

# Multi agency approach to promote better mental health in Scottish football



Hibernian Football Club, through its GameChanger partnership with Hibernian Community Foundation and NHS Lothian – is working with the Penicuik Thistle, Bonnyrigg Rose, Tranent Juniors, Whitehill Welfare, Spartans, Civil Service Strollers to promote better mental health in Scottish football.

The partnership is hosting a two-day training session which will see coaches and others from a number of football clubs learn more about mental health first aid.

The course, approved by the SFA and the NHS, will help the clubs participating ensure staff are better equipped to spot and deal with mental health issues.

Clubs taking part include Hibernian Ladies, Penicuik Thistle, Bonnyrigg Rose, Tranent Juniors, Whitehill Welfare, Spartans, Civil Service Strollers.

The training is being delivered by Mark Fleming, of Positive Mental Health Scotland, who said: “Mental health is now the biggest health issue facing people of working age, and the training helps create a more positive environment for organisations and their staff, where people can feel valued and appropriately cared for.”

Mark Henderson of the ScotRail Alliance said: “Mental health and well-being is an increasing priority for Government and health agencies throughout Scotland and we are delighted to be able to support this initiative.

“We are also currently working with Samaritans to help train railway staff in how to identify and approach people exhibiting vulnerable behaviour and are constantly seeking new ways to make the railway environment safer.

“Unfortunately, we experience many incidents on our network therefore it is important to work closely with our partner agencies to assist with the wider mental health and wellbeing agenda.”

Linda Irvine of NHS Lothian and GameChanger said: “Our mental well-being is, and has to be, of real importance to all of us.

“Unfortunately, many of those who suffer from poor mental health are still reluctant to come forward to mainstream health professionals to help address their problems, so having a football club get involved can really help get positive messages out there.

“You can support your own mental health and well-being by connecting to people around you, spending time with your with friends and family, being active, enjoying different activities , and trying and learning learn new things.

“But when things do go wrong, and many of us will experience this at some point, then all of us need our ‘team’ to support us. It is important to remember that talking can save a life.”

If you – or someone you know – are feeling low, stressed or have been thinking about suicide, talk to someone.

For help or advice call:

Breathing Space: 0800 838587

Samaritans: 116 123

NHS24: 111