

## **Scottish Recovery Consortium: Communication Strategy 2013/2014**

“Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.”

Paul J. Meyer

The Scottish Recovery Consortium is a small independent charity funded by the Scottish Government to support the implementation of the national drug strategy, ‘The Road to Recovery’. We work with people in recovery, treatment providers, recovery communities and support agencies to build the capacity of the recovery movement on a local and national level.

### **Background**

The year 2012/13 brought a new direction for the SRC and this was reflected in a change in communication strategy for the organisation. We moved away from traditional methods of communication such as creating monthly newsletters, seeking media coverage and targeting membership growth in our promotional activities. Instead we experimented with person to person communication, shared the lived experience of recovery throughout SRC events and developed our audience to include treatment providers, recovery communities and support agencies. Our communication strategy for 2013/14 will build upon foundations built over the past 12 months.

### **Organisational approach to communications**

The SRC believes that the most influential way to inspire people about recovery from addiction is to share the lived experience of recovery across our communication activity. We have found that the most influential way to achieve this is by person to person communication, low risk story sharing through SRC events and online communication channels. At this time we believe that we are not in a position to take part in communication processes that require people in recovery to be identified (photographed and named) in order for their lived experience to be shared. Therefore we have not supplied the mainstream media with case studies or tried to generate mainstream media coverage for our activities at this time.

### **Strategic progression 2012/13**

Last year the SRC refocused its organisational strategy which resulted in the following important changes to our communications work:

- passively decreased interaction with the SRC membership and closure of monthly newsletter *Many Paths One Journey*;
- the end of our use of the traditional approach to sharing recovery stories (via newsletter or website);
- no longer using the mainstream media as a primary channel to influence others about recovery.

We also invested in the following key projects:

- the *An Invitation to Talk About Recovery* resource;
- the *My recovery gave me...* public information campaign;
- a stronger online presence with a new website and two social media platforms.

Learning from both changes and investments in 2012/13 has informed the development of this communication strategy.

### **Audience**

Our main audience is within Scotland and our key partners are people in recovery, treatment providers, recovery communities and support agencies. We will continue to work closely with the Drug Policy Unit at the Scottish Government.

This year we will also carry out work on a case by case basis across the UK and internationally.

### **Aims**

- Connect local recovery activists and communities with each other on a local and national level;
- Change our relationship with those who want to get involved in the work of the SRC by cultivating an asset register in place of organisational membership;
- Engage directly with the public to place key recovery messages in the heart of public life;
- Share the lived experience of recovery across all organisational activity;
- Grow SRC's reputation as the unapologetic advocates of recovery from addiction.

### **Action plan 2013/14**

Our communication activity for the next 12 months can be split into five distinct elements as shown below.

*We will use our **online presence to connect with people** across the country in the following ways:*

- Facebook will continue to be used as the SRC's day to day information portal and a place where recovery activists and communities can connect with us and each other;
- Reposition our use of Twitter to connect with those working in the recovery community on a global scale;
- Kuladharini will open a Twitter profile to comment upon drug policy, media reporting and related matters of interest;
- Build links with international websites such as Faces and Voices, In the rooms and others;
- Develop our website to become an online recovery resource library with local and national resource information, ADP guides, support information (fellowships and peer support info) and helpful web links;
- Explore the use of podcasts and Skype to host interactive recovery master class events and share key speeches/presentations;
- Promote connection to the SRC via Twitter and Facebook across all of our communication activities.

*We will **build our resources** by creating:*

- A recovery workbook for people to complete while on their recovery journey;

- A series of information booklets to provide information for those supporting an individual on their recovery journey;
- A *methadone and recovery* information resource;
- A *How to...* yearbook based upon learning from the Recovery Initiative Fund grant award experiences.
- A coffee table book of recovery stories from across Scotland.

Support the Board to clarify any changes to SRC Membership:

- Contact members to explain any changes to SRC Membership that are recommended by the Board.

We will **cultivate** an *Asset Register*:

- Create appropriate communications to support the launch of an SRC asset register.

We will **share the lived experience of recovery** by:

- Sharing the achievements of those funded by the Recovery Initiative Fund to build the capacity of recovery in their local area;
- Working with Team Consortium to influence decision makers by bringing recovery activists and government/official body representatives to work alongside each other at SRC events;
- Using film and photography to explore the public expression of the lived experience of recovery.

We will place **key recovery messages** at the **heart of public life** by:

- Exploring the potential to re-run the *My recovery gave me...* campaign;
- Exploring the use of Twitter to host a global recovery conversation café
- Seeking opportunities to share the lived experience of recovery publicly, whether through invitation to an SRC event, promotion of resources or experimenting with creative expression of the lived experience of recovery (art, poetry, photography etc.).

## **Conclusions**

The next 12 months will see the SRC continue to build upon the foundations of our communication strategy that were built in 2012/13. We will remain focused upon the importance of person to person communication, using online platforms to share information and resources and sharing the lived of experience of recovery across all of our communication work.