Working in partnership to improve mental wellbeing

10 years of Scotland’s ‘Breathing Space Day’

Improving mental wellbeing

There is growing evidence of the value of good mental wellbeing and its benefit to individuals and communities. To improve population mental health, we need to both promote mental wellbeing and prevent the development of mental health problems.

Partnership approach

Over the last 10 years, through innovative campaigns and partnership working, this national awareness day has gone from strength to strength, with calls to Breathing Space doubling over this period.

National awareness day

Breathing Space is Scotland’s mental health phone service. The first ‘Breathing Space Day’ was held on 1st Feb 2007 at the Scottish Parliament, to encourage people to think about simple things they can do to improve their mental wellbeing and promote Breathing Space as a free and confidential listening and advice service to people in distress.

Methodology

A review of Breathing Space Day campaigns over the last 10 years was undertaken, with insights into:

- campaign aims
- partnership working
- promotional activity
- key campaign highlights
- review of call demand to Breathing Space

Aims

We know from our experience so far that in order to improve mental health and wellbeing, a partnership approach is vital. The aim of Breathing Space Day over the last 10 years has been to involve NHS, local authorities, third and private sectors, and communities themselves, to raise awareness of good mental wellbeing (using our yearly themes) and further promote the Breathing Space service.

Results/outcomes

Breathing Space Day has become a key date in the National Health Calendar. Over the last 10 years, calls to Breathing Space have more than doubled, with our experienced advisors answering more than 750,000 calls over this period. Through innovative campaigns and a partnership approach, the day has become a platform for organisations to promote mental wellbeing messages and the vital support Breathing Space offers.

Author: Tony McLaren, Breathing Space, NHS 24 | Email: Tony.McLaren@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk