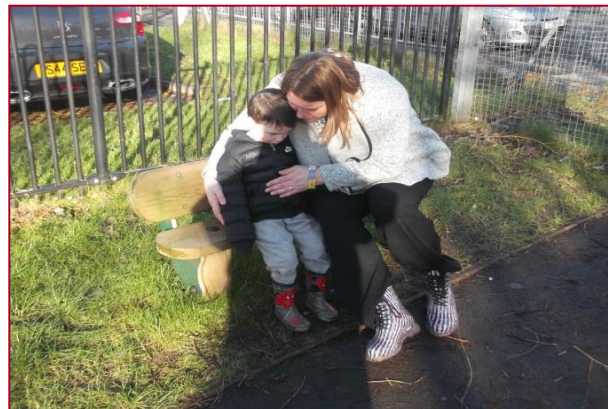


ASSET-BASED APPROACHES FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING: REDRESSING THE BALANCE



Overview...

- Some quick reminders
- A comment about ‘evidence’
- Points of learning from research
- Throughout –
 - Partnerships, relationships and collaboration
 - Working differently, striving to achieve a balance and sharing power
 - Flexibility, sensitivity and humanity
 - Leadership, the workforce, people and skills

Asset-based approaches - where are we now?

- Fundamental changes to way service delivery is and thought about
- Not universal panacea
 - Opportunities exist to re-orientate and re-shape care and delivery
- Working 'with' rather than 'to' – potential to transform delivery – better positioned
- Not ignoring structural or material issues – redress imbalance that favours focus on need – opportunity to be part of an alternative narrative

The Deficit Model

- Based on pathogenesis
- Focuses on problems and needs
- Tends to define communities and individuals in terms of what they can't do, do wrong or don't have
- Encourages dependency
- Potential to disempower people who are intended beneficiaries

The Assets Model

- Based on salutogenesis
- Focuses on existing strengths and capabilities
- Defines communities/individuals in terms of the resources - stay healthy
- Encourages people to take control of their own health
- Promotes self esteem and ability to cope

'Asset-based' features

- Person-centred
- Empowering and supportive
- Flexible, sensitive and responsive
- Focus on sharing power
- Relationship and partnership focused
- Building skills, confidence, self-esteem and coping abilities
- Developing skills, creating opportunities and possibilities
- Supporting individual and community connections



Benefits for people and communities

- More control over their lives and place
- Able to influence decisions
- Engaged as and how they want to
- Seen as part of the solution not the problem
- Improved sense of cohesion, increased confidence and self-esteem
- Empowered, confident, independent



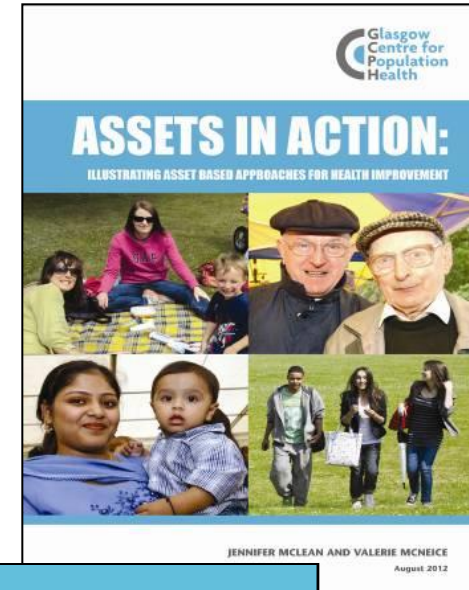
The evidence so far...

- ...evolving
- Evidence on impact – limited
- Research base to be strengthened – processes, scale, types of effect
- Questions remain – why and how?
- So what have we have learned so far...



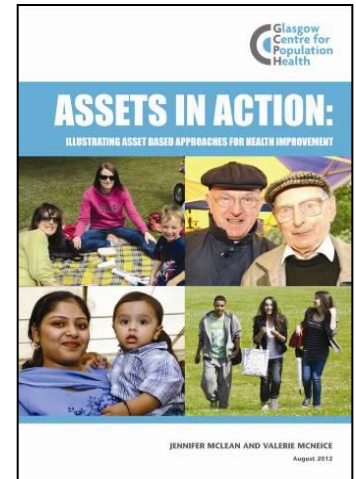
Building the evidence

- Early research
 - capture lived realities in community-based projects
- More recently
 - explore what embedding asset-based principles looks like in statutory services
 - explore potential for the future
 - relevant to service planning and delivery

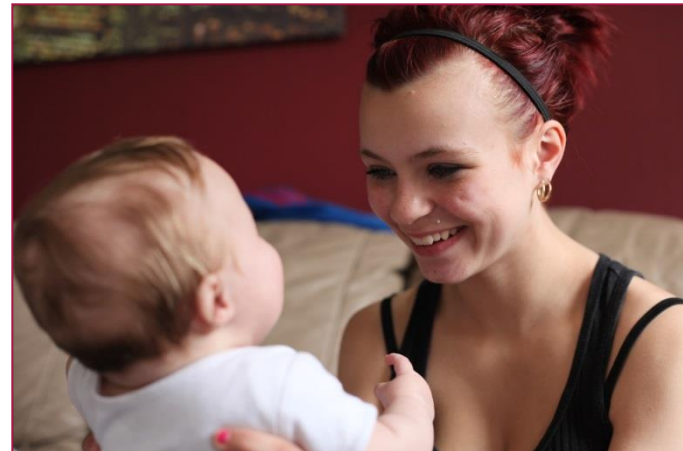


Community-based settings

- Balancing
- Connecting
- Learning and earning
- Empowering
- Being human



Illustrating asset-based approaches in services



Our cases...

Primary Care Learning Disability Local Area Co-ordinators	Supported learning disabilities service
The Bridging Service	Supported employability service
Healthy Minds	Mental health support service
Family Nurse Partnership	Supported early years service for young mums
musicALL	Music service for children with additional support needs
North West Recovery Communities	Drug and alcohol sustainment service
The 'nurturing' approach	Education services approach
Cassiltoun Housing Association & Trust	Local housing association and community trust
Violence Reduction Unit in Hawkhill	Supported community engagement

What did we learn?

- Shifting the balance
- Creating the conditions
- Building relationships and partnerships
- People and skills
- Leadership and influence



Shifting the balance

- Enabled active service user involvement
- Mutual relationships, shifting the balance of power

“Taking a more rounded approach, taking into account different issues going on in people’s lives.”

“It’s about involvement; it’s about them doing it, deciding what’s important to them.”

“People really valued being involved in a process where they feel they can shape something and it leads to improvement.”



Creating the conditions

- Flexibility, sensitivity and adaptable

“Everyone deserves a chance. Without the right help and support people won’t achieve their potential.”

- Working differently within existing services – services which ‘fit’ people

“Not creating systems and boxes – need to deliver in a way that people will access.”

- Finding a balance – financial tensions with development and innovation



Building relationships and partnerships

- Connections, interaction, trust, respect
- Value relationship-building aspect of role

“Relationships are the thread that runs through – in every contact with a child or an adult.”

“It all comes down to relationships – between professionals and between professionals and service users.”



- Time, *“patience and perseverance”*
- Focus on collaborative endeavour

“... embraces a model of partnership working, knitting services together.”



People and skills

“There is often the desire to just fix things... but we have to take a step back and help them identify the strengths they have to address the challenges they face.”

“Having the right people involved, the right staff who can balance the person-centred approach within the real world.”

- Staff as our greatest assets
- Core skills, personal characteristics
- Implications for staff/organisations
- Facilitating and brokering



Leadership and influence

“Initially mixed attitudes to a different way of working, but strong management helped embed it in the team.”

- Leadership...in its many guises
- Inspiring, influencing, advocating for change
- Staff supported, enabled and trusted



“Ability to be able to take time to listen – let’s see where we can go and make a difference.”



Exploring the potential of asset-based approaches



What did we learn?

- Interpretation
- Attitude or intervention
- Possibility, power and responsibility
- Resources and reporting
- The workforce



Interpretation

- The language: *“It’s jargony...”*
- Scepticism – just too rosy?



Attitude or intervention

- What does it mean to take an asset-based approach?
 - Mindset or targeting

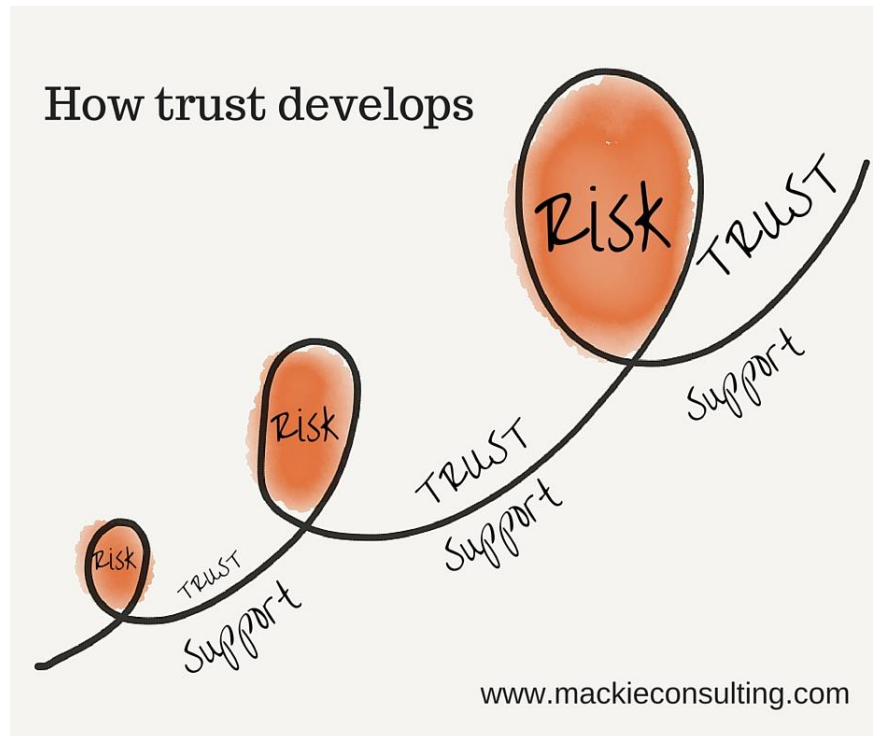


“...you can’t make a generic model for asset-based approaches.”

Power, possibility and responsibility

- Balancing risk and trust
- Ability to achieve freedom, choice and control and a learning culture?

“It’s a very different approach that assumes that people are OK, assumes that people have to be nurtured to allow assets to be seen, drawn out and valued; especially the most vulnerable.”



Resources and reporting

“There’s a tendency to address [changed circumstances] by doing a slight reshaping. But now we need transformational change.”

“In order to develop the assets of the individual we need to change lots structurally.”

- New approaches – changing expectations and increasing pressures
- Scale of change required
- Re-framing and re-investing
- Sustainability



The workforce

- Reciprocal relationships
- Circumstances rather than conditions
- Workforce development and/or personal characteristics



“Led by leaders who model that way of working.”

“Can’t work in an assets-based way unless you are in that space yourself – appreciative in nature.”

Learning from the research



Learning from the research

- The nature of evidence
 - Legitimising and justifying the approach
 - Evidence base – sticking point to action
- Language and implementation
 - Contentious but a mutual and shared understanding
 - Language of strengths and capabilities
 - Not easily definable – context specific



Learning from the research



- The importance of context
 - Shift – response to directives, organisational or practice decision – improved outcomes
 - Margins rather than mainstream, projects rather than services?
- Delivering differently
 - Context of reductions, change, increasing pressures
 - Role of asset-based approaches?

Finally...

- A progressive step.....but remain '*far from the way we do things*'
- Demonstrate how approach is being delivered – supports literature and principles
- Positive relationships, partnerships, sensitivity, inclusion, leadership and culture
- At their heart - reflect a commitment to work in a different way.

Asset-based approaches in service settings: striking a balance

An illustration of asset-based approaches in services, and an exploration of their potential for the future

March 2017

Jennifer McLean
Valerie McNeice
Charlotte Mitchell

ASSET-BASED APPROACHES IN SERVICE SETTINGS

BRIEFING PAPER 51
March 2017 www.gcph.co.uk

SUMMARY

This briefing paper summarises the findings of research into asset-based approaches in service settings across Scotland.

Through a series of case studies the research profiles the work of mainstream statutory services embedding asset-based principles in their approach to service delivery. Further, the work uncovered opinion and thinking on the potential of an asset-based way of working within public services in a Scottish context via key informant interviews.

KEY POINTS

- Asset-based approaches feature strongly in Scottish public policy and are informing and influencing the planning and delivery of services across Scotland.
- Examples can be found of statutory, third sector and community-led organisations currently working in an asset-based way, while others are developing asset-based approaches as a means to improve health and wellbeing, and tackle deep-rooted social problems.
- A number of key questions remain around the applicability, relevance and potential of this way of working within the public sector.
- Case studies of nine services illustrated the importance of relationships, partnerships, citizen involvement and collaborative endeavour.
- Six further themes emerged from interviews with ten senior strategic and operational managers. Features of language and terminology, balancing power and possibility, the interplay of policy and practice, and the 'attitude or intervention' debate, were identified as themes across the key informant interviews.
- A step towards asset-based approaches was broadly supported by stakeholders.
- Across the research, the importance of evidence in supporting, legitimising and justifying the approach, despite the current limitations of the research base, was evident. Questions were raised as to what constitutes 'evidence' in relation to asset-based approaches.
- The language of asset-based approaches remains a contentious issue, and although defined and described differently, a mutual understanding of the underpinning values and principles was clear.
- The asset-based workforce was seen to be striving to work collaboratively and developmentally with a clear vision for change while retaining good governance and a focus on delivery.

**Positive conversations, meaningful change:
learning from Animating Assets**

November 2015

Animating Assets

**ASSETS IN ACTION:
ILLUSTRATING ASSET BASED APPROACHES FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT**

JENNIFER MCLEAN AND VALERIE MCNEICE

August 2012

DUNEDIN

POLICY AND PRACTICE IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE 20

**ASSET BASED APPROACHES:
THEIR RISE, ROLE AND REALITY**

Fiona Garven, Jennifer McLean
and Lisa Pattoni

Glasgow Centre for Population Health BRIEFING PAPER 9 CONCEPTS SERIES

**Asset based approaches for health improvement:
redressing the balance**

October 2011

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Towards asset-based health and care services

February 2014

Glasgow Centre for Population Health BRIEFING PAPER 10 CONCEPTS SERIES

**Putting asset based approaches into practice:
identification, mobilisation and measurement of assets**

July 2012

Thank you!

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