



Equalities Exchange - November 2009

Welcome to November's edition of Equalities Exchange, the newsletter from the Equalities and Planning Directorate. This month's focus is on religion and belief.

In next month's issue, we will focus on human rights. If you would like to contribute any articles or news, please contact Nick Hay at Nick.Hay@health.scot.nhs.uk.



In this month's issue:

- [Focus: Religion and belief](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Sharing good practice](#)
- [In the news](#)
- [Equalities and Planning Directorate news](#)
- [Equalities and Human Rights Commission news](#)
- [Events and training](#)
- [Events and training outside Scotland](#)
- [Next edition of Equalities Exchange](#)

Religion and belief

Improving Spiritual Care in the NHS

Ewan Kelly, Programme Director for Healthcare Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, NHS Education for Scotland, looks at the importance of spiritual care in the NHS.

Approximately 8% of the Scottish population participates in regular worship within a faith community, be that on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday or other day of the week. This means that a significant proportion of Scots believe in something 'Other' or in some sort of transcendent life force. However, all of us are spiritual beings because we are human, regardless of whether or not we are religious. The spiritual element in all of us is that dimension of our being that seeks meaning and purpose in our lives and tries to make sense of what life, and living it as fully as we can, is all about.

Within health care, such searches can be all the more immediate and urgent as patients, relatives and staff experience illness, injury, trauma and death - prompting such existential questions as "Why?", "Why me?", "Why me?", "What has my life been about?" and "How am I going to cope with such a loss?".

Everyone explores these issues within their own individual framework of values and beliefs; some have such a framework greatly informed by the religious tradition to which they belong and others will not. For some, their faith tradition will be a strength and comfort during times of distress and transition, while others will question and wrestle with their religious beliefs. For others, their faith stance will cause added anxiety or pain. The key is to begin where individuals are in their understanding of what is happening to them and what their personal experience, perceptions, beliefs and worldview is.

I work within NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to not only try to educate and better equip chaplains - professionally and personally - to support those in our healthcare communities who are struggling with spiritual issues, but also to develop the capability and competency of all healthcare staff to sensitively meet the spiritual and religious needs of those they care for - as well as to consider their own spiritual needs.

To this end, NES has recently produced [Spiritual Care Matters: An Introductory Resource for all NHS Scotland Staff \(PDF\)](#). Hard copies are also available from Anne Richardson at Anne.Richardson@nes.scot.nhs.uk.

Scottish Inter Faith Week 2009

The launch of Scottish Inter Faith Week will take place on Sunday 22 November from 2.30pm to 5.30pm at the University of Dundee, in the Dalhousie Building. The event's theme is 'A Place of Home and Welcome'. It provides a chance for individuals, local inter faith groups and faith communities to plan events, including faith awareness and employment equality training. It is also an opportunity to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation between Scotland's diverse religious communities at inter faith networking seminars.

[Scottish Inter Faith Week 2009](#)

[Return to top](#)

Resources

Religion or belief: A practical guide for the NHS

This Department of Health guidance document gives practical advice to NHS organisations to help them comply with recent equality legislation, understand the role of religion or belief in the context of health care, and integrate this knowledge into single equality schemes (SESS).

[Religion or belief: A practical guide for the NHS \(PDF\)](#)

Spiritual Care: A Multi-Faith Resource for Healthcare Staff

This NHS Education for Scotland resource helps NHS staff address some of the religious needs of patients in their care. It provides information for a range of communities on: attitudes to healthcare staff and illness, religious practices, diet, fasting, washing and toilet, ideas of modesty and dress, death customs, birth customs, family planning, blood transfusions, transplants, and organ donation.

[Spiritual Care: A Multi-Faith Resource for Healthcare Staff \(PDF\)](#)

Religion and Belief Matter - An Information Resource for Healthcare Staff

This report provides staff with a helpful review of the relevant current legislation, and sets out in some detail the emerging evidence base on the link between religion and health.

[Religion and Belief Matter - An Information Resource for Healthcare Staff \(PDF\)](#)

[Return to top](#)

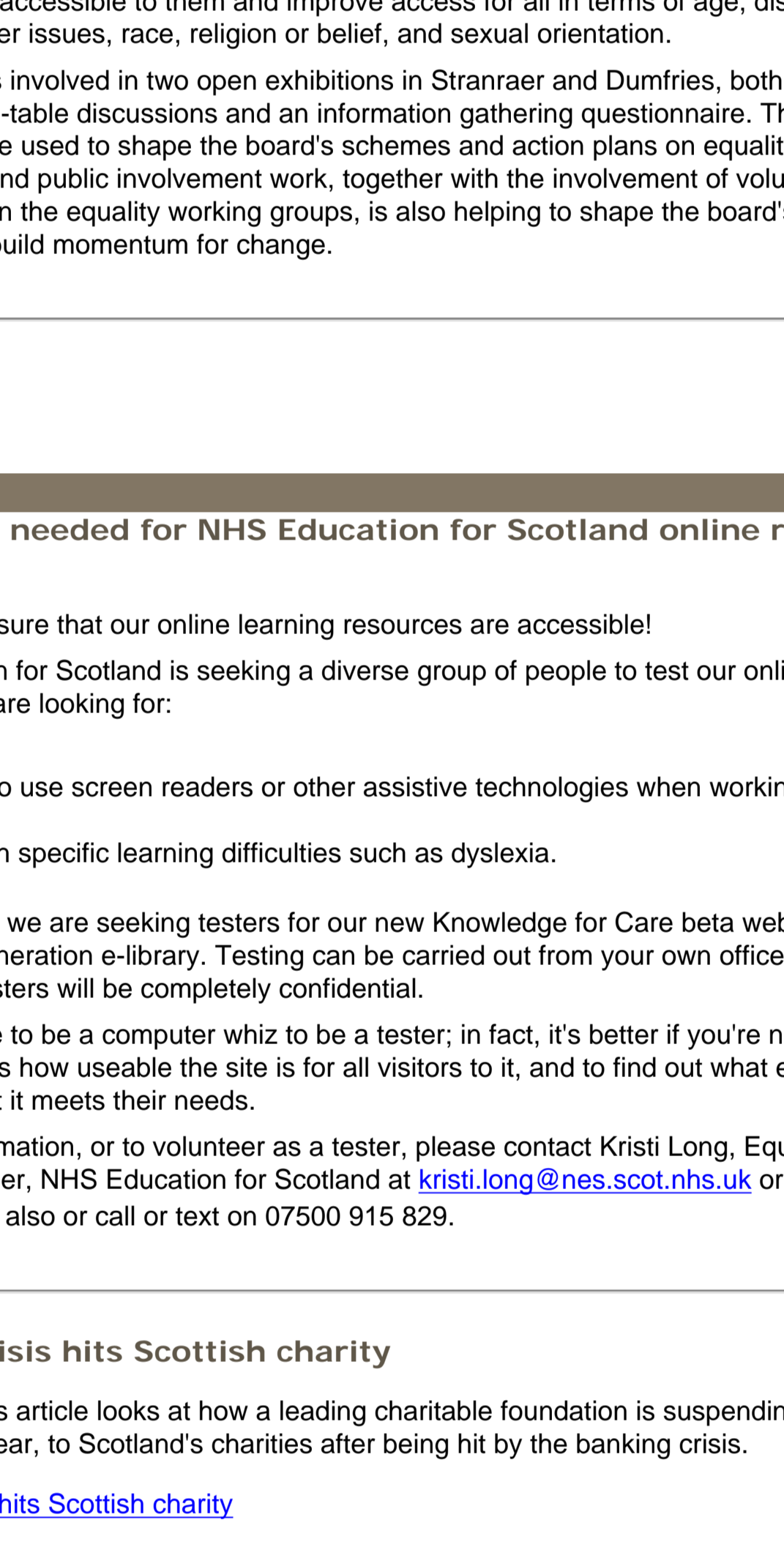
Sharing good practice

New DVD launched to improve bowel screening rates

The [national bowel screening programme](#) is being rolled out to health professionals to help people aged 50 to 74. The new 10-minute film explains how the simple bowel screening test works, and helps community workers encourage people to take the test through a better understanding of what is involved.

The film clearly explains why it is so important to participate in bowel screening, and shows how to complete the home screening test. It also takes into account the needs of people with learning difficulties, those for whom English is not their first language, and people with disabilities. In this way, the film aims to improve uptake in harder-to-reach groups and address any concerns people may have about using the home-based test.

The launch of the DVD is an important part of the ongoing Scottish Bowel Screening Programme, which aims to increase awareness of bowel cancer and encourage participation in the Programme. About 3,400 new cases are diagnosed each year in Scotland, with 95% of cases occurring in the over 50s.



New data about Scotland's diaspora and overseas-born population

This new publication from the Scottish Government looks at data about the Scottish diaspora and inward migration.

[Scotland's Diaspora and Overseas-Born Population](#)

A marketplace for ideas

NHS Dumfries and Galloway was recently involved in the region's first diversity week. In partnership with the council, voluntary organisations, police, fire and rescue service, and the college, a week of events was organised to:

- promote positive messages regarding diversity
- find out more about what's happening locally
- encourage participation in a range of activities to promote good relations between people.

One of the event's key aims was to enable local people to tell us about how we can make services more accessible to them and improve access for all in terms of age, disability, gender and transgender issues, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

The board was involved in two open exhibitions in Stranraer and Dumfries, both of which included round-table discussions and an information gathering questionnaire. The information gathered will be used to shape the board's schemes and action plans on equality. Ongoing patient focus and public involvement work, together with the involvement of voluntary organisations in the equality working groups, is also helping to shape the board's commitment in this area and build momentum for change.

[Return to top](#)

In the news

Volunteers needed for NHS Education for Scotland online resource testing

Help us make sure that our online learning resources are accessible!

NHS Education for Scotland is seeking a diverse group of people to test our online products. In particular, we are looking for:

- people who use screen readers or other assistive technologies when working on the computer
- people with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

At the moment we are seeking testers for our new Knowledge for Care beta website, which will be the next generation e-library. Testing can be carried out from your own office, and the identities of testers will be completely confidential.

You don't have to be a computer whiz to be a tester; in fact, it's better if you're not as we are trying to assess how useable the site is for all visitors to it, and to find out what else we can do to make sure that it meets their needs.

For more information, or to volunteer as a tester, please contact Kristi Long, Equality and Diversity Adviser, NHS Education for Scotland at kristi.long@nes.scot.nhs.uk or on 0131-313-8097. You can also call or text on 07500 915 829.

Banking crisis hits Scottish charity

This BBC news article looks at how a leading charitable foundation is suspending payments, worth £6m a year, to Scotland's charities after being hit by the banking crisis.

[Banking crisis hits Scottish charity](#)

Scottish firms caught out in racism 'sting'

This news article from The Herald details a government sting operation that uncovered widespread racial discrimination within Scottish employers against workers with African and Asian names.

[Scottish firms caught out in racism 'sting'](#)

[Return to top](#)

Equalities and Planning Directorate news

NHS Equality and Diversity Lead Network

The next NHS Equality and Diversity Lead Network meeting will take place on 10 November in the Premier Inn, George St, Glasgow.

The Big Picture 2009: A review of progress on equality in the NHS in Scotland

The final benchmarking report, [The Big Picture 2009: A review of progress on equality in the NHS in Scotland](#), is now available on our website. It helps form a wider picture of progress across the equality strands and a more efficient and coordinated approach to equality and diversity in the NHS in Scotland.

Gaelic language plan for NHS Scotland

NHS Health Scotland expects to receive an instruction in November from Bord na Gaidhlig to prepare a Gaelic language plan for NHS Scotland. This note is an early notification that there will be such a plan. Once we have developed and agreed it in partnership with all boards, we will all be clearer about what is required of us.

[Return to top](#)

Equality and Human Rights Commission news

Latest news from the Equality and Human Rights Commission

A round-up of news from the Equality and Human Rights Commission is available at the [Equality and Human Rights Commission website](#).

[Return to top](#)

Events and training

Changing Hearts, Opening Minds - "Challenging Prejudice: Changing Attitudes towards LGBT people in Scotland"

Saturday 14 November, Dundee

[Equality Network website](#)

Consultation on the Equality Bill and the Scottish Specific Public Sector Duties

Monday 16 November, Glasgow

Visit the [NHS Health Scotland website](#) for more details.

Training Day: Domestic Abuse: A Workplace Issue

Wednesday 18 November, Edinburgh

Visit the [Scottish Women's Aid website](#) for more details.

Launch of Scottish Inter Faith Week

Sunday 22 November, Dundee

Visit the [Scottish Inter Faith Council website](#) for more details.

SCVO Equalities and Human Rights Group Conference

Wednesday 25 November, Glasgow

Visit the [The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations \(SCVO\) website](#) for more details.

Implementing the new Equality Bill: the implications for the public sector and public procurement in Scotland

Tuesday 1 December, Edinburgh

Visit the [MacKay Hannah website](#) for more details.

[Return to top](#)

Events and training outside Scotland

From Equality Bill to Act: Towards a Framework for a Fairer Future for All

Thursday 19 November, London

Visit the [Westminster Briefing website](#) for more details.

What is the role of faith in community development and cohesion work?

Thursday 19 November, London

Visit the [Humanism website](#) for more details.

Disclaimer:

The events and training included in these sections have been selected to be of interest to colleagues. However, we cannot quality assure external events or training and we are not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

[Return to top](#)

Next edition of Equalities Exchange

End of November, 2009

The next edition will focus on human rights and we need your input. If you have any news or good practice, please contact Nick Hay at Nick.Hay@health.scot.nhs.uk.

[NHS Health Scotland Equalities and Planning directorate](#)

[Return to top](#)