

*Equally Connected** Report 4

Gypsy/Traveller Awareness-Raising Training

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**Equally Connected* is an action research project using community development approaches, including the creative arts, to learn from Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities about:

- attitudes to, and experiences of, mental health
- what helps maintain well-being
- effective ways of challenging stigma and discrimination

This evidence will be used to improve understanding and help ensure that services and systems of care (such as the Integrated Care Pathway (ICP) for people with depression) are designed to meet the needs of the diverse BME communities within Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Equally Connected is funded and supported by NHS Lothian and NHS Health Scotland and based at Health in Mind in Edinburgh

Evaluation Summary

1. Introduction

This report covers the evaluation of two Gypsy/Traveller awareness-raising sessions hosted by the Equally Connected project, one in April 2010 and a second one in March 2011.

The training seminars were facilitated by Michelle Lloyd (Equally Connected) and five Gypsy/Travellers (via Equality Diversity And Inclusion Services Ltd). The seminars exemplify the ongoing educational value in bringing together service providers, research staff and Gypsy/Travellers to discuss the wide-ranging and persistent issues affecting Gypsy/Traveller communities across Scotland. Recognising the widespread discrimination faced by many Gypsy/Travellers, these seminars are an attempt by community members, first and foremost, to promote dialogue, communication and understanding. The introductory seminars cover a range of issues, including accommodation, social care, discrimination and health.

2. Who attended?

Limited places, due to budget and venue size, were available but even so the two seminars attracted interest from over 100 service-providers from across Scotland. The first session was attended by thirteen participants and the second by nineteen (with one cancellation) from a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies, the majority of staff were working in health or social care settings.

Agency	Number of participants	Agency	Number of participants
Health in Mind	8	CAPs	2
City of Edinburgh council	7	NHS 24	1
NHS Lothian	7	Mental Health Foundation	1
West Lothian Council	2	Midlothian Council	1 cancellation
Saheliya	1	University of Edinburgh	1
Choose Life	1	Shelter	1

3. The aims of each seminar were:

- To improve understanding of the situation of Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland
- To highlight the discrimination faced by Gypsy/Travellers
- To increase knowledge of the policy and legal framework in Scotland
- To reflect on our own attitudes, assumptions and actions

4. Methodology

A variety of methods were used during the seminars, all of which have been developed by Gypsy/Travellers, and others, over a period of many years:

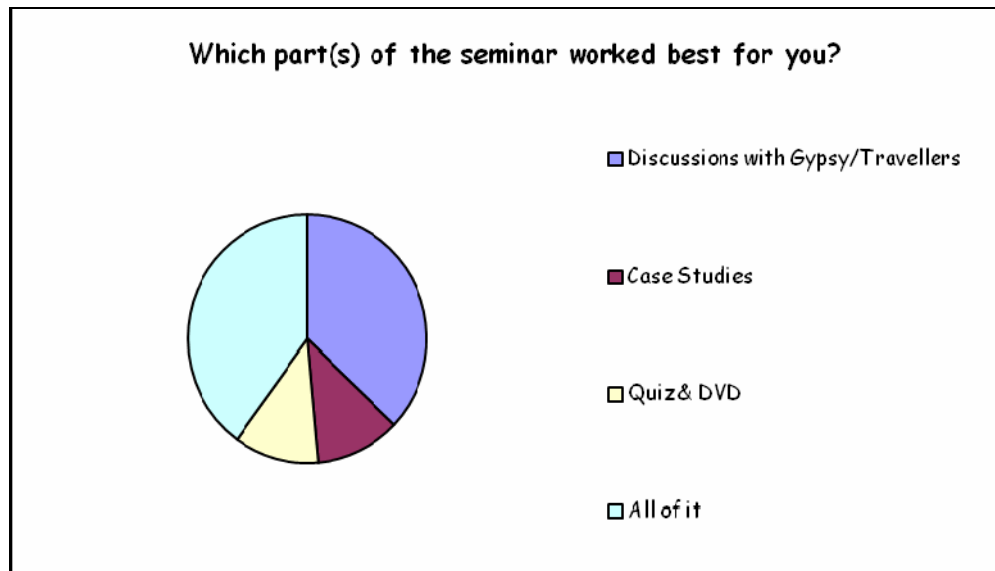
- **First Impressions and Photo Game:** a time for reflection, thinking about the first time participants became aware of Gypsy/Travellers and in small groups, looking at traditional and modern photos of Gypsy/Traveller life, exploring the power of the media, particularly the negative images that are often portrayed.
- **Quiz:** to dispel some myths and challenge assumptions.
- **DVD:** using *Moving Voices*, allowing other Gypsy/Travellers, particularly young people, to present their varied views.
- **Case Studies:** in small groups, looking at real life experiences faced by Gypsy/Travellers, including poetry.
- **Inclusive Practice:** brief consideration of policy developments and examples of good practice from across Scotland.
- **Open Forum:** an opportunity to ask questions and to think about how to take issues forward.

In addition, for the second seminar the Team Leader from Keep Well (working specifically with Gypsy/Travellers in Lothian) gave a short presentation.

5. Evaluation

In total 31 participants completed an evaluation form at the end of each session. Feedback was very positive - 40% said all aspects of the seminar had some part to play in broadening their knowledge and understanding and a further 37% found most benefit from talking directly to Gypsy/Travellers.

5.1 What worked best?



Specific comments included:

"Case studies being facilitated by the Gypsy/Traveller trainers was very insightful and thought-provoking"

"I thought it was a valuable training exercise and well-organised"

"The Quiz & DVD - all very important and relevant"

"the discussion with Gypsy/Traveller trainers, over generations can see how this has influenced their community's reluctance to engage with statutory sectors"

"The trainers brought the session alive with their experiences."

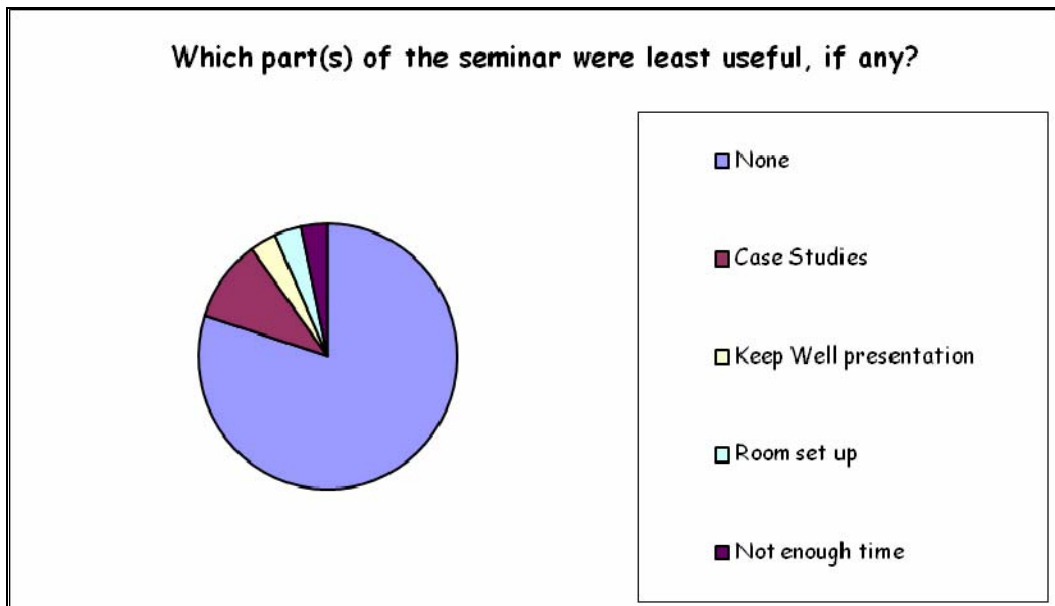
"I feel the varied approaches with the training worked well."

"The video. It was a good interactive method which provided lots of detail."

"The willingness of the facilitators to illustrate answers with personal experiences"

"well-organised and good range of methods...all effective"

5.2 What was least useful?



80% of participants thought all parts of the seminar were useful in some way, comments included:

"None, I have found the entire session informative and have raised my awareness"

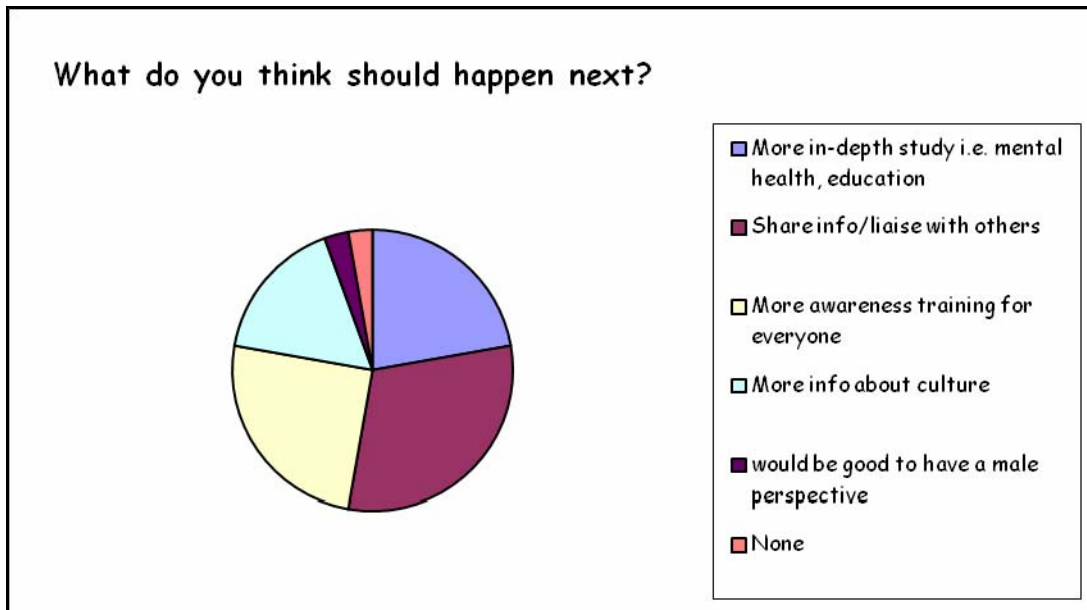
"All parts were useful - it was short and I came away wanting to know more!"

"2 groups in one room - quite distracting"

"All useful! A small thought with trainer's hat on, perhaps use the video differently, show bits at different points and end the session with the kids repeating their sentence in common."

"None, all areas provided new learning."

5.3 Future training needs



"Session on more specific aspects e.g. mental health, accessing services, city .vs. rural"

"I think that it would be great to further explore what travelling people's needs are and to gather relevant organisations/local authorities together to explore how to bridge the gaps at a pace that would suit those impacted"

"Would be helpful to have a male perspective"

"More of same for everyone - truly excellent learning opportunity"

"Perhaps more analysis of culture and belief systems!"

"More in depth training on the challenges faced in specific areas i.e. health"

"Perhaps more on the most commonly abused but untenable rights?"

5.4 Additional comments

A range of additional comments were written on the evaluation forms, participants had particularly enjoyed the positive learning environment and the sociable

atmosphere at each training event. They welcomed the opportunity to speak to, and learn from, Gypsy/Travellers directly. In addition, they felt the seminars had been well-organised and delivered in an effective way:

"Fantastic atmosphere!"

"Thank you - very informative."

"Thanks to all the trainers for their input. It's been excellent but I'm ashamed at the intolerance and prejudice you and your families face"

"Well done, well structured and great atmosphere"

"A valued, worthwhile training session. Thank you"

"I really enjoyed the morning and felt it was very well delivered."

6. Conclusions

Overall, the training events seem to have been beneficial to all who attended. In addition to raising awareness about issues faced by Gypsy/Travellers they also allowed service-providers to promote their services to community members, for example one Gypsy/Traveller trainer went away with a bag full of information about NHS 24 Breathing Space, a service she had previously been unaware of.

The approach taken, having the session led by Gypsy/Travellers, gave these seminars a unique and interactive feel. As the evaluations show, hearing directly from community members about their experiences was both an eye-opener and a learning experience. All participants went away with new knowledge, and the introductory nature of the training left many wanting to know more. A final comment from one participant:

"I found it very insightful and learnt many new aspects of the Travelling life and that of the stigma and bullying that surrounds their community. I have a deeper appreciation and understanding of the mistrust that has been built up over the years and was very touched by the courage of those who ran the training to expose oneself to others in order to exchange an understanding"