Chair’s Report

In 2012-13 there have again been some big changes for NIWE. In May 2012 we appointed a new Development Officer who started in May after the previous post holder left in February. We moved premises on 12th December 2012 (12.12.12!) without disruption to the service provided and in October finally completed the incorporation as a Company Limited by Guarantee and as a charitable company. This year NIWE had 1502 contacts with individuals, 199 with supporters/carers, 629 with professionals, and provided 141 one to one consultations and three therapy groups for women. This shows a significant increase in the overall number of contacts in 2011-12 (see comparison chart on the next page).

We are very grateful to Northern Rock Foundation for agreeing to continue the part funding of the post of the Chief Executive and half of the rent, funding which will however be tapered from 2014, and for funding the post of NIWE’s Development Officer. We are also grateful to the Primary Care Trusts of Newcastle and North Tyneside (now handed over to CCGs) and to Newcastle City Council for their continued funding of our service. Gateshead Primary Care Trust also gave a one-off grant to NIWE at the end of the financial year in 2012 which greatly helped the core service in 2012/13. We are also grateful to RW Mann Trust for their donation.

In 2012/13 we have also welcomed some new volunteers, both as potential trustees and to help with the work of NIWE, as well as beginning the placement of our first counselling trainee and setting up the pilot counselling service. The Staywell group for those in recovery from an eating disorder was established and volunteers helped with this too.

In these continuing recessionary times, we have much additional work to do in order to position the organisation for achieving contracts and to offer a faster and greater range of help for service users. We are in a better position to pursue this after the intense effort put into our research on NIWE’s Evidence, Effectiveness, Quality and Impact, ably steered by Trapeze Consulting and funded by a Northern Rock Foundation Learning and Support Grant.

This year we will be working on:

- Securing contracts for NIWE core services going forward
- Seeking funding for a counselling service and continued development work
- Improving the website
- Achieving extra funding to run more groups for women with eating distress

Lyn Boyle    Chair of Trustees
Service Statistics

The table below shows that although contact from professionals was slightly down on the previous year, there were significantly more contacts from individuals and supporters/carers and a higher number of one to one consultation visits, demonstrating that the need for NIWE services continues to grow year on year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation visits</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal supporters/carers</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with eating distress</td>
<td>1344</td>
<td>1502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart below shows the geographical split of contacts by area during the period covered by this report. Newcastle and North Tyneside accounted for over 2/3 of the contacts NIWE received.
The following information is taken from the research referred to in the Chair’s Report, which included the period 2012-13 and is typical of how service users tend to hear about NIWE. It shows that although half of these survey respondents first approached their GP for help with their ED, 15% heard about NIWE from their GP; the same proportion who found out about NIWE from a counsellor. The most popular way of hearing about NIWE was from NIWE itself, via its online and offline publicity. According to the survey, a fifth of respondents (21%) heard about NIWE from non-primary care professionals (hospital, nurse, CPN and social worker).

When asked what help they received from NIWE, most of the 61 women who responded had been put on a waiting list for a group and then went on to take part in group therapy. Just under a third (31%) saw someone for 1:1 support, which could include 1:1 support whilst waiting for a group to start.
NIWE Therapy Group Service

A committed team of experienced accredited counsellors deliver our group work service on a sessional basis. During 2012-13, NIWE groups were facilitated by the following counsellors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nazia Ahmed</th>
<th>Helen Allott</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lorna McCarthy</td>
<td>Maureen McGrath</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The administration of the group work service in 2012-13 was carried out by NIWE Admin and Finance Officer Karen Hannah, who joined NIWE in May 2012.

During 2012-13, there were three therapeutic groups for women with eating distress/disorders, offering a choice of day and evening groups. The groups were for women aged 18 and over (no upper age limit) from across the region who have a troubled relationship with food.

Groups generally last for ten weeks and there is encouragement to attend more than one group, as difficulties with eating can take time to resolve. The groups also support women in considering the other issues that often underlie the eating problem, for example low self-esteem, bullying, relationship issues, domestic violence, abuse, alcohol problems, self-harming or bereavement.

NIWE wishes to support individuals with eating problems for as long as they continue to need help, whether we are providing the help directly or signposting to other services.

“What I really liked about the NIWE group was that there was no judgement whatsoever which was a first and really nice...and when someone else did well it spurred you on and gave you confidence, which you would not be able to get from 1-1 therapy.”
What people have said about the therapy group service

“I felt able to talk about things I haven’t said at other counselling sessions. The attitude/atmosphere felt like it was very much about listening to each other, no pressure to say or do anything, and to help people work things through themselves, with the support of the group.”

“When I’m not at the group, they are still with me as my cheerleaders.”

“I can’t find the words to say how much this group session really helped me on my journey of change and acceptance... I feel sure if counselling was made more available, people would not take the route of surgery. It may deal with the weight but it does not deal with what got them there in the first place, the root of their trouble!”

“I feared group therapy. NIWE being my first experience has taught me I have nothing to be afraid of.

“NIWE is like a lovely warm blanket where I feel safe to talk.”
Staywell Recovery Group

NIWE is so pleased to be helping to meet the gap in services for people recovering from eating disorders / distress. Local people had told us about their experience of finding nowhere to go for support to after leaving hospital, other mental health services.

The Staywell group acts as a step down service providing activities, support and information for people in recovery from eating disorders and distress. A lot of independent evidence points to the benefits of this type of provision, helping people to maintain their recovery and avoid going back into treatment and services, including hospital.

We set up a steering group for the project which included ex-service users, ex-hospital patients, a NIWE trustee and partners from REDS (the Richardson Eating Disorder service at the RVI Newcastle) and the Hungry for Change campaign group. The steering group undertook a survey of potential users. 77 ex-service users were surveyed with 19 replying, which is a 24% response rate.

Survey Results

- 94.4% of respondents believed there was a need for the Staywell Group
- 61.1% were interested in taking part
- 77.8% expected the group to provide support activities and information
- Respondents suggested a wide range of practical ideas for the group, including information sharing, recovery tips newsletter, visiting speakers, arts and crafts activities, relaxation, yoga and complementary therapies etc

NIWE was invited by the Community Foundation to be part of the first event in the North East for the innovative Funding Network, known as ‘the friendly Dragons’ Den’ for charities and potential donors. The steering group has written a bid and is busy working on a presentation and pitch to be made in April 2013. (To see NIWE's participation in the subsequent Funding Network event, see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ei8X2ajza_w)

The Staywell group meets fortnightly on a Thursday evening and has run sessions in different approaches to recovery, yoga, exercise to music, health benefits of
volunteering, confidence building and aromatherapy; held discussions on psychological therapies; run a film night, and is very excited to be currently working with local textile artist, Ali Rhind, to produce a ‘Recovery’ proggy mat wall-hanging.

Training and Education
NIWE runs training courses in eating distress/disorders at two levels for professionals; body image and self-esteem workshops and ED awareness talks and sessions. We offer awareness and education workshops and talks to a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations and groups.

We have had a busy year to March 2013, with a number of bookings already in the diary for next year, in particular a Time Out session for Newcastle GPs, and Body Image and Self Esteem workshops for Whitley Bay High school in partnership with MESMAC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Education Sessions</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training/workshops</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and awareness talks</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants this year have included:
- Sacred Heart School
- Northumberland NHS Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Group
- North East NHS Health Trainers Conference
- Gateshead College – Celebrating Diversity Event
- Saville Medical Group
- Scotswood Natural Community Garden Youth Project
- ‘The Kids are Alreet’ Young Carers Conference
- Northumberland and Tyneside Relate Counsellors
- Derwentside Primary Care Counsellors
- Newcastle World Mental Health Day
- Newcastle University Students’ Union Mental Health Day
Counselling Pilot

NIWE’s counselling service began in July 2012 with the placement of a trainee counsellor, Katie Cullinane, who was able to work with three clients in her time with us.

The service has continued with a volunteer counsellor, Viv Armstrong. One of the clients who has since left counselling made steady progress with self-esteem and eating issues, and appreciated the help of the counsellor.

Some of the issues experienced by our counselling clients include:

- self esteem issues
- family relationships
- eating distress
- discrimination

“I started work with NIWE’s counselling service in January 2013. Since then, I have seen five clients from a range of different cultures, consisting of one Black African, one Bangladeshi and three White British. There have been a total of seventy-nine counselling hours, ranging from two to thirty sessions per client.

The types of eating distress/disorder presented were binge-eating issues, anorexia and restricting and purging issues.

At the beginning of counselling, each client’s scores were measured using standard measurement tools for anxiety and depression and when measured at the end, it was found that they had improved in every case. “

Viv Armstrong, volunteer counsellor

“My counsellor has helped me assess relationships in my life and recognise which are helpful and which are not. She has helped me to build confidence to pursue work and leisure opportunities. I now have a stronger awareness of my thoughts and feelings and the reasons why they are there.”
Service users and volunteers at NIWE

NIWE is very fortunate to have a number of volunteers, service users and sessional workers who give freely of their own time to help develop and sustain the service. Volunteers have been involved in many ways during 2012-13, including:

- Trustees giving time for regular meetings and sub group
- Provision of counselling
- Launching NIWE research
- Delivery of talks to schools
- Involvement in planning meetings/strategy meetings
- Devising and running a Forum Theatre production for NIWE’s 2012 AGM
- Helping to run NIWE’s stalls at health events
- Fundraising activities, including a zip wire ride across the Tyne, DWP dress-down day, collections at supporters’ family events, a theatre club and regular monthly donations from ex-service users and supporters

Students

NIWE has also hosted a Trainee Counsellor student placement from South Tyneside College (Katie Cullinane) and a Career Development Module student from Newcastle University (Amy Grover).

AGM 2012 – Forum Theatre

We were grateful to the volunteer local theatre workers and musicians who devised and produced The Forum Theatre or ‘Theatre of the Oppressed’ production at our last AGM. One of our commissioners who attended felt, ‘It brought the work and the problems of eating distress to life and I learned more about the organisation.’
NIWE would like to thank Vivienne Armstrong, Katie Cullinane, Amy Grover, Audrey Rogers, Jos Wrightson, Kathy Wilson, Isabell Okongwu-Scicluna, Karen Tite, Mark, One Love Productions, Eleni Venaki and all of our other volunteers and supporters for their valued contributions during 2012-13.

Collaborative Working
NIWE is a member of many local groups and forums:

- Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group: Patient, User, Carer, Public Involvement forum (PUCPI)
- Gateshead Voluntary Organisational Council (GVOC) Voluntary Sector Mental Health Group
- Newcastle Health & Race Equality Forum
- Newcastle West CCG Community Forum
- Newcastle World Mental Health Day and Let’s Talk Mental Health event planning group
- North East Eating Disorders Action Group (NEEDAG)
NIWE has working links with a number of partners from the region and beyond, including:

- B-eat
- Community Foundation - The Funding Network
- East End Community Development Alliance
- Eating Matters - Norfolk
- Gateshead College
- Institute of Fundraising
- Launchpad - Newcastle
- MESMAC
- MIND
- Newcastle University Students Union
- Newcastle University Wellbeing service
- Northumbria University Wellbeing service
- Regional Health Trainers
- S.E.E.D – Sympathy and Empathy for Eating Disorders - Hull
- South Yorkshire Eating Disorders Association
- Them Wifies
- Women’s Health and Equality Consortium

**NIWE in Parliament!**

The work that NIWE does to raise awareness about eating distress and disorders is vital and we are passionate about it. The recovery rate for someone with an eating disorder is greatly improved the earlier they get a diagnosis and help / treatment. We have always helped local professionals to recognise early signs of eating problems and undertake specialised work through our training courses and visits to schools, youth groups etc. so we were really happy to have the opportunity to be part of raising awareness at a national level with people of influence.
We worked with Mary Glindon, MP for North Tyneside, on content for the Eating Disorders Parliamentary Debate in Westminster Hall, London that took place on February 14th 2013. Mrs Glindon talked about local people with eating disorders and went on to explain that while funding in the North East is particularly limited, NIWE is still managing to continue the ‘amazing service that it has provided for the past 24 years.’ She praised NIWE’s newly launched Staywell group for providing a much needed service to those in recovery.

Mrs Glindon suggested that some funding would be better spent on ‘working upstream’ helping small charities like NIWE, than dealing with the re-admission to hospital of those who lack such support. She praised NIWE for its high success rate and reiterated concern about rising numbers of people affected by eating distress. She closed by asking the Government to support charities like NIWE in the North East for the ‘fantastic and fundamental’ work that they do.

If you would like to view the full debate, or read the full transcript, log on to www.parliamentlive.tv Click the What’s On button on the bottom left side of screen; click on Archive on left hand side of screen; use search facility to search for - Topic : Eating Disorder awareness; Place: Westminster Hall (unclick Others); date: 14 February.

**Promoting the Service**

Our statistics show that many people find out about NIWE via the internet and social media, so we are therefore further developing our online presence through refreshing our website and developing our Facebook and Twitter use.

We are also working on a new service leaflet with funding support from the Mental Health Foundation North East.

We are grateful to Ben Hoare Bell for sponsoring our banner and to Proctor and Gamble for sponsoring this year’s Annual General Meeting.

**Evaluation – how well are we working?**

NIWE is continually reviewing its services, effectiveness and user satisfaction and we have again revised our group therapy evaluation questionnaires. The Staywell group has decided to use the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) to help measure the benefits of being in the recovery group. We are also planning to use this standard system, which is now being widely used in health settings, for all of NIWE’s group therapy work in addition to our other measures.
Trust Board Members
With NIWE’s change of status through incorporation into a charitable company limited by guarantee in October 2012, the Management Committee became the Board of Trustees and three ‘founding directors’ were required to set up the new organisation. During 2012-13 the Board of Trustees comprised:

| Lyn Boyle (Chair & Founding Director) | Catherine Moody |
| Katie Cullinane (Founding Director)   | Dr Joanne Neely |
| Jessi Lowry                           | Eleni Venaki (Founding Director) |
| Dr Polly Washington                  |