



FEAT DOWN UNDER

Local charity Fife Employment Access Trust (FEAT) are proud to report an international collaboration.

FEAT run a variety of projects and activities aimed at supporting people with mental health conditions to return to work. Amongst their range of work has been the introduction of computerised cognitive remediation therapy (CRT) to help people with enduring conditions develop their capacity to learn and overcome common barriers faced such as poor memory, attention and concentration levels. CRT is an evidence-based therapy likened to brain-training games, though as Duncan Mitchell, FEAT's General Manager says, "whilst there is scientific evidence of the benefit of this therapy, results are greatly improved by the input of our trained staff, who work 1-to-1 and in groups using the CRT, and then developing practical activities and strategies with individuals to help them overcome problem areas."

FEAT are leading the way in the use of this therapy and following a series of skype meetings, a second visit from a Melbourne organisation to FEAT's Glenrothes offices took place this week and has led to a deal being struck to deliver the "Employ your Mind" project down under.

Gaye Moore, Program Manager for Frameworks for Health at the Mental Health Executive Services of St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne, was impressed by the project which was first created in Fife in 2012, in a partnership with FEAT and NHS Fife. Gaye has been working closely (though remotely) with FEAT staff to replicate the programme in Australia and an agreement has been signed to ensure the key elements of the programme are delivered in the same structure down under. The agreement also includes the sharing of knowledge, learning and research between the



organisations for the future. Gaye says, "The model developed in Fife is absolutely the best practice we've seen anywhere in the world and we were keen to implement it here, but rather than "steal" the idea, we were keen to work collaboratively so we can all share the learning from running the programme on both sides of the world. This will help us all ensure the programme develops in line with a global evidence-base and we're also keen to share all other learning in terms of mental health recovery and employability work we're involved in."

Duncan adds, "Our Employ your Mind project has been funded by the Big Lottery in Scotland, we've worked with hundreds of people with enduring conditions since 2012 and made a real difference to their lives. The current stream of funding ends next year and this international seal of approval could help us find continuation funding locally. Of course, many of the staff team are interested in getting a return visit to Australia to see "our baby" grow, but funding for that may be more challenging to secure!"

FEAT's work in this field was recently described as "world leading" by Dr Clare Reeder from Kings College, London, who was the keynote speaker at the first ever CRT conference held in Scotland in March this year. The conference, held in Methil, was hosted and led by FEAT and had delegates from across the UK keen to learn more about FEAT's implementation of the therapy. Further information about FEAT's range of services are available at www.feat.org.uk

Fife Employment Access Trust
Tel: 01592 759371
www.feat.org.uk



Contact Information

Duncan Mitchell
Fife Employment Access Trust
Tel 01592 759371
e: duncan@journeytowork.co.uk

Photo Detail

FEAT staff pictured with Gaye Moore outside their Glenrothes office.

Left to right: Inga Davidson, Liz Gibson, Neil Ross, Pam Bruce, Gaye Moore, Norma Clark, Duncan Mitchell, Aleks Atanasova, Kate Appleyard

Notes to Editors

FEAT are a registered charity, established in 1994, providing support to people who have experienced mental ill-health and now want to return to work after unemployment. FEAT also work closely with employers to raise awareness of mental health in the workplace and expand the range of employment opportunities available to those experiencing mental ill-health.