



**August  
2007**

## **Include Me In!**

Inclusion Scotland (IS) the national disability-led organisation that gives disabled people a voice, have a new project that directly involves disabled people called Contact 100 — the Manifesto Review.

Bill Scott from IS will be coming along to the August meeting to talk to the Forum about the new project and is keen to involve mental health service users in its development.

The Contact 100 Project would like people to come together in small groups of 5/6 people who have an interest in one or more of the issues that are raised in their "Manifesto for Inclusion". This can be viewed on the Inclusion Scotland website ([www.inclusionscotland.org](http://www.inclusionscotland.org)).

There are many areas highlighted in the manifesto, some of them are interlinked. The Contact 100 groups can choose up to three subjects to review and advise IS on them and other issues that arise from time to time and what they think is the best way to tackle them.

The groups would also act as sounding boards for policy and decision makers when planning policies and courses of action. In that way

informed of what disabled people, rather than groups acting on their behalf, really think!

Inclusion Scotland hope by having a direct flow of grass roots opinion they can keep up to date with what is going on and make a contribution to resolving problems/issues and disabled people can have a stronger say in society.

If you would like to hear more about the work of Inclusion Scotland or would like to be involved in Contact 100 come along to the next meeting.

### **Our Next Meeting:**

**Saturday 4 August 2007**

1.30 - 2.00pm Doors open

2.00 - 4.30pm Meeting starts

McDonald Road Library,  
Edinburgh

For more information contact  
CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

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## Hod Your Hond!

By Adrienne Chalmers

For the past year and a half I have been representing EUF on the Edinburgh Choose Life Steering Group. Choose Life is an initiative of the Scottish Executive which aims to reduce the numbers of people who kill or deliberately harm themselves every year. Choose life runs a number of different training courses, mostly for people who work in health and social care, to help them recognise people who are at risk of killing or harming themselves and improving their skills in dealing with these situations. Edinburgh Carers Council has also designed its own training to help carers who find themselves in these situations.

At a EUF meeting last year, we decided we would like to look at the idea of developing training like this specially for service users. So that we had a better idea of what was involved, with the support of some of the CAPS workers, I took part in two of the training courses, "Suicide talks" and ASIST (whatever it stands for). We found that the existing courses were not really suitable for people who use mental health services, so we had a bit of a rethink and this is what we have come up with. We have talked about it a bit at the EUF Executive and now we want to talk more about it at a EUF meeting.

We think that self-harm is a completely different thing to trying to kill yourself and we think it needs to be dealt with in a different way. We may look at this later, but we want to start by looking at when people want to kill themselves.

We know that most, if not all of us, have at least thought seriously about killing ourselves, even if we have never tried to do it. We also know that sometimes when we feel like this, we can get help from people who work in the services we use and, of course, we now have the Crisis Centre, but we probably get help and support more often from our friends and often from our fellow service users. However, for each time we are helped by another person to overcome the wish to kill ourselves, we will have talked ourselves out of it many times more.

We think that the most useful thing we can do as service users is to learn what helps us and other service users when we find ourselves in this frame of mind. What we plan to do is to work in small groups of people, not so much to be trained, but more to develop our own Bag Of Tricks to help us through the bad times. Each person's Bag of Tricks will be personal to them, it's all about what works for us, but that doesn't stop us from trying out what has worked for other people.

This is about making us stronger and perhaps even a bit more aware of how we are really feeling. It's about helping ourselves, but not being afraid to look for help elsewhere. It will also help us to be more aware of how other people are feeling and how we can help them.

We spoke a bit about this at the July EUF meeting and are going to hold a special meeting for anyone who is interested in being involved. If you would like to come along or want more information get in touch with CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

## Hot Topics

### Suicide Prevention Pledge

Choose Life are calling for Scots to lift the lid on their emotions and sign a pledge be more open about their and others feelings in a bid to improve the nation's mental health and help prevent suicide.

Many Scots find it difficult to talk about the problems and challenges they face in their lives, this can lead to problems getting worse and people's overall health and mental health deteriorating. Some people feel so bad that they begin to think of taking their own lives.

Having the courage to speak out about your emotions, and also having the ability to sensitively listen and empathise with those seeking support, could help save a life.

***“Talking and listening can save lives. I promise to try and talk more openly about my feelings and to encourage others to do the same; and if someone speaks to me about their feelings, I promise to try to be a good listener.”***

To sign up to the 'Talk. Listen. Save Lives' pledge and confirm your support, you simply need to submit a head and shoulders photograph of yourself to Choose Life along with an attached submission form.

All images received by **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> August** will be used to create a collage that will be unveiled to the public during Suicide Prevention Week 10 - 17 September 2007.

For more information or to download a pledge form log onto:

[www.chooselife.net](http://www.chooselife.net)

### Maggie's Collection of Art

Maggie Keppie, a EUF member and service user activist will launch her art exhibition on;

**8 August  
at 2.30pm - 4.30pm  
The Hive  
Royal Edinburgh Hospital  
Morningside Terrace  
Edinburgh**

Everybody is welcome to come along to see Maggie's work and there will be refreshments available on the day.

The exhibition will run for 6 weeks, so if you can't make the launch you can drop into the Hive between 10.00am - 5.00pm, Mondays to Thursdays and 1.00pm - 5.00pm on Fridays to have a look.

## At our last meeting.....

Eddie Donaghy who is a researcher at the Cancer Care Research Centre (CCRC) came along to speak to the forum about researching cancer among people who experience mental health problems.

He wanted advice on about the best way to involve service users in this research so public and patient involvement in cancer services could be improved.

This research is in the early stages and Eddie wants to set up an advisory group that will have an influence on the way that it is carried out. EUF agreed that this was important and someone from the Forum would be a representative on the advisory group to help oversee the research.

Almost everyone had experiences of not being listened to and having physical symptoms being put down to their mental health problems.

People spoke about how medication and how it can have a negative impact on physical health. This can be a very difficult thing to prove and physical symptoms/illness can be made worse in the case of over-prescribing. The side effects of medication can also be seen as a symptom of a persons diagnosis.

It was felt that if you have a mental health problem and go to a GP with a physical illness that you cannot see,

the doctor implies you must be suffering from paranoia "it's all in your mind". This is upsetting for people when they aren't listened to or taken seriously. This makes them reluctant to go and see about physical problems when they are in the early stages and might be easily treated and cured.

There is legislation that is meant to make sure that everyone gets treated equally but people with mental health problem are still suffering from discrimination and find it hard to make a complaint about the way they are unfairly treated. That is why it is important that we support research like this to highlight these inequalities so groups like EUF can fight discrimination.

This is a summary of what was discussed at the meeting. Full minutes of all EUF meetings are kept in the office and are available to any member on request.

Minutes are not automatically sent out any more because members said that they didn't want this.

If you want the full minutes please contact the CAPS office - details on the back page.

You can also ask to have the EUF newsletter sent to you by e-mail as well as or instead of by post.

## How we act in meetings

### Ground Rules

We have agreed that when we come to EUF meetings, this is how we will behave:

- we listen to other people and do not interrupt them;
- we respect other people's point of view;
- we give everyone a chance to talk;
- if we want to talk we let the Chair know and wait for our turn;
- we support the Chair and help them run the meeting;
- we have a sense of humour.

We understand that sometimes things that have happened to people make it hard for them to manage their feelings when they are talking about their experiences in meetings. We try to make allowances for this but it is important that everybody who comes to our meetings feels safe.

We also have a "three strikes and you're out" policy.

What this means is that if one person upsets the meeting, they are asked to take time out. If they do it a second time, they are asked to take time out and talk with a worker. If they do it a third time, they will be asked to leave.

We will go over our ground rules at the start of the August meeting.

### Before it's a crisis...

Here is a short list of phone numbers you can contact for support when most services are closed. It is a good idea to have these numbers and others where you can find them when you need support or help. Services such as Breathing Space and the Samaritans offer a listening service. Social Work and the NHS are more appropriate if you need more than this.

#### Breathing Space

0800 83 85 87 (6.00pm-2.00am)

#### Samaritans

08457 90 90 90 (24 hours)

#### NHS 24

0845 24 24 24 (24 hours)

#### Emergency Social Work Service

0800 731 6969 (out of hours only)

#### Crisis Centre Interim Service

Free phone 0808 801 0414

Text phone 0808 801 0415

If you get support at home, you may have an 'on-call' number to contact staff. If you have contact with a Community Mental Health Team, they may also have a number for you to contact staff.

If you require advocacy you may contact:

**Advocard** 0131 554 5307

## Community Happenings

### Self help support groups

Depression Alliance Scotland (DAS) are offering a series of structured groups, each involving eight sessions. By attending a group, people will learn useful skills for overcoming stress and anxiety, build confidence and importantly, learn new ways to tackle difficult situations. The groups will cover issues such as understanding why we feel as we do, problem solving, relaxation, overcoming reduced activity, changing unhelpful thinking, helpful and unhelpful behaviour and healthy living.

#### Open Group

For anyone who is between 18 and 35 years at the Edinburgh Central Library, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh on Thursday evenings, 5.30pm – 7.30pm, 6 September to 25 October.

To book a place Tel: 0131 467 3050, or email :[info@dascot.org](mailto:info@dascot.org) or log on [www.dascot.org/lothiangroups.html](http://www.dascot.org/lothiangroups.html)

#### Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Centre for Health & Wellbeing

For anyone living in Edinburgh, Lothian or the Borders who identifies as LGB or T at the LGBT Centre for Health & Wellbeing, 9 Howe Street, Edinburgh on Wednesday evenings, 6.00 – 8.00pm, 12 September to 31 October.

Book online at

[www.lgbtmindmatters.org.uk/booking.php](http://www.lgbtmindmatters.org.uk/booking.php), or phone the Centre on 523 1100.

### Make your views count

“In 2006 The National Review of Mental Health Nursing(1) set out a new vision for the future development of mental health nursing in Scotland. This would be rights-based and person-focused mental health care, promoting recovery-focussed approaches in mental health nursing.

Development of an Acute Capabilities Framework for nurses arose directly from the findings and action plan of that review. To inform the development of the capability framework NES undertook a range of preliminary work, involving a range of stakeholders, including service users, carers and practitioners.

The project team now wish to speak with and hear the views of people in two areas, Lothian and Borders which they hope will provide valuable insights and critical commentary. This will further guide the project team as the development of the framework progresses. We would therefore be grateful if any one with an interest who would be happy to take part could contact us.

Email: [A.Wildman@napier.ac.uk](mailto:A.Wildman@napier.ac.uk)  
Tel or Text Mob 0771 563 6841”

Or Tel: Audrey at CAPS 0131 538 7177

## Community Happenings

### health in mind

#### Information Afternoon

**Wednesday 8 August 2007**

**1.30 - 3.30p.m**

**Information Resource  
Centre**

**health in mind**

**40 Shandwick Place  
Edinburgh**

#### **Talk about anxiety and mental health by Wester Hailes Health Agency**

The afternoon is for anyone who is interested in learning about anxiety and mental health. You can also have a look at the resources that are available in the information resource centre.

For more information:

Tel: 0131 243 0106 or email  
[information@healthinmind.org.uk](mailto:information@healthinmind.org.uk)

Numbers are limited so please book as soon as possible. Service users given priority over workers. **Please note there is no disabled access to these offices.**

### Hearing Voices?

Do you hear voices? Would you like to talk about your voices in a supportive environment? Would you like to learn new ways of coping with your voices?

#### **Stuart Hyde and Alisdair Gormley group**

Inchkeith House

Fridays 2.00 - 3.00pm

137 Leith Walk, Edinburgh.

This group is open to anyone who hears voices. For more information contact: Alisdair Gormly on 131 537 4530

#### **SAMH's group**

Tuesday 2.00 - 3.00p.m

The Hive, Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Morningside Terrace, Edinburgh.

This is a long term support group for people with connections to The Hive or the REH. For more information contact: Sue Robertson or Shona Ferguson on 0131 537 6526

#### **Cambridge Street group and 1 - 1 clinic Group**

Thursday 3.00 - 4.00p.m

Cambridge Street House, 5 Cambridge Street, Edinburgh.

These are only open to voice hearers in the South West of Edinburgh.

For more information contact: George Watson, Barbara Braner or Christine Hislop on 0131 537 8650

## About Edinburgh Users Forum

The Edinburgh Users Forum (EUF) is an independent collective advocacy group.

Our members are people who use, or have used mental health services. We were set up to give people who use mental health services a say in the services that are provided, and how services are run.

We have monthly meetings where we discuss issues and invite speakers along. We campaign on issues like benefits, housing, advocacy, crisis services and bus passes. If you would like any more information about EUF please contact us.

### Contact us

Phone: (0131) 538 7177

Fax: (0131) 538 7215

Email: [euf@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:euf@capsadvocacy.org)

Write to:

Edinburgh Users Forum  
c/o CAPS  
5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh  
EH7 5SN

### Dates for your diary

#### **EUF 2007 meetings:**

Saturday 4 August

Saturday 1 September

Saturday 6 October

Saturday 3 November

Saturday 1 December

### Monthly meetings

We meet at the McDonald Road Library, Edinburgh (on the corner of McDonald Road and Leith Walk). Come along from **1.30pm** for a cuppa and a chat. Meeting starts at **2.00pm**.