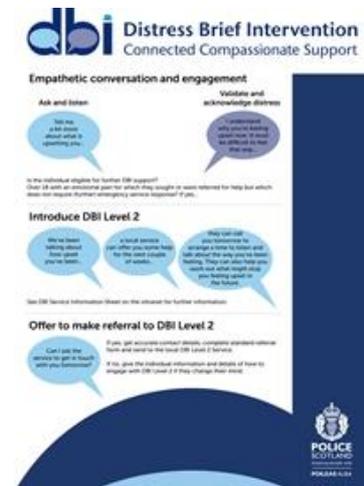
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## 4: Police Scotland: support for officers

Police Scotland has developed some posters which will be displayed in police stations where officers have been trained in level 1 DBI.

The posters give officers some pointers on how they would engage an individual who they feel would benefit from DBI support.

One poster gives guidance to officers on how they would identify someone who they feel would benefit from DBI and how they would go about referring them to the Level 2 support.



A second poster (above) gives officers a steer on how a conversation might go if they came across someone who would benefit from DBI.

Police Scotland is now delivering DBI Level 1 in both Inverness and Aberdeen with plans to expand to Scottish Borders and Lanarkshire in the coming months.

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## 5: NHSScotland chief executive's annual report

The latest edition of the chief executive's annual report for 2016/17 makes reference to the DBI programme and the good work that is taking place. Referenced on pages 26/27, the full report is available at: <http://www.dbi.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Chief-Executives->



## 6: Fourth DBI gathering

The 4th DBI gathering took place in Perth on 26 October 2017. The day was significant as it also marked the DBI programme reaching the landmark of being delivered in all four pilot sites.

Among the presentations on the day were Blythe Robertson the policy lead for health literacy at the Scottish Government, who highlighted how health literacy approaches have been factored into DBI from the start. He also explained how DBI features in 'Making it Easier: A Health Literacy Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2025 (see more below).

Wendy Halliday, assistant director, programmes for See Me Scotland, explained how See Me has met with the DBI programme board and produced a joint paper to help reduce stigma and discrimination in health and social care settings.



**Above: Ian Macleod, Jill Fletcher and John McCulloch from the Scottish Ambulance Service who were present at the gathering and shared their experience of the SAS pathway being live in Lanarkshire.**

**Below: Delegates at October's gathering.**



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## **7: Evaluation**

The Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Research Unit (NMAHPRU) at the University of Stirling, will lead an independent DBI evaluation, in collaboration with ScotCen - an integral part of NatCen Social Research, Mental Health Foundation and Glasgow Caledonian University. The evaluation is informed by an evaluability assessment completed by NHS Health Scotland.

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## 8: Let's make it easier

The Scottish Government has been looking at the evidence on the impact of health literacy and wants healthcare information to more clearly tackle the challenges people face in their day-to-day lives. It published its first action plan 'Making Life Easier' in 2014. Not only did this focus on improving people's



health knowledge and understanding, it also challenged the health and care system to remove the barriers that sometimes get in the way when people try to improve their wellbeing.

It also wanted to raise awareness among health and care staff about the hidden problem of health literacy to help them respond better to patients. Through collaboration with the policy lead for health literacy at the Scottish Government, health literacy responsive approaches have been factored into DBI from the start and DBI feature in 'Making it Easier: A Health Literacy Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2025' For more on health literacy, visit the health literacy place at: <http://www.healthliteracyplace.org.uk/blog/2017/news/making-it-easier-a-health-literacy-action-plan-for-scotland-2017-2025/>

To view the action plan visit: [Making it Easier - a health literacy action plan for Scotland 2017-2025](#)

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## 9: Programme six month report: July-Nov

DBI programme manager, Kevin O'Neill produces a six monthly progress report to the programme. The latest report covers the period July to November 2017. Kevin would like to thank the Scottish Government, DBI central team, host organisation, programme board, local DBI implementation groups and partners and the broader community of interest who have all contributed so much

through collaboration and a commitment to a 'future that matters', enabling the DBI programme to achieve its objectives for phase 1 and phase 2 of the programme. To view the latest report visit: <http://www.dbi.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/DBI-Programme-Managers-Six-Monthly-Report-Issue-2-Jul-Nov17-KON-2.pdf>

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## 10: Programme Overview

The DBI programme overview (December 2017 – Issue 2) has been updated to provide a simple two page overview of the programme, progress and next steps. To view the overview visit: <http://www.dbi.scot/resources/>



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## 9: Previous DBI newsletters

There are three previous issues of the DBI newsletter which provided a general introduction to the DBI initiative. All three are available at the 'resources and links' section on the DBI website at: <http://www.dbi.scot/resources/>

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