



**April  
2008**

## **Benefits Who?**

With the changes to Incapacity Benefit, many people have been concerned about how these changes will affect them. We have invited Bill Scott from Inclusion Scotland to talk to the Forum. Bill can't give advice on personal situations, but he can talk about what is happening and how the changes will affect people generally. This is the situation as EUF understands it.

There is a new service in Edinburgh called Work Directions which is paid by the Department of Work and Pensions to get people currently claiming Incapacity Benefit into work. People who have claimed Incapacity Benefit from December 2007 have been told that they must attend five compulsory interviews with Work Directions to assess their ability to work, which is known as 'employability'. People who have been claiming Incapacity Benefit since before December 2007 can volunteer to attend an interview with JobcentrePlus to see about getting help with 'employability'. Some people will be assessed as being what is called 'job ready' while others will be assessed as needing support to make them 'job ready'. From October 2008, no one will be able to claim Incapacity Benefit but will instead claim the new Employment Support Allowance.

Come along to the next Forum and tell us what you think.

### **In with this mailing**

- **EUF meeting flyer**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing: Employment Support Advice leaflet**

### **Our Next Meeting:**

**Saturday 5 April 2008**

1.30 - 2.00pm Doors open

2.00 - 4.00pm Meeting starts

McDonald Road Library,  
Edinburgh

For more information contact  
CAPS on  
0131 538 7177.

# Hot Topics

## Kaisen – changes all round

After a week of working alongside NHS professionals in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital (REH) here is some feedback. The most powerful talk of the whole week was from a service user who spoke for a few minutes about her experience over the years of the different wards. It was quite striking how much effect her honest message had on the NHS managers – it was if some of them hadn't had a patient speak to them for years!

Some of the major changes that hopefully will be introduced include:

- welcome packs for all patients;
- admission paperwork made easier for staff;
- each ward will have a board to display photos of all staff;
- life on the wards will be more structured, including daily community meetings and activity programmes, better communication between the different wards should improve them all;
- the Intensive Home Treatment Team will start to operate from September 1 2008.

A stay in hospital, either as a voluntary patient, or under Section, is never going to be a very pleasant experience for any of us. Hopefully as these changes are introduced, patients will find a stay in the REH a little more tolerable. Can we ask why it has taken quite so long to introduce some of these changes? One particular service had, and I quote, "been the same since the King died"

Several of the Directors of NHS Lothian dropped in at the end of each day to listen to the result of our day's work. It doesn't necessarily mean the changes we asked for will happen – but if they don't we can at least get back to them and ask them why they have changed their minds!

## Intensive Home Treatment

After years of talking about being able to treat people in their own home instead of having to admit them to hospital, it looks as though Edinburgh might at last see Intensive Home Treatment become a reality.

The plan is to have two Intensive Home Treatment Teams. One team will work in South Edinburgh and another in the North of the city. The two teams will work twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. They will work with people who would normally be admitted to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital (REH). The teams will also work with people who end up in hospital, in order to support them to leave hospital as soon as possible. They will work closely with the existing Community Mental Health Teams, staff in the hospital and also with the Edinburgh Crisis Centre. The teams will also provide support to any carers who may be involved, if a person is able to stay in their own home.

Although there are still some things to sort out, it is hoped that the two new Intensive Home Treatment Teams will be able to begin providing a service at the beginning of September 2008.

## At our last meeting.....

At the last Forum we talked about how we want to be involved in planning and decision making about mental health services. We broke up into smaller groups to talk about the work of EUF and how we can make sure concerns we raise with planners and professionals have an influence.

EUF should always be given the option of participating in something. It should not be about the professionals choosing what we are and are not involved in. We need to know who is making the decisions on important topics.

We need the right support to get involved. We need to have access to the right information before, during and after meetings. There should always be enough time given to respond to things. Information should be accessible and sent out before the meetings or appointments. This gives us a chance to prepare and ask questions.

It is important to feel welcome at meetings and events. We talked about how to make people feel more comfortable. Some suggestions were to have smaller groups that can come together to talk about specific topics. There needs to be space for people to have a say, at their own pace. Knowing the procedures can also help us feel more confident and comfortable.

There should be opportunities for people to have a say in writing. For example using feedback forms or email. There should also be opportunities to explain your ideas through an advocate or friend.

EUF needs a communication strategy about how we share information between members and professionals. There should be ways of finding out what's happening between monthly meetings.

When we include professionals in user meetings we need to make sure that we contact the right person who makes decisions. We could have 'Day in the Life of...' events and invite professionals to explain what they do and what problems they face.

Politicians, planners and professionals must show that they have been listening to people and that service users have a real influence.

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.

## Oor Mad History

We now have a Steering Group for the Oor Mad History project. They will be responsible for giving the project direction, initially over two years, and in line with funding from the Health Board. Oor Mad History will focus on the history of the Lothian mental health service user movement over the past twenty years or so.

The steering group will now have to organise recruitment of a worker(s) to develop the project. The worker(s) will be responsible for organizing a range of materials to make sense of this history. This will include an archive and oral histories. There will be a number of opportunities to produce materials to inform people of the user movement, for example, film, book, theatre production and training.

For more information contact Kirstie at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Employment Support and Advice

Included in this mailing is a leaflet with a daisy on the front called 'What Works Best for You'. It is a list of organisations who offer work opportunities to mental health service users. The aim of the leaflet is to help people to decide what service is best for them, to explore different options and to see where the gaps are.

If you would like more information on mental health employment support in Edinburgh visit Edspace at [www.edspace.org.uk](http://www.edspace.org.uk).

## 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 (24 hours)

Text phone 0808 801 0415 (24 hours)

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

(Monday to Friday 9-5pm)

**Circles Network** 0131 537 6004

# Community Happenings

## Day Services Review

There will be a slight delay in The Day Services Review due to working out the details of involving the service user interviewers. EUF hopes to pay people who have their own experience of using mental health services to carry out interviews with other service users across Edinburgh. The aim is to find out their views about day services.

Meanwhile the mapping activity which is also taking place for the Day Services Review is developing. This involves finding out what day services are available across Edinburgh, when they are open, who can use them and how we can refer to them. The hope is once this is finished we will have a much clearer picture of what mental health services are out there.

When we say 'day services', we mean services which people can use during the daytime and at some places in the evenings and at weekends. Some are just for people from one area of the City. Some for a particular group of people, and others you have to be referred to by a doctor or social worker. Some are for people to learn new things, to be more creative, to work through particular problems, or just to be with and get support from other people in the same boat.

For more information about the Day Services Review contact Kirstie at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

## North West Edinburgh Service User Group

We are a service user group that gets together to talk about mental health services in North West Edinburgh. We are currently working to find a way people can get back in touch with a key worker once they have been discharged from a mental health team. We are working with Anne Langley, a nurse manager, to develop what we have called a 'Fast Track'. This means that you can call one phone number and get an appointment with a key worker without having to go back to your GP and be put on long waiting lists. We hope that we can continue to influence services and make mental health services better for service users.

If you would to come to a meeting or be kept updated with what is happening contact Donna from CAPS on 0131 5387177 or email [donna@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:donna@capsadvocacy.org).

## **EUF AGM!!!**

**Don't forget to put the EUF Annual General Meeting (AGM) in your diary!**

**30 May 2008**

**2:00pm - 4:00pm**

**The Drill Hall**

**36 Dalmeny Street**

**Edinburgh**

# Community Happenings

## Stress Control Courses

NHS Lothian staff are running a free, 6 week course on controlling stress. Topics covered in the course are how to control your body, thoughts, actions, panic and sleep. The first session is on:

Tuesday 15 April 2008

6:30pm -8:00pm

Lecture Theatre, Stevenson College, Sighthill Campus, Bankhead Avenue, Edinburgh.

For more information or to book your place contact the Information Resource Centre at Health in Mind on 0131 243 0106.

## Health In Mind

### Information Sessions

Wednesday 9 April 2008

Supported Employment

Held by Forth Sector

1:30pm - 3:30pm

Wednesday 16 of April

Anxiety Management

Held by Wester Hailes Health Agency

1:30pm-3:30pm

To book a place or for more information contact the Information Resource Centre on 0131 243 0106.

## SIAA (Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance)

There is talk amongst advocacy organisations about developing some kind of 'quality assurance' or accreditation for advocacy. Following the talks last year at SIAA's AGM, a working group has been set up to look at this topic. The debate is being taken to the wider advocacy movement to gather the views of workers, volunteers and those who use advocacy.

Consultation events for people who use advocacy will be held throughout Scotland. The Edinburgh consultation event will be held on:

Thursday 17 April

1.00pm - 4.00pm

Quaker Meeting House, Victoria Terrace.

To book a place on this event call 0131 260 5380 or places can be booked on line at [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk).

## Link Up

Link Up is a mental health support centre for women living in North East Edinburgh. They are looking for women to join a small supportive group in Link Up. Link Up are aiming to have short, 5 week courses looking at 'confidence building and standing up for ourselves'. It will be held on a Wednesday from 1:15pm - 2:45pm.

If you would like more information phone Margaret on 0131 661 9292.

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## 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 services, benefits, housing, advocacy, crisis services and transport. If you would like any more information about EUF please contact us.

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### Contact us

Write to:

Edinburgh Users Forum  
c/o CAPS

5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh  
EH7 5SN

Phone: (0131) 538 7177

Fax: (0131) 538 7215

Email: [info@edinburghusersforum.org](mailto:info@edinburghusersforum.org)

Or visit our website: [www.edinburghusersforum.org](http://www.edinburghusersforum.org)

### Monthly meetings

On the first Saturday of each month 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**.

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## Other dates for your diary

If you would like to know more about any of these service user meetings please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

### **Oor Mad History Steering Group:**

Thursday 1 May 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS

### **EUF Executive:**

17 April 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS.

### **North West Edinburgh Service Users Group:**

To be confirmed, contact Donna on 0131 538 7177.

## **EUF Monthly Meetings for 2008**

Saturday 5 April

Saturday 3 May

Saturday 7 June

Saturday 5 July

Saturday 2 August

Saturday 6 September

Saturday 4 October

Saturday 1 November

Saturday 6 December