

unsung heroes

The Queen's Award for
Voluntary Service 2008

June 2009



The Beacon Friends Newsletter

In this edition we continue our series of focused newsletters about aspects of our work. This month we are highlighting our adult counselling service offered in Cheadle Hulme, Stockport.

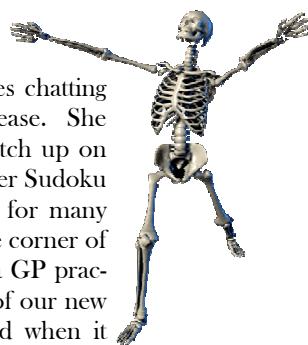
The history

We commenced our service from the Cheadle Hulme Medical Centre (CH) in 1989 and this was our very first venture working outside Bramhall. Beacon had been offering our adult service in Bramhall for about 5 years and the Board of Management (as it was known then) recognised we were ready to spread our wings. Our first manager, Ann Serjrup, arranged with the GPs the use of a consulting room at CH one evening a week. One volunteer counsellor started, and Elizabeth Zonca was our first volunteer receptionist - and 20 years later Elizabeth is still working for us there! One counsellor soon increased to two, and many people from our counselling team have since done sterling work from the CH venue. A couple of years after the start Elizabeth recruited her neighbour Esther Maxwell to join her as another receptionist and between them these 2 ladies have now volunteered an incredible 38 years for Beacon!

The people at the heart of our CH service

Esther:

Esther says it's a worthwhile job and likes chatting to our clients and putting them at their ease. She enjoys the "quiet counselling time" to catch up on letter writing, and loves the challenge of her Sudoku puzzle book. She remembers well that for many years a life size scary skeleton stood in the corner of one of our counselling rooms (well it is a GP practice after all) which used to spook some of our new clients, and everyone was rather relieved when it disappeared one day (though some say it still haunts the corridors!!!)



Elizabeth:

Elizabeth is retired and is our longest serving volunteer. She also worked at the Reddish venue a few years ago when we had a service there. Elizabeth has been a pillar of strength for Beacon for many years and has shown tremendous dedication.

Maureen:

Maureen joined Beacon around 3 years ago and finds a quite remarkable difference in some clients after a few weeks of counselling. Clients who started off appearing rather aggressive and angry change to gentle and confident individuals and she feels proud to be a small part of that process.

Polly:

Polly Chillingworth worked as a volunteer receptionist in Cheadle Hulme a couple of years ago. She really liked the work there - particularly in welcoming nervous first time clients. At that time she was in the midst of a psychology degree at Salford University, and the quiet time at CH enabled her to catch up on her course work. Our counsellors showed particular interest in her assignments etc, and showed her such encouragement that she was inspired to continue with her studies by training as a counsellor: 18 months ago Polly was promoted from receptionist to one of our counsellors at Bramhall, and is now about to gain her degree from the University of Manchester.

Our counsellors.....

James— Our current manager James started life at Cheadle Hulme (well, his counselling career anyway). He joined Beacon early in 2004 as he was studying a Diploma in Counselling. He has good memories of his time there, and he found the receptionists all to be friendly, welcoming, and good to talk with. He stayed at CH for a couple of years, before moving to Bramhall as a counsellor, then commenced work as the Manager at the end of 2006.

Zoe Nangah - started her work for us last December and counsels in both Bramhall and CH. She appreciates the variety of clients and says the support that Beacon provides is invaluable. She describes the supervision that Sue Rodrigues gives her as “brilliant”. She says the CH setting is quite different for both her and her clients from Bramhall venue in that there is a quieter atmosphere.

Pat Dodd - Pat has been a counsellor at Beacon for 2 years. She started as a brand new student studying at the university, and has gained experience through working at Bramhall, and now Cheadle Hulme. She is about to qualify in the next few weeks, so we wish her the best of luck in getting her Diploma.

The future

Our Cheadle Hulme service has been an undoubted success over many years mainly due to the hard work and dedication of all our volunteers who have worked there. We sincerely hope that we can continue to help CH residents there for many years to come.

More Current News...

Our 25th Anniversary Party!



Trustees Kathryn McGuire and Jo Tipa are organising.....

“An Evening to Celebrate 25 years of Beacon Counselling”
- and the many people it has helped.

This will take place on Saturday 15th August at Bramhall Lawn Tennis Club starting at 7pm.
“The Wellington Street Stompers” (a live trad Jazz Band) will be making an appearance and there will be a buffet meal.

Tickets are now on sale from the office at £10 per person. Everyone welcome.
COME AND HELP US CELEBRATE OUR BIRTHDAY— AND BRING A PARTNER

Lowri Dixon

Lowri started as an admin volunteer at Beacon last summer. She was studying psychology at Newcastle University and was interested in volunteering for a charity working in mental health; so she chose Beacon!

Lowri volunteered during the term breaks and has helped the manager with our Mental Health Promotion programme. She has organised our new library, researched Mental Health Promotion services throughout Manchester and put together a list of organisations that might make useful referrals for clients.

We don't know yet if Lowri is returning to Beacon this summer as she has finished university now, but James wanted to thank her for her hard work, and we would all like to wish her luck in her degree results.

Trustee news



Figen Murray (one of our new trustees) is organising the new "Beacon Training Programme". This increases the number of training events for our counsellors to 9 pieces of training covering a wide range of topics over the next 12 months. A further development will be the selling of places to other counsellors who do not currently work for us. This will ensure that the training events are always full, and also help to fund the continuation of the training programme for the long term. Many thanks to Figen for agreeing to take this on!

Brian McCluggage has joined the Governance Committee. This is a little known area of trustee work in charities, but is perhaps the most important. Governance, when related to charities, means the way the Board of Trustees ensure it is carrying out its role effectively, and also how the board ensures it knows how all others are carrying out their roles effectively. Brian is working with James in developing this area of trustee work, which will lead to a clearer direction for the board of trustees, a board that knows how well it performs its task, and a training and development plan for the board itself. The next step is to complete the 2009 BoardsCount programme, which is a national survey enabling charities to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the areas of governance, and create a plan to improve things.

Client Appointment Statistics:

From January to April we offered -
 789 appointments in Bramhall
 42 in Cheadle Hulme
 63 in Heaton Mersey
 43 in Heaton Moor
TOTAL 937

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Bits and Pieces....

Launch of our new service in Adswold

Beacon's brand new counselling project started at the beginning of June and we are offering our adult service each Friday. This project has been fully funded by Stockport MBC for the next 3 years through their Main Grants Scheme, and will enable us to provide a service that is free to local residents. We will be telling you a lot more about this service in a future issue of the newsletter, but in the meantime would like to thank Stockport MBC for their generous support of Beacon Counselling.

Thankyou!

We had some nice comments about our Wythenshawe newsletter last month, which is always satisfying to receive. One of our receptionists told us that the poem we featured about what life was like in living in Wythenshawe moved her to tears. If you have a comment (good or bad!) please send to Olive.Hunt@ntlworld.com

We are on the
internet...
www.beacon-counselling.org.uk

**DESPERATELY NEEDED
Part time cleaner for our
Bramhall premises
2 hours work once a fortnight
Contact the office for more information
440 0055**

Another positive mental health tip



Keep active

Physical activity is a proven way to keep mentally well. Exercise makes us feel better immediately through the release of uplifting chemicals called endorphins into our bodies. Even just half an hour's brisk walk every other day can make all the difference. Joining a gym, taking up a sport, leaving the car behind once a week, or taking up gardening, are all great ways to use physical activity to improve your mood. They can also lead to meeting new people and to new experiences.

Very peaceful holiday home to let in South West Cork with Spectacular Views



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