

CEIMH Directors Report for January 2010

During this month staff have been working on the final CEIMH Evaluation Report for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) who are our funders. Our external validators and the CEIMH Management Group will be asked for comments before we submit the final version. Previous evaluations of CEIMH can be found on our website at www.ceimh.bham.ac.uk Maureen Smojkis (Associate Director, CEIMH) and Liz Chilton (Research Fellow, CEIMH) held a half-day Digital Stories Workshop for the Dementia Council. With the support of Alex Rawlins (Lead User Voice Development Worker for Older People) Dementia Council members have produced a number of digital stories outlining their experiences of dementia and caring for people with dementia.

This month Marion Clark, Dee Partridge and Pam Newby presented a paper at an International Conference in Paris, France called Lifelong Learning and Empowerment in Mental Health. Their paper explained how the aims of CEIMH to create a space in which Mental Health Service Users and Carers could work in partnership with academics, students and practitioners to promote good mental health education and services was realised and evaluated.

CEIMH also organised an event this month for social care and health related Centres of Excellence (CETLS) to meet, share and reflect on the experiences they have gathered over the last four to five years in developing learning and teaching in the fields of health and social care. Most of the CETLs present acknowledged the work that service users and carers working with CEIMH had in influencing their institutions activities in areas of user and carer involvement in education. For CEIMH staff it was interesting to hear about the impact the CEIMH has had on influencing other institutions.

A joint CEIMH and Mental Health in Higher Education Event workshop entitled "User-led research: transforming learning and teaching about mental health" was also this month. The aims of the workshop were to improve knowledge of, and access to, high quality user led research and provide opportunities to debate the benefits of involving service users and carers in research. The energy of the day was considerable and a number of service users working in education and research took part.

As part of our Conversation with... series of seminars on contemporary issues in mental health (previous conversations can be found on our website), Gail Hornstein spoke around the theme of "Whose Story Counts? The Challenge of First-Person Madness Narratives". Thirty people attended the session and engaged in a very vibrant exchange about the issues Gail had raised. Copies of her book entitled "Agne's Jacket: A Psychologist's Search for the Meaning of Madness" were made available for people to explore. For further details about Gail please visit her website www.gailhornstein.com

Tarsem Singh Cooner, Acting Director, CEIMH
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