

Below is a brief write up of the Dumfries & Galloway and Ayrshires Local Learning Network Conference

Leap into Learning - "A Partnership Approach"

4th June 2008, Park Hotel, Kilmarnock

The focus of this conference was to encourage delegates to embrace learning and also raise awareness of the Local Learning Network. Local colleges/universities, voluntary and private sector organisations were invited to showcase their organisations and share information.

The day started with an ice breaker; this gave delegates the opportunity to speak to someone they didn't know. Every three minutes delegates were given a new question to think about and discuss with fellow delegates.

There were two key note speakers on the day.

The first speaker was James McKillop, Chair, Scottish Dementia Action Working Group. James talked about living with dementia, the frustrations of professional diagnosis, the impacts and implications on everyday life and the support he has been given.

The second speaker, Brian Smith, Scottish Social Services Council discussed registration requirements.

Delegates were given the opportunity to question the speakers, this proved to be a popular session.

Rather than formal evaluation, delegates were given the opportunity to contribute their comments onto 'graffiti walls' around the room.

The following statements were posted by delegates on the day:

"Really enjoyed the talk by James. This talk reminded me of the importance of continued learning."

"East Ayrshire' staff were present at today's training and many different resources were made available to them. However the "decision makers" who have the authority to commission training did not attend. Therefore, staff understand their responsibilities to develop their learning; however the managers do not have the knowledge of the range of services on offer."

"I was humble, ashamed and inspired by James McKillop. It was great to hear that the work we undertake can make a difference, as you can sometimes get caught up in all the paperwork that is attached to social services."

"Excellent conference and James was an inspiration to all dementia patients".

"James was an inspiration – A great speaker".

"SSSC speaker too focused on social work too specific."

“As I suspected, there was a lot of interest in the ‘Leadership and Management of Care Award and Kirwin Associates books about “Theory” and ‘the law’ as good resources for SVQ Levels 3 and 4.”

“I was reminded, once again, of the adage ‘less is more’. We were worried about the day but it worked well. There were enough inputs, no more was needed”

“I thought the icebreaker exercise worked really well and could have been even better if we’d had more time to think it through. GOOD IDEA!”

“Fascinated by James McKillop’s story – inspirational. Appreciated the networking opportunities and learning about the other people’s experiences.”

All in all the day was a success and we plan to hold a similar event early next year.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the day.