

## **Recovery Matters 2014 Aberdeenshire: Our reflections Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

### **Introduction**

“Recovery Matters 2014” is a baseline intervention for staff, paid or not, at any level of addiction treatment and related services. This workforce development opportunity comes free to ADP’s and treatment providers at point of delivery and our experience shows it has greater impact when senior managers and commissioners take part. We use current recovery research, ongoing examples of practice in Scotland and the local lived experience of long term recovery as standard in any of our workshops.

### **Our aim**

1. To contribute to a practice based recovery “paradigm shift” in the workforce
2. To build local learning from the lived experience of recovery
3. To use shared learning and dialogue based tools that respect the wisdom and experience of the participants’

### **Agenda**

The ‘brain food’ learning, in four sections that each last for ten minutes, introduced the participants to:

1. The lived experience of sustained recovery
2. The Road to Recovery – A radical shift in drug policy
3. The acute model/ recovery model
4. The power of recovery and ‘better than well’ effect
5. The next recovery right step – the culture of transformation and individual commitment.

The workshop included dialogue and round table exercises, a film show and a question and answer section.

We facilitated meaningful conversations between treatment providers and recovery activists in the Aberdeenshire from a diverse range of organisations and disciplines. We chose to give small bites of learning we call “brain food” alongside space for participants to dialogue in order to digest their collective thoughts/ learning and ideas.

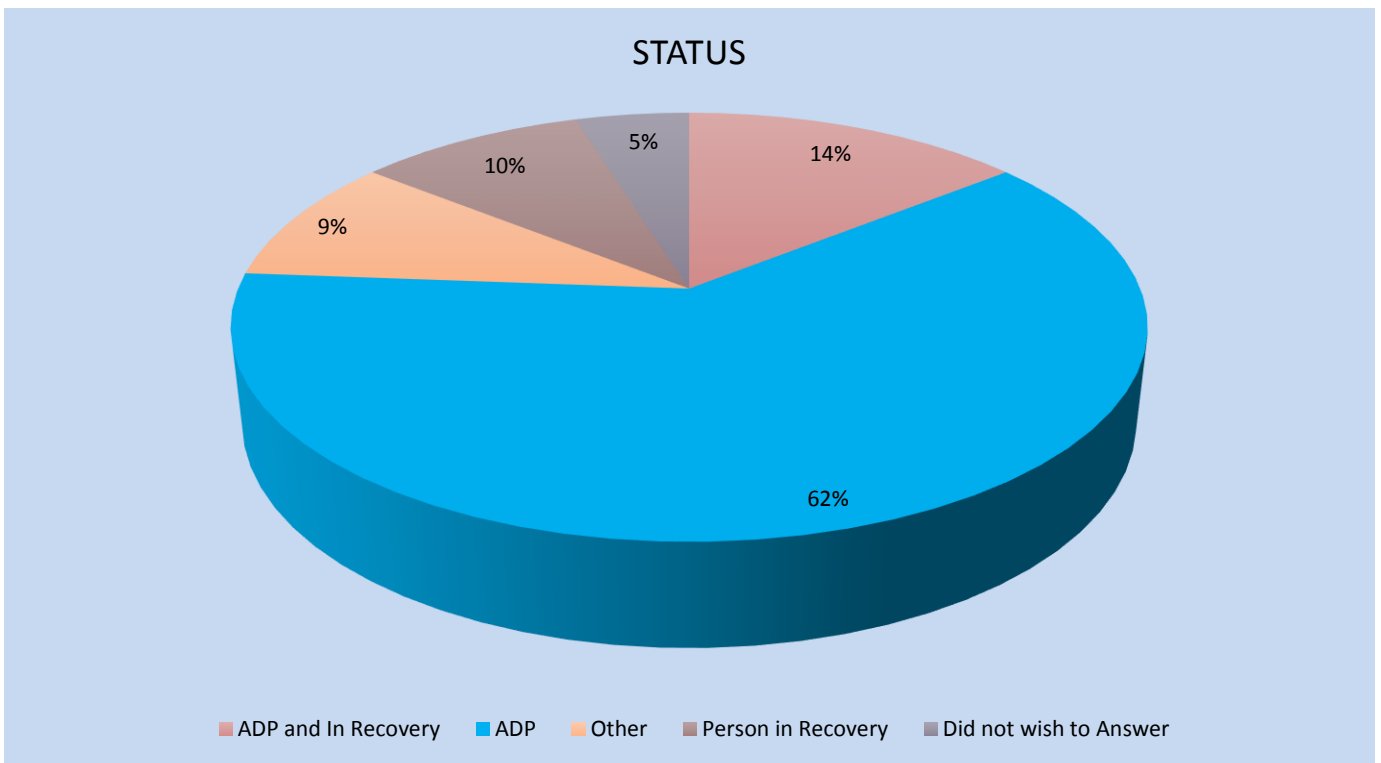
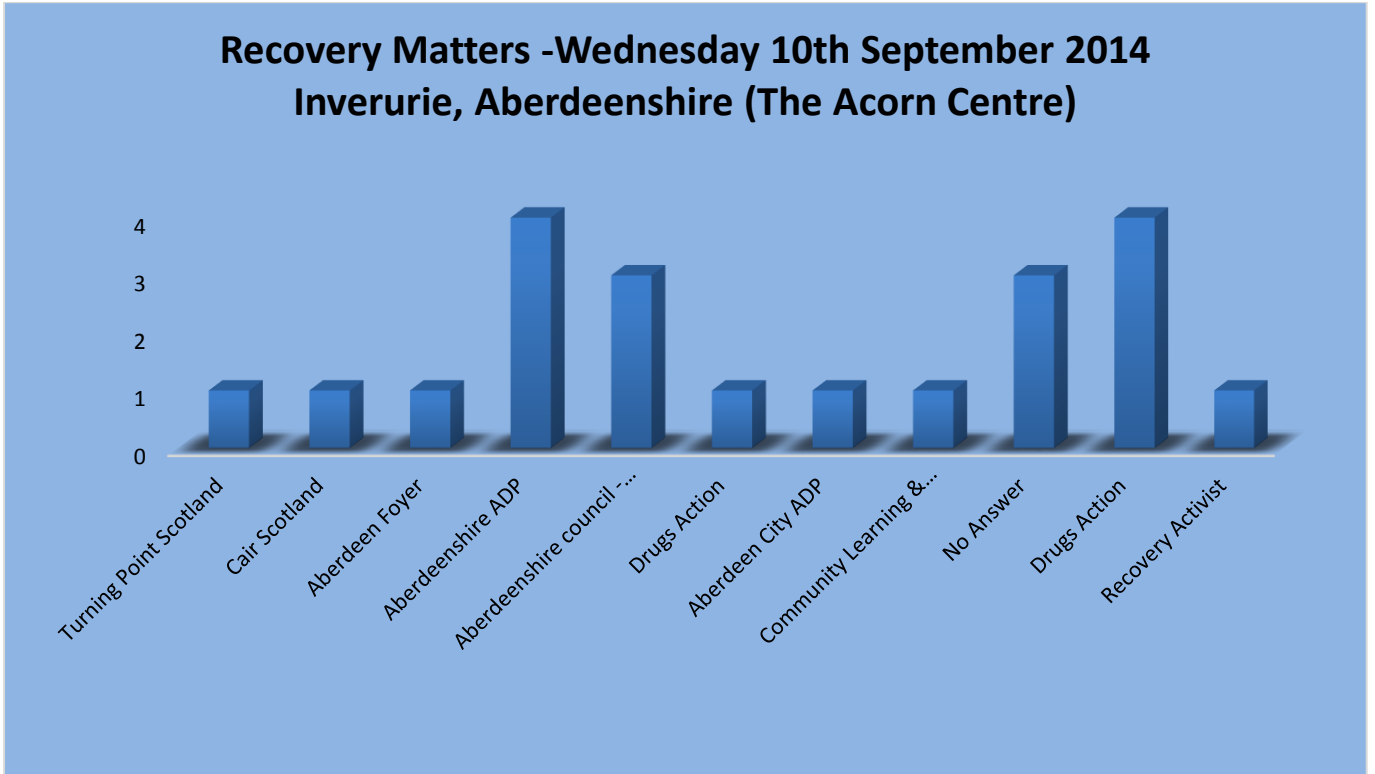
### **Event planning**

#### **The event**

To date this has been the quickest workshop ever organised. David Beedie had already organised a date further down the line for a Conversation Café Host training day, and Wayne decided that the Recovery Matters Full day workshop would benefit the area if done before the other learning days and planned work. Responding to that request the workshop in all took 3 weeks from request to delivery - accommodation booked, venue and catering sorted and participant’s registered.

**Aberdeenshire Recovery Matters -22 People Registered - 21 Attended**  
**16 Recovery Commitments**

**ATTENDANCE**



## **Feedback**

Feedback was gathered from a survey monkey questionnaire – 3 responses were collected - extracts below:-

### **We asked about your experience of the Recovery Matters Workshop. You Said:**

“This was an excellent workshop which brought together individuals from the community to discuss recovery. It was extremely valuable”

I enjoyed the experience”

“It was an interesting and well facilitated “coming together” of service providers and users in a friendly and constructive environment”

### **We asked, what if anything, did you learn from the day? You Said:**

“That people, when in this kind of informal situation are willing to talk and listen to others, and I feel that this went some way to breaking down barriers and addressing stigma surrounding recovery from drug/alcohol use.”

“I didn’t learn anything new specifically but did gain great reassurance that the content was in keeping with my existing attitudes and agenda. I found it hugely valuable to have gained this reassurance in conjunction with service users”

“Everyone had different ideas as to what exacty recovery is and how it can be achieved and maintained. However this difference of views can lead to a lack of focus, and when the big picture gets clouded, professionals can tend to retreat back to their niche of expertise. Also, there seemed to be a slight lack of belief in abstinence as an aim for clients, despite several people in abstinent recovery being present. Also I (re)learned the importance of frank discussion between service users and providers”

### **We asked, Did you see anything differently as a result of the Recovery Matters Workshop? You said:**

“I saw that all of those present were open to discussing recovery and that barriers from “both sides of the fence” require to be addressed, but there is a willingness there to do so”

“Not really, other than strengthen my conviction”

“Yes, the importance of not just getting service users into recovery, but re-using and re-integrating that lived experience back into services to increase effectiveness”

### **We asked, What is your Next Right Step? You said:**

“To take this further and to encourage mutual aid groups/services to use the Recovery Matters Workbook”

“Continue to battle the forces wishing the status quo in order to shift the balance of ADP spend to be more focused on recovery”

“Continue my work with the PI Committee of NA to carry the message to service providers and professionals, to try and dispel some of the myths and prejudices that seem to still exist within services re: 12 step recovery”

## Visibility: Initial impact

- Dialogue between participants who previously had not met and found the networking incredibly helpful.
- Inclusion of other areas and partners i.e. Aberdeen City attended and as a result would be keen to have a workshop.
- The ADP co-ordinator was able to take some of the workshop material which supported discussions he intended to have at an important meeting the next day.

### **16 wonderful Recovery Commitments were made, these are:**

- To employ more people in recovery and involve people in recovery in a genuine way that allows them to have a significant input in our service delivery
- To keep believing, to create employment opportunities for those with lived experience to work in true partnership with other services and to re-read chapter 3
- To do my best to encourage a better balance between service provision and bureaucracy to enable the whole National Policy around recovery and treatment to become more alive; dynamic and most of all break down the expert trap - more inclusiveness and less stigma promoting and meeting the needs of people, the tax payer and our country as a whole (Inky + the brain!!)
- To remain positive and committed to my past of 1 year at the Grampian (Aberdeenshire) ADP to share my professional experience and skills from working in Recovery and Treatment Centres in Glasgow Community Addiction Teams. To remain committed to change attitudes and practice models in Aberdeenshire.
- To ensure that I read "Recovery Matters" and in particular chapter 3, and to endeavour to bring the principles therein to my work within Recovery
- To ensure family members are supported through their recovery journey so that they can contribute to their son's/daughter's/partners recovery and improve their own well-being and life experience
- Continue to progress ROSC within North Aberdeenshire
- To continue to engage in recovery and support related activities such as Aberdeen in Recovery (AIR), Shire addiction Recovery Enterprise (SHARE) and Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)
- To give myself to the promotion, development and implementation of client involvement - in service provision and delivery; volunteering; in peer mentorship/example roles which will be seen as a vital part of the individuals recovery plans + journey
- To continue to develop my skills and knowledge around recovery to enable me to support individuals. Remember that recovery is an individual thing.
- I'm going to learn more about your organisation, (and read chapter 3 of the Road Recovery). I'm also going to have a look at your website.
- Go to bed before 2am 5 nights per week!

- Staying in recovery and helping others
- To develop my personal recovery by using tools offered by the various services in order to progress personally and help those looking for long term recovery. My spiritual awareness is paramount to developing further in all aspects of my recovery and importantly others
- First of all I would like to, and I need to, get to know all the background of my work (ADP), to find out about problems services available in the area and throughout the whole of Scotland, but especially the situation/problems addicts have. Then I'd like to commit to my work, to do my job as best as I can to be helpful etc. Promoting the idea of Recovery from Addictions - I find it very important and helpful supporting people who are Alcohol and Drug addicts. I find it really important to listen to these people, to provide them with the possibility/opportunity of being listened/understood, to help them discover they have a problem.
- Read the Road to Recovery, increase my recovery activism, seek employment in Recovery services, more pro-actively attend ADP Aberdeenshire central forum
- To work with and develop a better relationship with the Western isles ADP as a person in long term recovery. To become a member of the Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

#### **Visibility: Developing impact (the recovery bounce)**

- Workshop material immediately being utilised and taken into external meetings
- Had a direct impact on the people who attended the Lead Café Host Training
- The same format will now be used for the Spirituality Café.
- The participants of this workshop used on a consultation basis for the question for the intended café.
- Aberdeen City expressed an interest in running the same workshops

#### **International impact**

None

#### **What did we learn?**

- The challenges facing rural communities.
- Inverurie is nowhere near Inverary!

#### **Appreciation**

- A huge thank you to all participants, and especially to the Recovery Seed, who had not shared publicly in her professional capacity.
- Participant's for their Commitments to Recovery
- The ADP for hosting the workshop
- Drugs Action for helping with photocopying when our printers went down.
- To Janet and David for assisting in the set up
- The Acorn Centre for all the wonderful home baked scones and shortbread

**Anne-Marie Quigg**  
**18th December 2014**