

Your Experience Counts

Improving self-harm support in Scotland

Summary report



Introduction

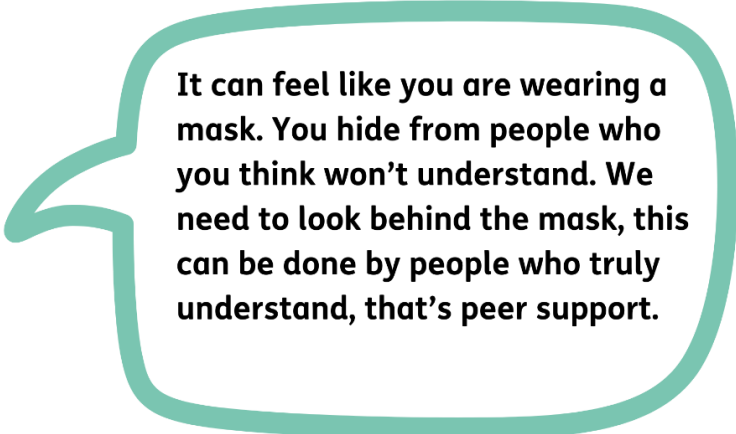
A series of engagement events were held to listen to the experiences and ideas of people affected by self-harm in Scotland. Learning from these events is summarised below and is also available in a full report.

This learning has been shared with the [Self-Harm Network Scotland](#) run by Penumbra and funded by the Scottish Government. It will also be shared with Scottish Government to help shape their new Self-Harm Strategy due out later this year. A key commitment has been made to ensure that lived experience will be placed at the heart of developing the strategy and its subsequent implementation.

Engagement summary

Four engagement events were held during February 2023. They consisted of one national online discussion followed by three in-person events. These took place in Glasgow, Dundee, and Inverness and brought together people and communities affected by self-harm, along with the organisations that support them.

Taking a [Recovery Conversation Café](#) approach the aim was to listen to the experiences and ideas of people to better understand what is helping, what needs to improve and what are the priorities moving forward. Over the four events 89 people attended; 29 of those had self-harmed. 33 people from the voluntary sector joined us, 18 people from public sector, 3 that were carers of someone that self-harmed. 6 not known or didn't want to identify themselves.



It can feel like you are wearing a mask. You hide from people who you think won't understand. We need to look behind the mask, this can be done by people who truly understand, that's peer support.

Key themes

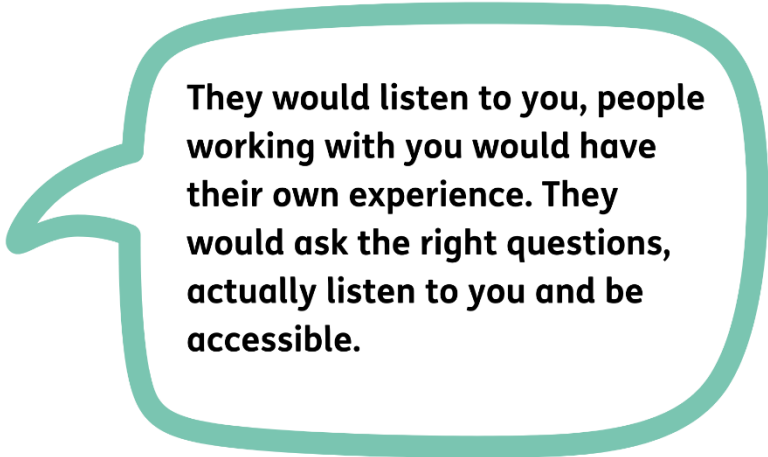
Three questions were asked, and the key themes that emerged were:

What enables you to live well?

- Relationships are integral to living well – including family, friends, health professionals, peers
- Access to a choice of support at an early stage
- Opportunities for peer support
- Compassion

What would make support and services better in the future?

- The input of lived experience would be valuable in improving all services
- Peer support is something that needs and can be expanded
- Improved understanding of self-harm resulting in services that are trauma informed, delivered with empathy and compassion
- Better and early access to a variety of support available within the community which could meet needs and reduce pressure on clinical services
- Increased recognition of the role of the third sector and community supports. This would lead to better and increased collaboration between the NHS and third sector



They would listen to you, people working with you would have their own experience. They would ask the right questions, actually listen to you and be accessible.

Key priorities for new Scottish Government Self-harm Strategy?

- Action on reducing stigma of self-harm
- Improved education on self-harm in schools, professionals, and wider society
- Quicker and wider access to different types of support
- Compassionate approach to self-harm
- Lived experience and peer support to be widely used

As someone who has previously self-harmed I understand the importance of the strategy. I truly believe it will save lives. I look forward to following the progress.

Get in touch

If you have any questions or need this information in a different format, please contact us:

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