



## The Sheffield-Gulu Mental Health Partnership

This leaflet outlines the work of the Sheffield-Gulu Mental Health Partnership and how you can get involved.



### Why Uganda?

Uganda is a low income country with an estimated population of 37 million. It is a country with one of the highest death rates from malaria in Africa and its mental health resources have to compete for funding with other preventable diseases with high death rates. The nation's commitment to and success in tackling malaria can be judged from figures which show that in 2001 only 1% of children were treated within 24 hours of contracting the condition and in 2011 this had risen to 48%. This is an example of Uganda's commitment to health issues.

However, it spends only 0.7% of the health budget on mental health services compared to 10% in the UK, and there are fewer than 40 psychiatrists in Uganda, mainly based in the capital, Kampala. Northern Uganda is a region recovering from the devastating impact of the terror campaign from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) over many years. The Trust is concentrating its work in Gulu, which is the main city in Northern Uganda.

### What is the Partnership?

The Sheffield-Gulu Partnership is a collection of organisations in Uganda and the UK who are working towards an aim of improving the support available to people with mental health problems in both cities. It is developing a two way learning process involving state provided services and voluntary organisations.

In Uganda this involves the Mental Health Ward at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital and the local branch of a service user organisation - Mental Health Uganda

In the UK the Sheffield Health and Social Care (SHSC) Trust is partnered with several groups:

- The Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, who plan to provide specialist Epilepsy training
- The Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in the Sheffield Children's Hospital
- The University Hospital of South Manchester are working in General Medicine in Gulu
- The Health Uganda Group- which is the Diaspora community in Sheffield provides support and advice
- A charity has been created, called the Sheffield Health International Partnerships (SHIP), which allows for flexible fundraising and Gift Aid to increase the value of money raised
- The Clinical Psychology Unit of Sheffield University is providing Monitoring and Evaluation support

### What does the Partnership do and what has it achieved?

The Partnership works with the Mental Health Ward providing training and supporting staff in their plans to change the service offered to patients. It also works with Mental Health Uganda in Gulu to support people in the community. The achievements so far include:

- Supporting the creation and maintenance of an Occupational Therapy service on the Mental Health Ward at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital. This OT service is provided on a day to day level by service user volunteers under the guidance of an Occupational Therapist
- Yoga has become an important element of the work of the OT service and this is supported by SHSC staff
- Supporting the creation of a Medical Library at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital
- Supporting the delivery of an Acute Illness Management course to staff on the mental health ward and the provision of basic physical health monitoring equipment.

- Enabling the installation of taps in the carers cooking area outside the mental health ward, with financial assistance from UNISON and an SHSC Non Executive Director. This has enabled patients carers to more easily access water for cooking. Ugandan hospitals often do not provide food for patients, having to choose between either providing medicines or providing food.
- Mental Health Awareness training has been provided to the local service user group, Mental Health Uganda. A Training the Trainers course has been delivered to Mental Health Uganda members in November 2013 which has enabled them to deliver these courses in the wider Gulu area. This will combat the stigma of mental health in Uganda and by doing do improve the quality of life of service users
- Financially supported a Pass a Goat scheme run by Mental Health Uganda. This scheme will enable 120 families to benefit over three years from an improved livelihood.
- RESPECT courses (to manage violence and aggression) has been provided to mental health ward staff at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital in November 2013. This is hoped to have a significant impact on Patient Safety and its effectiveness will be evaluated in February 2014.
- Developing a dedicated space in the mental health unit to create a childrens ward. This is in recognition of the need to provide differently for children and adults who are currently altogether.
- Hosting eight Ugandan mental health colleagues (2012-13) in Sheffield through the Commonwealth Fellowship Programme which is funded through the British Council and managed by the Association of Commonwealth Universities. Five more Commonwealth Fellows will be hosted in Sheffield in 2014

### **How can you get involved?**

There are a range of ways that you can get involved:

- Volunteering to get involved in the many 'behind the scenes' activities that are vital to support the work and represent the main part of the partnership work in Sheffield
- Taking part in fundraising activities
- Supporting our Ugandan partners, clinically or socially when they visit Sheffield.
- Donating money to SHIP on either a one off basis or regularly through a Standing Order. If this is combined with a Gift Aid form this will increase the value of your kind donation.
- Volunteer in Uganda if the partnership plan requires the skills you have.

**For more details please speak to either:**

**Greg Harrison, Partnership Coordinator. [greg.harrison@shsc.nhs.uk](mailto:greg.harrison@shsc.nhs.uk)  
or Kim Parker, Partnership Clinical Lead. [kim.parker@shsc.nhs.uk](mailto:kim.parker@shsc.nhs.uk)**

**Thank you**

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