

It takes a village volunteer....

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Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland



- About Cruse Scotland
- Why do volunteers do it?
- What difference do they make?



About Cruse Scotland

- Initially established in England in 1959
- Services started in Scotland late 60's
- Scottish services devolved in 2002
- “as long as they looked after each other they would always have resources both for others and for themselves....”

What we do

- Support given by local community ('village') volunteers
- Services free at point of delivery
- Support offered to everyone – all ages
 - Regardless of type of bereavement
- Support offered anytime – no time limit
 - website, phone, face to face, email support, support and drop in groups.

What we do

- Volunteers support people bereaved by any cause:
 - Drugs and alcohol, suicide, murder, accident, natural causes, many others
- Support delivered to clients when / how they want to receive it
- Working within the COSCA ethical framework
 - Cruse Scotland training validated by COSCA .
- Services are available across Scotland
- Local area support groups: developing community networks/identifying local need.

Our volunteers 2015/6

- 300 volunteers Caithness – Dumfries and Galloway
- Giving over 42,000 hours of time
- Worth an estimated economic value of over £1million
- Volunteers
 - Gave information and support to 11,743 callers to Helpline
 - Supported 4,330 new clients
 - Undertook over 3,000 hours training

Why do volunteers do it?

The stories project

- Volunteers on themselves, by themselves
 - EAPC Stories Project
- Approach, numbers, anonymity
- Response
- Openness, honesty richness of information

Story prompts

- “What motivated you to volunteer with Cruse Scotland?”
- “What does your role involve?”
- “What does volunteering with bereaved people mean to you?”

Motivations

- Experience of loss
 - Personal experience of loss -12
 - (of which 2 had experience as CS clients)
 - (of which one had received counselling elsewhere)
 - Supporting others through loss as professionals -2
 - Supporting others through loss - personal experience -1
- Personal/professional development – 6
- Looking for something worthwhile/to give back – 2

“Unfortunately it took the tragedy of my 16 year old nephew) dying in a road traffic accident to change things. I had never witnessed the level of grief my Sister was experiencing Within a year or so my Sister contacted Cruse and started working with a Counsellor – the relief for everyone was incredible, but along with this relief came a curiosity and if I’m being honest, a slight resentment within me. I wanted to be that person who was able to help someone whilst they were in this amount of despair. This is where my counselling journey began”.

(Volunteer 5)

“Having lost both parents over a relatively short period of time I received some counselling through my employment, the memory of the help I received stayed with me and it was at this juncture I decided to try bereavement and loss counselling”.

(Volunteer 4)

“A counsellor from Cruse listened to me and reassured me that firstly, I was not going mad.. and all the emotions I was experiencing (anger, sadness, loneliness, jealousy, disbelief, shock and frustration) were normal. Just being listened to helped me enormously and got me back on my feet. For this I am forever grateful. It was then that I knew one day I would in some way like to give something back by helping this very worthwhile charity”.

(Volunteer 17)

Additional Motivations

- Recommendation from a colleague
- Recommendation from Cruse volunteer
- The warmth of response from Cruse Scotland
- Hearing the experiences of a client

“It is many years since I saw an article in the local newspaper advertising a training course about bereavement, being run by Cruse – an organisation I had never heard about! I was immediately interested as during my time as a nurse I had been with bereaved relatives, comforting them as best I could but feeling so inadequate and still holding the image of distressed relatives leaving the ward, having to find their own way home and often wondering how they would cope and if they would have any support in the days, weeks and months ahead”.

(Volunteer 2)

“I was interviewed by X, who ran the office at that time and found her enthusiasm and passion supporting bereaved people so infectious that I agreed there and then to join the team. I love helping people so the opportunity to train to help people struggling with their loss felt right for me – and indeed it has been.”

(Volunteer 3)

“It was a chance discussion with a woman who had used the services of Cruse. Her story was about how she came to be bereaved, the devastating impact that it had on her life and the help she received from Cruse. She commented that it was this help that sustained her during the most difficult period of her life. I needed to find out more so onto the Web and some searching around provided me with the basic information and how to apply.” (Volunteer 14)

What volunteering means



- The 'privilege' of being with clients on their bereavement journey
 - 'Humbling', 'rewarding', 'fulfilling'
- Helping others: making a difference
 - Client's journey to acceptance and living again
 - Supporting the organisation
- Feeling part of something worthwhile, connection to others.
 - 'Belonging', 'part of a team', 'purpose', 'support', 'friendship'

“Each time someone speaks to me they entrust me with their inner most feelings, feelings that they may never have told anyone before and I feel privileged that they have been able to trust me enough to have done so. I am constantly amazed by the change that can happen simply by enabling someone to speak and say exactly what they feel, not having to worry about being judged or negatively affecting those around them.”

(Volunteer 13)

“It is a privilege to be accepted as part of another human being’s support network and coming into contact with clients whose lives have been shattered is a humbling experience and one I never take for granted. It is however a two way street and I can honestly say I have gained equally as much as I have given over the years.”

(Volunteer 15)

“Learning to sit ‘in the moment’ with someone who opens their heart to you is work that can be so rewarding, especially as you ‘hold them’ and see them emerge and gain strength over the weeks, ready to face the world again, albeit in a different way.”

(Volunteer 9)

What volunteering means



- Personal meanings – in honour of someone who has died
- Meaning in people receiving same support as they had
- Meaning in being able to use inherent skills.

“Cruse gives me a feeling of belonging to something of worth..... It gives me the chance to meet new people. It gives me a purpose. It allows me to help people through something I’ve experienced myself and found impossibly difficult- losing someone you love, through bereavement”. (Volunteer 18)

“I enjoy meeting up with colleagues at Cruse where the opportunity to share knowledge and seek support makes my journey a pleasurable and rewarding one.” (Volunteer 16)

“It lets me use inborn skills and qualities which I have, such as warmth, compassion, empathy and the ability to connect.” (Volunteer 18)

*“Although I am not personally involved with clients, I like to think I am helping to ‘keep the wheels turning’ in the process of getting assistance to bereaved people once they have taken the giant step of asking for help.”
(Volunteer 7)*

Other experiences

- Pride in their work- giving best possible support
- Significant responsibility - challenging and complex nature of bereavement.
- Range of people from all walks of life - adults and children.
- People bereaved in many different ways including suicide, the loss of a child and fatal accidents.

Growth and development



- Growth through personal experience of loss - helping others.
- Clear commitment to ongoing learning.
- Opportunity to develop practice and skills and see these progress.
- Developing confidence, finding skills they didn't know they had.
- Value of the training
- Understanding bereavement, and the uniqueness of grief.

What difference do volunteers make?

Evaluating Impact

- Introduction of WEMWBS¹
- Range of assessment tools considered
- Evidence based
- Measure changes in wellbeing
- Designed for programmes aiming to improve mental wellbeing.
- Easy for clients, easy to administer, cost effective

1. Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)



Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.

Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks

STATEMENTS	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling useful	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling relaxed	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling interested in other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've had energy to spare	1	2	3	4	5
I've been dealing with problems well	1	2	3	4	5
I've been thinking clearly	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling close to other people	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling confident	1	2	3	4	5
I've been able to make up my own mind about things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling loved	1	2	3	4	5
I've been interested in new things	1	2	3	4	5
I've been feeling cheerful	1	2	3	4	5

Customising

- Ability to add 3 specific questions
- Impact of bereavement
- Evidence for funders
- CBCS statements and scoring
 - ‘I felt able to return to work’
 - ‘I am able to focus and concentrate’
 - ‘I visited by GP less often’

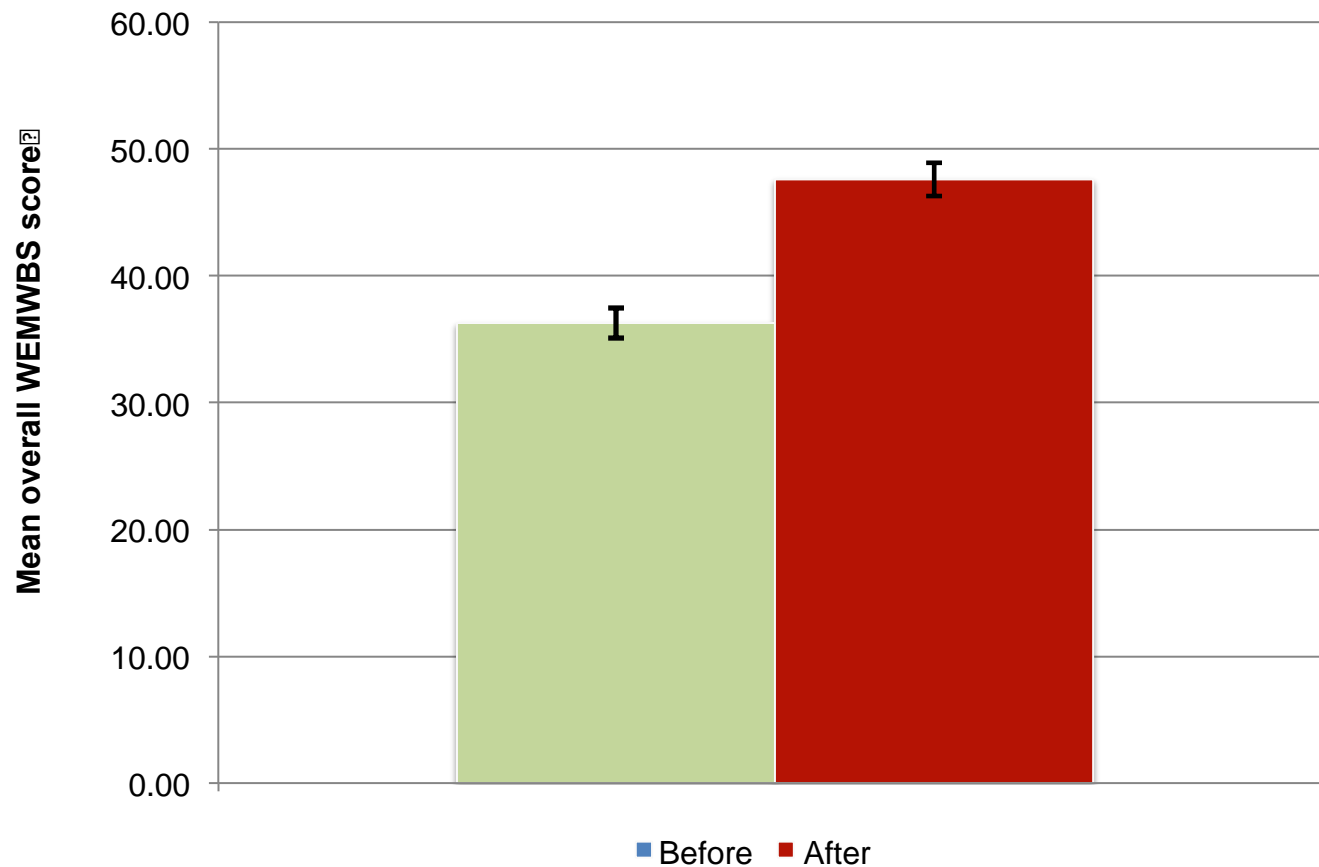
Challenges

- Volunteer concerns
- Over protection/paternalism?
- Preparation
- Feedback following implementation

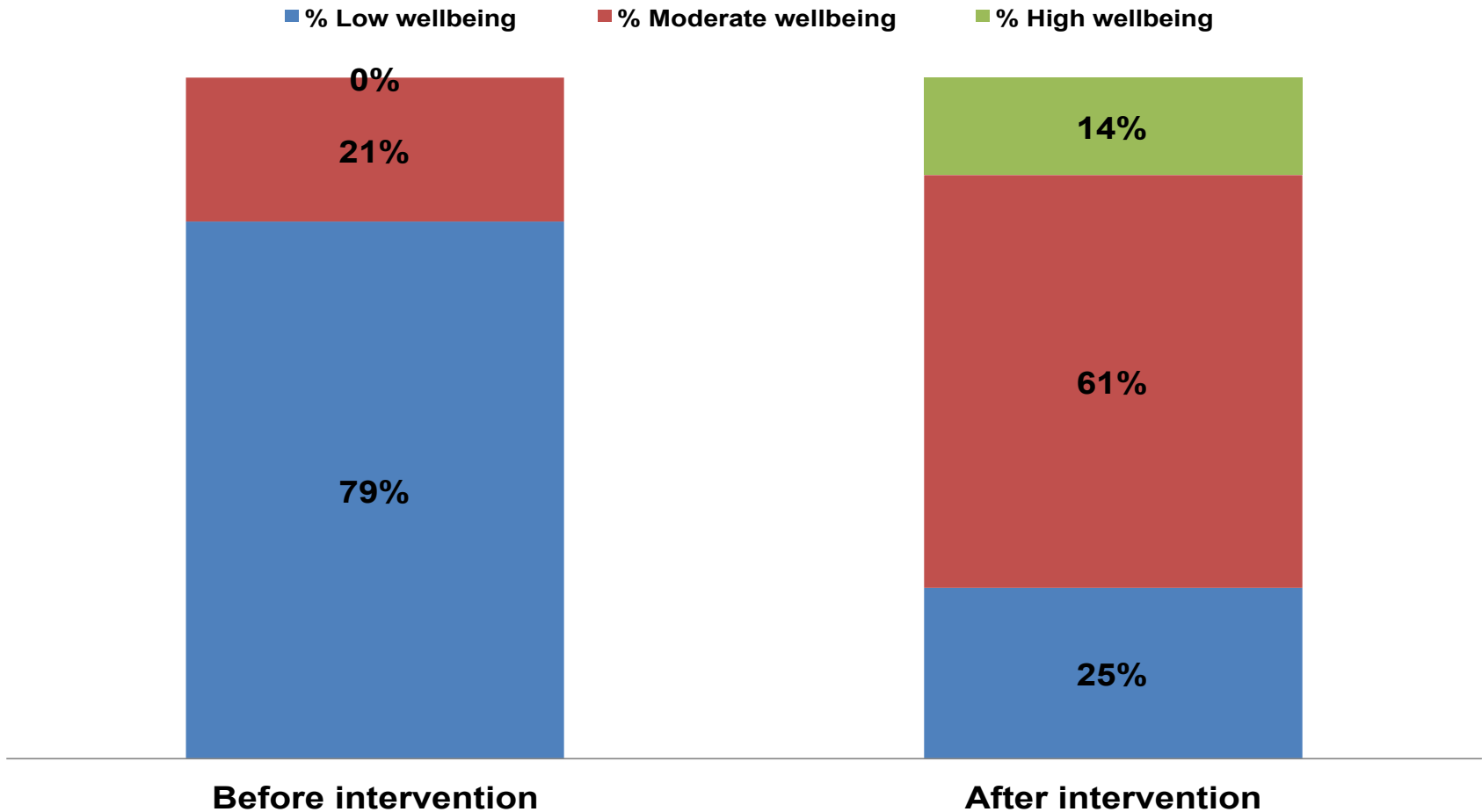
Implementation

- Piloted West Area Feb - Nov 2015
- Roll out in November 2015
- 1st year April 15- March 16:173 clients
- Female: 73%
- Age groups:
 - 16-24: 9%,
 - 25-39: 17%,
 - 40-54: 40%,
 - 55-64: 16.5%,
 - 65+: 16.5%

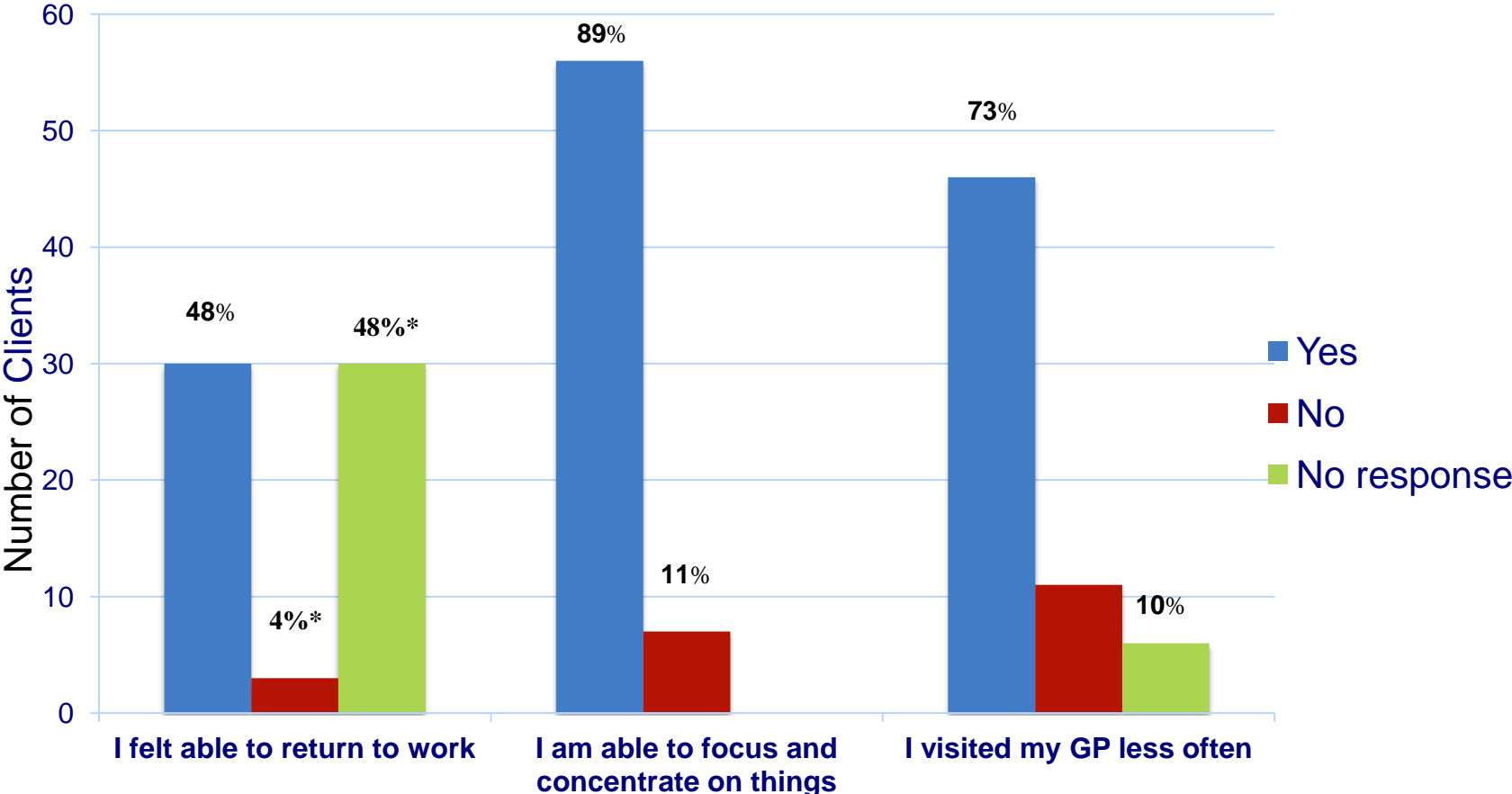
First year results



Wellbeing Improvement



Cruse Scotland Questions



Evaluation next steps

- Fully embed in reporting cycles
- Explore socioeconomic results
- Wider WEMWBS application?
- More detailed analysis and reporting
- Year on year trend comparisons

"I can never explain how much CBCS counselling has meant to me. I am a very practical, level-headed person who generally copes well. I can be depended upon to be strong, to guide and nurture. But for a time last year, the real me was in danger of being lost for good. Who would have thought that some hours spent in the company of a relative stranger, could make such a difference? Their skills are subtle, but very effective."

Thank You

<http://www.crusescotland.org.uk>