



Women's Health Network International Women's Day Report

Be Bold for Change



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Introduction

International Women's Day 2017 was a day to celebrate women and this year's theme was '**Be bold for change**'. The Women's Health Network (WHN) agreed that an event should be held to mark the day. A task group was set up with volunteers from the Network; Michelle Taylor (WHN Co-chair The Rockwell Centre), Ingrid Dzerins (individual), Masira Hans (Sharing Voices), Yasmin Begum (Sharing Voices), Sandra McIntosh (BDCT Governor), Tracy Higgins (WHN Development Consultant) and Saima Ashfaq (CNet).

The event was supported jointly by CNet and Sharing Voices Bradford, and took place on Wednesday 8 March 2017. Approximately 50 people attended including speakers.

Programme

The programme included talks from inspiring women leaders, inspiring women from the community, a panel question and answer session, Be Bold workshops and a networking session for attendees with lunch.

The morning began with a welcome and introductions by WHN Co-Chair Michelle Taylor and Masira Hans - Community Development Worker for Sharing Voices who welcomed the first Inspiring leader speaker Helen Hirst - Chief Officer of Bradford City, Districts and Airedale Wharfedale and Craven CCG's. Helen gave an honest personal account of her journey to achieving success within NHS leadership and the challenges she faced along the way as a woman.

The next inspiring leader scheduled to speak was Nuzhat Ali, a Board member of Muslim Women's Council and winner of the Northern Writers Awards 2015. Unfortunately however due to a family emergency



Helen Hirst – Inspiring Leader

Nuzhat was unable to attend and Tracy Higgins kindly offered to step in to talk about her previous leadership roles with the NHS and the personal battles she faced along the way.

Tracy's talk was recorded and shared on the NHS Bradford & District CCG's and the Women's Health Network facebook page. The Youtube clip can be found here https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtL_xkBoKIMm8vUZKRMqrbtP4DIgYeD5F.

The next speaker was PC Firzana Ahmed who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer and Margaret Feon (Mags) who fights an ongoing battle with bi-polar disorder.



PC Fiz Ahmed sharing her personal story

PC Firzana Ahmed is a local PC working for West Yorkshire Police with a young family who had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer. She is now in remission and has been eager to share her personal story in the community to raise awareness of cancer in the local community. She was a very eloquent and engaging speaker and many in the audience were deeply moved by her story.

Margaret Feon known as Mags is a client of Sharing Voices and has battled with Bi-polar disorder since she was young. She talked through the ups and downs of Bi-Polar how it affects her daily life and the bold changes she had to make in order to live a better life.

Mags has a great sense of humour and again mixed the emotion of her story with a few jokes. Mags's talk can also be found on the Youtube link above.



Mags Feon - Inspiring speaker

The Q&A panel was made up of PC Firzana Ahmed, Margaret Feon, Tracy Higgins, Michelle Taylor and Masira Hans. The floor was opened up for questions for approximately 20 minutes. The Q&A was very engaging and the feeling evoked by the speakers generated some poignant questions and heartfelt replies.



Question and Answer Panel – WHN organisers and inspiring women

The Be Bold Workshops consisted of 4 groups. Each group were asked to complete a My Bold Story template and think about bold actions they could make for themselves, others and their organisations in relation to:-

- Personal/physical health
- Mental/emotional health
- To support and progress the work of the WHN

An example was given to help people fill in their own story. After the workshops all groups were then asked to feedback their **bold actions** and choose one person to share their own personal Bold Story. A few example of the Bold Stories written by the attendees can be found on the CNet website under Women’s Health Network.

This is my Bold Moment. If it was a story I would call it: *Independence Day*

My story is about a time when I: (what was your bold moment) *decided enough was enough and ended a long term relationship due to ongoing domestic abuse*

You should watch out for the moment when I: (what was the one action you did that made you feel bold) *told him to leave and meant it and stuck with the decision even though it took another two years before we were really free*

I took my bold move because: (what motivated you) *I'd learned to believe in myself, what I was worth, what I was capable of and was reminded of the inner strength that I thought I'd lost*

When I tell people my bold story I want them to know: (what difference did this make) *that often the darkest of times, when you feel the most lost, can lead to beautiful places you never dreamed you would see.*

Please tick if you'd be happy for us to include your story on our website to inspire other women

Below are the bold actions of 2 of the workshops.

| BOLD CHANGE | PERSONAL/ PHYSICAL HEALTH | MENTAL/ EMOTIONAL HEALTH | TO SUPPORT + PROGRESS THE WORK OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| FOR YOURSELF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> self care waves. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sharing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> finds more literature - promote it making own choices. |
| FOR OTHERS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> take time out for others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen communicate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> more literature easier to understand teach people to understand health policies. |
| FOR YOUR GROUP OR ORGANISATION | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask men/encourage men to participate follow policies. create activities. women to participate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spreading to more wide spread organisations. <p><i>(Examples of organisations)</i> Women's Health Network Infirmary Health Centre Health Services Health Centre Health Services</p> |

| BOLD CHANGE | PERSONAL/ PHYSICAL HEALTH | MENTAL/ EMOTIONAL HEALTH | TO SUPPORT AND PROGRESS THE WORK OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| FOR YOURSELF | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use my gym membership! To get fitter and run a marathon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> build confidence by attending more network events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the network more |
| FOR OTHERS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> INSPIRE OTHERS Attend more Women's Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen. Help the older people. - Attend Comm. centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the Network. |
| FOR YOUR GROUP OR ORGANISATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn new skills / qualifications Continue to develop others + help improve both their physical + mental health. | | |

Conclusion

In conclusion the event was very well attended, the speakers were all the speakers were well received. The inspiring leader's speakers told personal stories of how they reached the positions they had reached and the bold changes they had to make to get there. The inspiring women from the community told personal stories of battling with very serious life threatening health issues and the bold changes they had made in their lives to begin to overcome them.

The feedback gained from people who attended was positive, people felt that the atmosphere was inspiring, empowering and emotional at the same time.

Fifteen new members joined the network and women felt empowered, inspired and happy to become involved in the Women's Health Network. BCB Radio were present to talk to attendees and organisers about the Women's Health Network. Photographs taken on the day, workshop feedback and a few of the My Bold Stories are available on the CNet website <http://www.cnet.org.uk/community-development/Womens-Health-Network/>. Tweets were taken throughout the event on the day and can be found via our CNet twitter account CNet_Bradford.

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