

Connections

News and Information from
Manchester Alliance for Community Care



Safeguarding

The words may have changed in recent years, but the new term “safeguarding” covers a lot of familiar and important issues: child protection, domestic violence, elder abuse, protection of vulnerable adults. What all of these issues have in common is that it is everybody’s responsibility to help people exercise their fundamental human right to live a life that is free from abuse and neglect. Of course, this includes how services in all sectors respond to allegations of abuse but is also about how we prevent abuse — and promote and support wellbeing.

In the many voluntary, community and faith sector organisations in Manchester, improving practice around safeguarding is a priority. It’s about putting in place basic policies and procedures. This means looking at all areas of organisations—recruiting and training volunteers and staff, working with service users, working with other agencies. It means, for example, that legally required Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out, that policies and procedures are in place to know how to respond when abuse or neglect is suspected. But it starts with a need to understand what “abuse” and “neglect” actually means. Sadly, it’s much more complex than even the shocking stories reported in the media which tend to focus on physical and sexual abuse. Many issues are unreported - financial and psychological abuse are not generally given the same public attention and there is a generally poorer track record when it comes to prosecution of the people carrying out the abuse.

In this edition of **Connections**, we report on the work MACC is involved in to raise awareness of safeguarding issues within Manchester’s voluntary, community and faith sector and our work with other agencies to provide support.

Autumn 2008

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Health and Social Care

www.macc.org.uk/health_and_social_care

Safeguarding Adults: Everybody's Business

As we reported in our last issue of **Connections**, from October 2009 there will be a single Independent Safeguarding Authority and all employers from relevant organisations will have to check potential employees, if they are to work with children or vulnerable adults. The loophole would have been domestic employers who did not have to check an individual they wish to employ (such as a Personal Assistant through an Individual Budget) unless they wished to do so. This was raised at the Safeguarding Adults Board.

At the August Board meeting, Paul Cassidy informed the meeting that Manchester City Council has decided that all personal assistants employed through an Individual Budget, must be CRB checked (a proposal made by MACC at the Adults Health and Wellbeing Board in July). Other steps were being taken to ensure that the risks associated with giving people more choice, were safeguarded against.

Safeguarding adults is everybody's business and not just the responsibility of Adult Social Care. It is also important to remember that the ultimate intention of safeguarding policies is to prevent the abuse of vulnerable adults. This is why the voluntary and community sector participate in the Safeguarding Adults Board.

We have met recently with the Local Authority Head of Safeguarding, Deborah Russell, Nigel Hunt and Rohina Ghafoor to discuss the role of the VCS members of the Board and how, through the Board, we could raise awareness of the need for policies, procedures and protocols related to safeguarding, to be embedded into practice within the sector.

A meeting with the voluntary and community sector will be arranged by the Board officers for early October.

The Board accepts the principal that advocacy plays a prominent role within the safeguarding process: for an update on our work on this...see page 4.

MACC's website includes a number of pages on our work around safeguarding adults: www.macc.org.uk/msab - we're adding to these as the work progresses and building up a resource for local groups.

Social Care Reforms: Personalisation update

A briefing meeting was held between the City Council's Department of Adult Social Care and the local voluntary and community sector in June. Members of the MACC staff team made a presentation to the meeting which raised the importance of planning and managing transitional arrangements that will support market development and give time for providers to adjust.



There are currently 1400 people in Manchester in receipt of some form of Individual Budget, but we are still not in a position to say what people will choose to 'purchase' when the reforms are imbedded into the system, or if the 'choice' of services will still be available. We continue to press for recognition that the voluntary and community sector needs to be part of the solution rather than a potential problem.

The City Council is currently reorganising itself into "Business Units" to fit in with the personalisation agenda. Adult Social Care is being split into three divisions; Customer Support, Commissioning and Business Units. They will continue to commission/provide some preventative services. Many organisations are asking for a more transparent process, for example, that we need a clear commitment from commissioners that preventative services will be protected.

MACC has proposed a partnership approach so that we that we work jointly with local stakeholders, including Manchester City Council, to manage the planned period of transition from the current system towards the new market based era.

NHS Constitution

The Government has published a proposed constitution for the National Health Service. This is intended as a statement of the values of the NHS and people's rights to free services. While it's not yet clear what status the Constitution will have (i.e. if you will be able to use it in the NHS complaints process), it is an opportunity to let the NHS know what the public expects from it. For example, MACC's view is that the section on the right to services free from discrimination should also cover discrimination on the basis of age—which the draft document doesn't state.

If you have views you wish to feed in, you can send them directly to the Department of Health via the consultation details on their website (www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations) or contact MACC and we will include your comments in our response. **The consultation runs until 17th October 2008.**

Manchester Adult Social Care Consultation

Manchester City Council's Adult Social Care Department is asking for people to respond to a questionnaire about their services and policies. The aim is to gather feedback from people using the services, their carers and the general public about the present services and plans for the future. There have been a lot of changes recently in the provision of home care services and with the personalisation agenda more changes are on the way.

To take part, visit the Manchester City Council website (www.manchester.gov.uk and type in "adult social care consultation" to the search box - the first result links to the consultation pages) or contact MACC. **The deadline for responses is 7th November 2008.**

For further information contact **Mike Wild - mike@macc.org.uk**

Older People

www.macc.org.uk/older_people

Safeguarding Adults and Advocacy

Staff from the voluntary and community sector met with Nigel Hunt who is Manchester's Adult Safeguarding Co-ordinator, to discuss safeguarding and advocacy and how the voluntary and community sector can influence the work of the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Board has accepted the principal that advocacy makes an important contribution to safeguarding by strengthening the voice of people who feel unable to speak for themselves for a variety of reasons. There are unique challenges for advocacy services in working with safeguarding issues, particularly where the organisation concerned may have a legal duty to act (e.g. to inform statutory authorities) without the express permission of the person they working with.

The meeting was arranged to discuss ways of improving safeguarding policies and procedures and how they work in practice within the voluntary and community sector. MACC hosted the meeting with representatives from Gaddum Centre, Manchester Care and Repair, The Generation Project, Age Concern Manchester and Link-Age Advocacy and Information Project.

Nigel distributed his presentation on developing links between advocacy and safeguarding and focussed on the process and the importance of multi-agency working with safeguarding. The presentation is on the MACC website in the Health and Social Care section under Reports.

Issues raised by the voluntary sector organisations present included:

- the need for sharing how the processes and procedures work in practice with other agencies.
- consent, confidentiality and communication between agencies
- thresholds for reporting
- protecting vulnerable adults during the process of investigation
- feedback on outcomes following investigations

The meeting also discussed the need for clarity and understanding of the role of the advocate, the different models of advocacy and the importance of advocacy as part of safeguarding processes, including as a preventative tool.

Safeguarding and Advocacy will be on the agenda at the Manchester Older Peoples Network meeting for the voluntary and community sector on Wednesday October 29th.

The logo for the Manchester Older People's Network is a yellow circle with a white border, containing the text "MANCHESTER OLDER PEOPLE'S NETWORK" in black, uppercase letters.

MANCHESTER
OLDER PEOPLE'S
NETWORK

For more info contact **Mary Duncan - mary@macc.org.uk**

How Do You Support Wellbeing?

In focusing on safeguarding, it's important not to be solely concerned with protecting people - it's also about ensuring that people have the opportunity to live as they choose. Earlier this year, the Health & Wellbeing Network asked Manchester People First to hold an event for people with learning disabilities to talk about what affects their wellbeing - such as control over life & money, friends & relationships and people in our lives who help us feel good and keep well.

The day was a mix of workshops, networking time and stalls. Workshops included art, drama, magic and massage. During networking time, there were stalls people could have a look at such as the health stall "Lumps, Bumps and Squeezy Bits!" which covered testicular and breast cancer with models that people could feel for lumps. Blood pressure testing was also available along with a healthy eating stall with models of food, the Balance of Good Health and accessible information. This was matched with a "market stall" full of bowls of prepared fruit and fruit goodie bags for people to take, free of charge.

As well as the workshops there were other ways for people to record their views about their health and wellbeing. These included video recording sessions; work with an artist to produce portraits and comments and "nosey parkers" - a group of facilitators who chatted with people and recorded their views, and who also observed the workshops.

The key message from the event was about the need to have real control over their needs and wishes. For example, 49% of people present said that others had control of their money. 46% said they had control over their money but did not feel that it was complete control where they could come and go as they please and spend their money on what they liked without asking.

This tells a story about the way we need to provide services to people who need support but in a way which doesn't restrict their ability to make choices. Other recommendations were:

- Staff need training in how to support people and who is in control.
- People need real opportunities to have relationships.
- Individual Budgets (i.e. personalisation) should give people more opportunities to do things they want.
- Social Services need to respond to people's needs in a more person-centred way.

The full report (with some great photos!) is available on the MACC website in the Health and Wellbeing section under Reports.

For more information about Manchester People First visit their website www.manpf.org

For more info contact Jackie Kilbane - jackie@macc.org.uk

Children and Families

www.macc.org.uk/child_families

Safeguarding Children

As we reported in the last edition of **Connections**, there is now a voluntary and community sector subgroup of the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB). The Board is made up of agencies that work with children, young people and their families across Manchester and aims to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of the work that all sectors undertake to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

MSCB has developed a website (www.manchesterscb.org.uk) that has a wide range of policies and other resources designed to support everyone who works with children and families in Manchester in keeping children and young people as safe as possible. The most recent addition is the newly revised MSCB Multi-agency Protocol **Working Together to Safeguard Children from Domestic Abuse**, which includes clear steps to follow for workers who come into contact with families where domestic abuse is an issue. This is part of Manchester's Domestic Abuse Strategy and sits alongside MSCB Safeguarding Procedures. All agencies (including voluntary and community sector organisations) working with children or young people who are subjected to family domestic abuse are expected to implement this protocol and ensure that all relevant staff are aware of it and know how to use it.

Support in developing safeguarding practice

In the same way that we've established pages on MACC's website about Safeguarding Adults, we've also set up new pages about working with children and young people. This includes not only news about the MSCB but also a list of useful resources for local organisations - which we're developing all the time.

These pages now include:

- the diary of safeguarding training provided by MSCB which is open to voluntary and community sector organisations
- links to key areas of the MSCB website
- links to the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding

The NSPCC has also developed a toolkit for small organisations wanting to develop their safeguarding policies and procedures. This is **FREE** and includes a step-by-step guide to run a safe organisation as well as a DVD to explain the background, the issues around abuse and the role of organisations in stopping it. This is available at www.nspcc.org.uk/toolkit



MACC is also about to start some work with the safeguarding children voluntary sector subgroup around issues within faith organisations - we'll be circulating details soon.

Common Assessment Framework

The Common Assessment Framework (better known as “CAF”) is a new standard format for carrying out an assessment of a child or young person’s additional needs and deciding how those needs should be met. It can be used by anyone providing services to children in in England. It’s been developed as part of the Every Child Matters programme to provide a simple way for anyone who is involved in supporting a child to raise issues and communicate with other workers and agencies who are also involved.

For voluntary and community sector organisations it’s a means of flagging up a wider view of the needs of the child or young person taking account of the role of parents, carers, housing, neighbourhood and other factors which have an impact. By having a common form across all agencies, there is a way for information to be shared between those providing support and so help them to work together.

In Manchester, putting CAF into practice is being led by the City Council with officers in each district. Training on how to use the CAF is open to voluntary and community sector organisations - contact details for the team, training dates and more background information are on our website at www.macc.org.uk/caf - or contact us for further details if you don’t have internet access.

Recontracting Process

Manchester City Council’s Children’s Services funds a wide range of services delivered by the voluntary and community sector. The budget for these comes from a combination of funding streams (eg Children’s Fund) and mainstream budgets (eg Youth Services). Because each of these has evolved separately, the result for the voluntary and community sector has been a confusing array of contacts within the Council and a range of monitoring, financial reporting and data collection processes. To try to simplify this, MACC has been working with statutory colleagues to develop a rationalised approach. This is now looking at commissioning for 2009/10. The work focuses around 3 themes:

- parenting and family support
- youth and play
- emotional health and well-being.

Each is being led on by a commissioning manager who will be putting together a service specification for their area of work. Decisions will be made by city-wide representative panels for approval by the Children’s Board. Newly commissioned provision will be contracted for 2 years, subject to a review at 12 months. It is expected that these service specifications will be circulated late in October so that decisions can be made by the end of December 2008 to enable organisations with existing contracts to have sufficient notice to manage the risks around staff contracts and, where necessary, around any decisions to decommission.

For further information contact the MACC office.

Mental Health

www.macc.org.uk/mental_health

Manchester Mental Health Stakeholder Engagement Forum

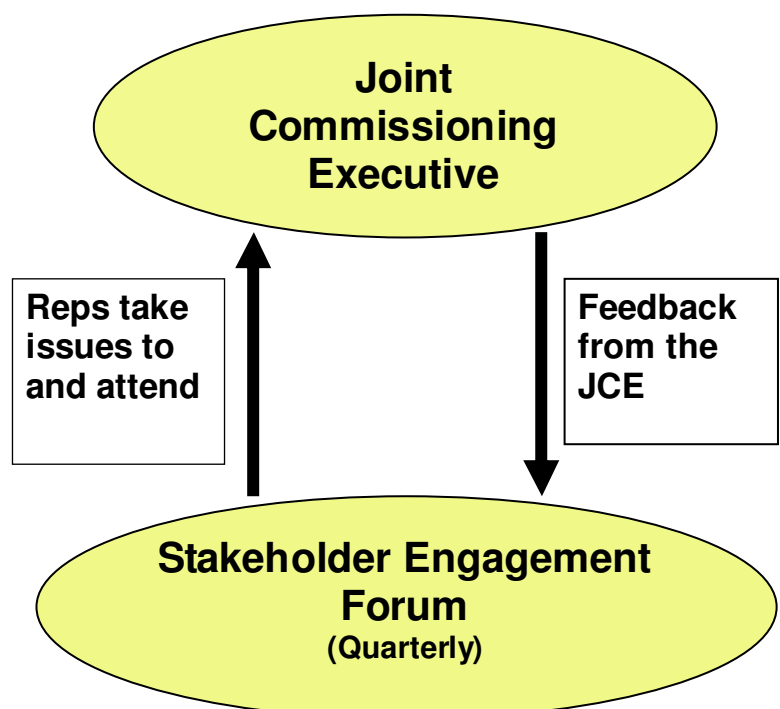
This is the new name for a group which is part of a redesigned “LIT” - that is the Local Implementation Team responsible for ensuring that the National Service Framework for Mental Health is put into practice in Manchester. The new Forum held its first meeting on 3rd September 2008.

The Forum is coordinated by the Mental Health Joint Commissioning Team and will meet every three months. It aims to give service users, carers, providers, commissioners and other invited people who may have a stake in Mental Health services for people aged 16 and above (including older age) an opportunity to:

- Exchange information on Mental Health service development
- Be involved as fully as possible in the implementation of the 10 year Mental Health Commissioning Strategy
- Help identify strengths and weaknesses across the Mental Health & Social Care economy
- Receive feedback from the Local Implementation Team (LIT) and raise issues that can be taken forward to the LIT for consideration.
- Keep up to date with policy development and changes.
- Meet with other people who have an interest in Manchester’s mental health services.

The other, more formal part of this new arrangement will still be called the “Local Implementation Team”—and will be included in the role of the Mental Health Joint Commissioning Executive. Service users, carers and representatives who attend this body will feedback its decisions to the Forum and also take issues raised at the Forum to the LIT.

The next Stakeholder Engagement Forum will be held on 17th December. If you would like to attend please contact Mohammed Abas (Policy, Strategy & Engagement Manager) or a member of the Joint Commissioning Team on 0161 237 2923.



External Assessment of Manchester's Mental Health Services

This assessment was jointly commissioned by Manchester Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Manchester City Council in April 2008 to assess the obstacles to mental health service development in Manchester and advise on courses of action to address these, in order to take forward and improve services.

The report makes a number of recommendations for action which support what many agencies have been saying for years. For a copy of the full report go to the MACC website (www.macc.org.uk) and visit the mental health reports section.

MACC was particularly pleased to see that the report highlighted some "excellent examples of good practice in the independent sector in Manchester" and also noted that "commissioning relationships need to be developed in order for the positive advantages of investment in the independent sector to be fully realised and also feature as part of the local NHS and the City Council communications strategy, especially in respect of making GPs and other staff aware of, and confident in services which are contracted from the independent sector".

The voluntary and community sector needs to be proactively engaged in commissioning and operational discussions and decisions about patient pathways and access criteria, and pathway training initiatives. It is especially important that the Care Trust and Joint Commissioners see the potential for engaging the sector's providers in partnership working to deliver more effective and user focused services.

Efforts need to be made to re-engage and sustain user and carer involvement. Relationships, and above all trust needs to be re-established with groups and individuals. Both the Care Trust, the NHS and the City Council need to invest in an effective infrastructure for sustained user and carer engagement and to work in partnership to avoid duplication of effort and make efficient use of user and carer time and capacity.

MACC's observation is that many service users, carers, independent sector colleagues and frontline staff from the care trust believe that the history of failure to deliver on the modernisation of mental health services in Manchester is linked in part to the top down nature of change processes, and an attitude of defensive response to criticism amongst senior management.

If change is to be brought about there needs to be a willingness to listen and respond to the voices and concerns, ideas and enthusiasm of people closer to the ground. MACC believes that this can be addressed by engaging users and carers in all aspects of the recruitment process for the new Chief Executive and Clinical Director vacancies at the Care Trust. In our experience, users and carers are well placed to assess which candidates have the essential skills and qualities to lead in an inclusive and engaging way. We strongly urge the Care Trust to take this opportunity to create a new culture of management and leadership.

Voluntary Sector Development

www.macc.org.uk/voluntary_sector_development

Turn Your Partnership Ideas into Reality!

Applying the same Business Improvement model that we have used over the last two years, MACC is now expanding that model to support voluntary and community organisations delivering services in any area of health and social care – e.g. Mental Health, Children and Families, Health & Wellbeing, Older People.

Our Partnership Working Project offers practical, tailor-made capacity building support to voluntary and community organisations who have already identified potential or existing partners that they wish to develop their relationship with. Partnership working is high on the agendas of both the statutory and voluntary sectors: it can help save costs, improve efficiency, avoid duplication of services and deliver services that groups would not have the capacity or resources to deliver alone. MACC supports the move towards increased partnership working but we recognise that developing partnerships and making them work effectively can be challenging and time-consuming - which is where we're offering to help.

We are keen to support and promote collaborative working in a variety of forms, across a wide range of organisations—but the kind of support we would provide would depend on your individual circumstances.

So contact us if...

- You're an established voluntary and community sector organisation delivering services in the city of Manchester. (We'll give priority to groups working in areas of the city which have fewer services than others)
- Your organisation has already identified potential partner(s) or has been working with them for some time and is ready to move on to the next stage in developing the relationship.

Unfortunately we don't have the time or money to be able to offer general training or support to organisations that are in the very early stages of thinking about collaborative work or who are looking for potential partners. If your organisation is taking its first steps towards partnership working, we'd advise you to visit the Collaborative Working pages of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations website for more information: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/cw

Our service is only available until the end of March 2009.

The first step would be for you and your identified partner(s) to meet with the Business Improvement Co-ordinator to discuss your partnership ideas and what would help you take things forward. The package of support would be FREE to your organisation!

For more information, or to discuss your partnership idea, contact our Business Improvement Co-ordinator Alison Tansey on 0161-834-9823.

For further information contact **Alison Tansey** - alison@macc.org.uk

Safeguarding

Vetting and Barring - The Independent Safeguarding Authority

In the last edition of **Connections** we reported on the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which will bring in new responsibilities for checking on staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. There is still very little information available about what this will mean for voluntary sector organisations: the process is still being drawn up so it's unclear what the impact will be. For example, we do know that the ISA system is being brought in gradually over a period of 5 years as from October 2009 - but there's no detail yet about exactly how this will happen and what organisations will need to have in place by a certain date. Over the next couple of pages, we set out what is known at the moment. **All voluntary, community and faith sector organisations need to consider the implications of this new procedure for the people who are involved in their activities - paid staff, volunteers and (potentially) trustees. Lots more organisations will be required by law to carry out checks than is the case at present.**

ISA Checks

Whenever you take on someone to work with children or vulnerable adults you will be required by law to check their ISA status. The kinds of work it covers are:

- Activity of a specified nature which involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively and/or overnight (e.g. teaching, training, care, advice, treatment, transportation).
- Activity allowing contact with children or vulnerable adults that is in a specified place frequently or intensively (e.g. schools, care homes, play schemes).
- Activity that involves people in certain defined positions of responsibility (e.g. school governor...and trustee of "certain charities" - see next page)
- Fostering and childcare

These are called **regulated activities**. It will be a criminal offence for an employer to allow a barred person, or a person who is not yet registered with the ISA, to work for any length of time in any regulated activity.

It will also be illegal for an employer to take on a person in a regulated activity if they fail to check that person's status.

The ISA guidelines also give examples of **controlled activities** - these are mainly concerned with support activities such as cleaners, caretakers, car park attendants, people with access to information and records. In these cases, you are still legally required to check the ISA status of a person before you take them on, but you may be able to employ a barred person provided certain safeguards are in place. This is mostly aimed at ancillary workers in the public sector and will probably not apply to most small and medium sized voluntary sector groups themselves—though it could potentially apply to the landlords of the premises at which your services or activities take place.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

The introduction of the ISA checks does NOT replace the existing CRB checks. An ISA check is solely about working children and/or vulnerable adults—it doesn't tell you about any other criminal record information. The person you want to take on could be registered with the ISA but still have a criminal record that would make the person unsuitable to do a particular job. Again, details on this are still emerging, particularly around the Enhanced CRB checks which some activities require. It seems likely that the same position will be adopted: everything currently in place concerning CRB checks will continue and the ISA process will simply be added.

Staff and Volunteers

Organisations will need to start providing information to new and existing staff (used below to cover both paid workers and unpaid voluntary workers) about their personal responsibilities under the scheme. You may need to offer staff additional help and support if they have any concerns about being checked by the scheme. Below is what we know so far:

- **How to apply:** it is the individual person who applies, not their employer. Staff can apply for registration through their employer - or a prospective employer if applying for a job (paid or unpaid) - but the employer is simply assisting with the process.
- **Existing staff:** those who have already had a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check will need to apply for ISA registration in due course. Staff who work with children or vulnerable adults and have not been CRB checked will need to apply for ISA registration as early as possible. Again, we don't yet know how quickly this will be brought into effect.
- **Fee:** People working in / applying for paid jobs will be charged a registration fee of £64. There is no fee for volunteers. There's no guidance at present about whether organisations are allowed to pay registration fees on behalf of new or existing staff.
- **Registration is portable:** Once you have paid for registration, the ISA will give you a personal ISA Registration Number and you remain on their database even if you change employers. People who are registered become "subject to monitoring" - which simply means that their record is being maintained.

Although this is being phased in over the next 5 years, it will be a big challenge—particularly for organisations who have not previously had to undertake CRB checks. It will be important to start planning how you will bring this into practice in your own organisation, for example:

1. Brief your trustees on their new legal responsibilities and the potential penalties: it will be illegal to employ someone in a regulated activity who is not

- registered with ISA and can result in imprisonment or a fine of up to £5000.
2. ISA checks on all new staff and volunteers - from October 2009 onwards.
 3. ISA registration for all staff and volunteers who have not been previously checked by the CRB.
 4. ISA registration for all those who have been CRB checked, starting with staff whose CRB checks are the oldest.

Fortunately organisations won't be charged for checking someone's ISA status. Once you have registered your interest in an individual as their employer, the ISA will automatically contact you should their status change – that is, if new information leads to an ISA decision to bar them from working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

It's not clear yet how much of this applies to charity trustees. At present, there are requirements that CRB checks are carried out for the following:

- Governors of independent schools
- Trustees of charities which are childcare organisations
- Trustees of charities which work with vulnerable adults and/or who provide care to vulnerable adults

In 2006 the Charity Commission required that organisations registering as charities working with “vulnerable beneficiaries” must provide CRB disclosures to prove that their trustees had been through CRB checks. This applies to new charities - but also established charities when appointing new trustees and includes charities which do occasional work with children or vulnerable adults.

Reporting to the ISA

Obviously, for the Vetting and Barring Scheme to work, information about individuals needs to be shared. Some organisations will have a legal obligation to pass relevant information about an individual to the ISA - including employers and service providers of regulated and controlled activity. This will probably cover all voluntary, community and faith sector organisations working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is suggested that this can be done by contacting the ISA directly or by contacting the relevant statutory agency (e.g. Children's Services) who will then decide whether or not to refer the information to the ISA.

Although this process is clearly needed to ensure that people who should not be working with children and vulnerable adults are prevented from doing so - it will create a lot of additional work for organisations and may be particularly off-putting to potential volunteers. Given that few organisations currently get full cost funding, MACC has concerns about the additional burden this will place on many organisations - particularly smaller groups. We aim to work with the local safeguarding authorities to find ways to support the local voluntary and community sector in bringing this into practice over the next few years. **For further information and regular updates, visit the ISA website www.isa.gov.org.uk.**

Data Protection

With increased use of information in safeguarding, it becomes ever more important for organisations to think carefully about how they handle and protect the personal information they hold about a whole range of people. Every organisation that holds or deals with personal information must notify the Information Commissioner's Office, unless they are exempt. Failure to notify is a criminal offence. "Personal information" is about a living individual who can be identified from that information and other information, which is in or is likely to come into your possession. So, it can be your name, address or telephone number. It can also be the type of job you do and the services you buy. Many voluntary and community sector organisations will hold this information for:

- Service users
- Carers, friends and relatives
- Volunteers
- Paid staff
- Next of kin / emergency contacts for volunteers and paid staff
- People you work with in other organisations

For us at MACC, we get lots of requests to give out information stored on our database of local voluntary sector organisations. These requests come from the public sector, private consultancy firms, journalists, other voluntary sector groups...the list goes on and is growing all the time. To protect the information people give to us, we have a Data Protection Policy to prevent misuse of data. This includes steps such as ensuring that no personal data is shared without prior consent from the person concerned. It's also important to us because we have to manage a great deal of personal information - not just about our own staff but also individual contact details for workers in many local voluntary and community sector organisations.

It's that time of year again for MACC...we have re-registered MACC's details with the Information Commissioner's Office. You can see an online copy of the Notification on the Data Protection register at:

<http://www.ico.gov.uk/ESDWebPages/search.asp>
Registration Number Z9595019.

We are currently in the process of checking that all the information we hold is accurate and up-to-date. Enclosed with **Connections** is a copy of the details we have about your organisation and a letter asking you to update it. If you're not currently on our database and would like to be added to our mailing lists and email bulletins, please contact us - or you can download a blank copy of the registration form from our website:

<http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/downloads/general/Contact%20Database%20Form.pdf>

We're currently updating our **Information Charter** and **Data Protection Policy** and will be publishing them on our website soon - as a statement of our own practice and also as examples of standard policies for other groups to consider adapting for their own use.

“Credibility Check”



Earlier this year, MACC engaged Judith Emanuel (a freelance consultant) to carry out a series of informal interviews with some of the people we work with on a regular basis in both the voluntary and statutory sectors. The aim was to learn more about how MACC is perceived and gather views on our strengths, weaknesses and future development. Judith's report is available on our website at www.macc.org.uk/publications

Overall, the findings show that MACC is a highly credible organisation and people were very satisfied with work done by MACC. The interviews emphasised the high quality of our work and strengths of the staff and their working relationships with them. The majority of people interviewed felt that they understood what MACC does: a wide range of roles was identified with the most being about bringing people and agencies together. All stakeholders valued the way MACC provides efficient mechanisms for people to keep in touch. Voluntary sector stakeholders especially valued the way MACC kept them informed and aware of the strategic picture. Statutory sector stakeholders valued the ways in which MACC helps them to engage with the voluntary sector and influence decision making.

While there was general recognition that MACC works to capacity, a need for more direct work with voluntary sector organisations was identified. Some stakeholders thought MACC should get more resources and expand to do this, though there was concern that expansion could change the organisation negatively. Where there were frustrations with the speed at which MACC could achieve change in how the statutory sector works with voluntary organisations, many stakeholders felt that MACC did a tough job well and the problem was with the responsiveness of local and national agencies, not MACC.

The report produced some clear recommendations for us:

- Developing information in more accessible forms, including about what MACC does and what MACC achieves
- Greater clarity about the role of MACC in relation to other umbrella organisations in Manchester
- Working in partnership with Black and Minority Ethnic organisations to address the needs of BME communities

We're currently taking actions to respond to these - here are some examples

- Improving the range of information about our work available on our website
- Reviewing and updating our Information Charter and publicity
- Working with other umbrella groups on topics such as a Third Sector Strategy for Manchester and the future shape of capacity building services
- Building our relationship with the Manchester BME voluntary sector network.
- Planning the next stage of our evaluation programme to gather wider feedback.

Other News

Urban Detox - 'Tools for Urban Survival'

Wednesday 15th October 8pm-2am
Night & Day Café Central Manchester

Urban Detox is a partnership between Manchester Early Intervention in Psychosis Service, YASP (HARP), Central Manchester Primary Care Mental Health Team and 42nd Street. They have come together to promote positive solutions to the toxicity of urban living. A series of events is planned to promote positive mental health, challenge stigma and encourage people to seek help should they need it. To celebrate World Mental Health Day they are holding an Urban Detox event at Night & Day Café. This will include live performances from Haven, George Borowski, Mike Gary and DJ Jam Nelson. (Tickets are £3.00 booked in advance from www.ticketline.com, from Night & Day Café or from Paul on 8612343. 18+ only).

Following this, a young people's event is planned for early December. The event, expected to take place at URBIS will give young people opportunities to take part in a range of activities including demonstrations and workshops on street football skills, skating, djing, film, street dancing, graffiti skateboards and complimentary therapies.

All the activities are designed to offer an antidote to living in an urban environment, promoting positive mental health for all.

Produced by
Manchester Alliance for Community Care
Swan Buildings 20, Swan Street
Manchester M4 5JW

Tel: 0161 834 9823
Fax: 0161 832 2352
Email: info@macc.org.uk
Website: www.macc.org.uk
Online forum: www.macc.org.uk/forum

MEETINGS DIARY

- **7th October 2008**
Local Involvement Network "Big Tent" event 11am onwards
Piccadilly Gardens
- **7th October 2008**
Community Network for Manchester AGM
see www.cn4m.net.
- **29th October 2008**
Manchester Older People's Network (Voluntary Sector)
2pm—4pm
Cross Street Chapel
- **11th November 2008**
Manchester Older People's Network (Older people only)
11am - 3.30pm
Cross Street Chapel
- **12th November 2008**
Voluntary Sector Mental Health Forum
10am - 12noon
Contact us for details.
- **18th November 2008**
Child and Family Support Forum
10am - 12noon
MACC office.
- **20th November 2008**
Health and Wellbeing Network 10am - 12noon
MACC office.

Please contact MACC if you need support in taking part in any of these meetings.