



**January  
2008**

## **We need your views!**

NHS Lothian has started a new project to look at how Mental Health Services being provided at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital can be improved. Some of these changes may involve new buildings, but probably not for at least 5 years. In the meantime changes can be made to current services in the existing buildings.

There are lots of different meetings involving NHS staff, voluntary groups, and service user and carer groups taking place.

EUF needs to know what you think and what improvements and changes service users would like to see. For example, is it important that each area of the city has its own ward? Might it be useful to have a separate 'assessment' ward? What changes could be made to make our stays in hospital shorter? What would you like to do while you are in hospital? Do we need a women-only ward?

We will use our January Forum meeting to hear your views, so please do come along with your ideas.

### **With this mailing**

- EUF flyer for meeting
- Advocard volunteer training flyer
- Christmas card from CAPS
- CAPS Annual Report 2007

### **Our Next Meeting:**

**Saturday 5 January  
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

### **A survey of user experiences of the Mental Health Tribunal**

One aim of the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 was to give more of a chance for service users and carers to take part in care and treatment decisions. The Act introduced the Mental Health Tribunal system which was set up to make decisions about some kinds of compulsory treatment.

However, to date, no information about service-user experience of tribunals has been collected.

To do something about this, the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland will be asking individual service users, named persons, carers and relatives who have been involved in a tribunal what they thought about the experience. The Mental Welfare Commission want to find out what works well and what can be improved in the way tribunals work.

Copies of surveys will be distributed at every tribunal taking place in Scotland over a two month period early in 2008. If this will affect you an independent advocate could help you complete your survey.

### **Day Service Review**

The recruitment Panel are currently deciding who to interview for the Day Service Review Jobs. The people who get the job will talk to service users asking three main questions: how you would like to spend your time? are you doing this now? and if not, what is stopping you? The next planning meeting for this work is on:

**Tuesday 8 January at 2:00pm at CAPS.**

### **Oor Mad History**

The event with David Reville on 1 October 2007 was such a success that we are now hoping to start up a project called Oor Mad History. The project will support service users in collecting and learning from our history.

It is important for us to look back and acknowledge our achievements, learn from mistakes, and better understand how we can make a difference.

Knowing our history strengthens us as groups of mental health service users and helps us fight better for more improvements and progress.

We hope to let you know more in early 2008 so look out in future newsletters and come to Edinburgh Users Forum meetings to be kept up to date. The next planning meeting is on:

**Tuesday 15 January 2008 at 2:00pm at CAPS.**

## At our last meeting.....

After we had a chance to tuck into some Christmas nosh we watched the film 'Working Like Crazy'. This is a real-life documentary about people who use mental health services working and running businesses called 'social firms' in Toronto, Canada.

The social firms are unique because they're run by people who use mental health services. Some mainstream employers don't understand how mental health problems can affect people's lives and how it can make it difficult to take part in employment. These social firms try to give people a safe and flexible environment to work in where they can get support and understanding from other people who work there.

At the end of the film we talked about our ideas. There was some interest in getting together to do something like this here but it would take a lot of commitment to develop. It would involve getting a proposal together and finding funding to set up our own businesses.

If we did start our own businesses we need to think about jobs that we want to do. Some people thought that it was important to have work that wasn't stressful.

We hope the day service review will find out what people want to do with their time and maybe come up with some ideas for services we can run ourselves.

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.

## Too much season's greeting?

(it's a pun in the fine tradition of dreadful EUF puns).

This time of year can be difficult for many of us. And it is when services we rely on are often closed or reduced. We usually have a list of numbers under the heading 'Before it is a crisis' but we would like to add a little more for the January newsletter.

Be sure to make a note of when the services you usually rely on are available over the holidays. The NHS and the council usually publicise their holiday arrangements in local papers, so look out for that. Ask your support worker or community psychiatric nurse, if you have one, what the arrangements their service has for over the holidays. Make sure you have enough of the medication you need. Check with your GP and pharmacy when they are open.

**Crisis Centre Interim Service** Free phone 0808 801 0414 (24 hours) Text phone 0808 801 0415 (24 hours) All calls free, including those from mobiles.

**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)

**Advocard** if you need an advocate 0131 554 5307 (Monday to Friday 9- 5pm)

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.

Take care of yourself and each other. And don't forget the first 2008 EUF meeting on 5 January!

# Community Happenings

## EUf Website

EUf now has its very own website. Yes, we know the website has a rather long name;

[www.edinburghusersforum.org](http://www.edinburghusersforum.org)

It is for us to use it to publicise our projects and work with other people as well as to help us share ideas between ourselves. Each monthly Newsletter will also be posted on the website.

We'd like to offer members the chance to display their own writings, poems, pictures, and photographs so do get in touch if you would like to contribute.

We have included a Discussion Forum and hope that we might use it to collect wider views from service users from across Edinburgh.

## North West Edinburgh Service User Group

We are a group of service users, supported by CAPS, that looks at mental health services in North West Edinburgh. We can tell service providers what we want and ask for changes if we aren't happy with the way the new services are running.

One of the things we are doing is looking at how the Inverleith Day Unit runs.

We go to planning meetings about this and our group is a safe space we can talk about our views and decide what we want to say at these meetings.

We have also given our views on the Operational Policies for the Community Mental Health Teams and the Primary Care Liaison Team. The policies are a way of writing down what people in the mental health teams are supposed to do. We have been successful in getting some things changed in the policies so that services are better for service users.

Our group has only had three meetings so far and we need to get more people involved so our voice is strong. If you would like to get involved you're more than welcome to come along to our next meeting on:

**Wednesday 9 January 2008**

**1:30pm- 3:30pm**

**At CAPS, 5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh.**

**For more information contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.**

Our group feeds into the Inverleith Day Unit Development Group. This is a group run by NHS Lothian that looks at day services in North West Edinburgh. It is suppose to involve service users in developing services like the Inverleith Day Unit. CAPS staff are there to support services users and service users views. For more information phone Catriona Priestly on 0131 315 2026.

## Community Happenings

### Alcohol Problems Service (NHS Lothian)

#### Service Users Advocacy Group

NHS Lothian Alcohol Problems Service has set up a group it calls the Service Users Advocacy Group. This group is able to influence NHS Alcohol Services in and around Edinburgh. It can tell service providers what users think and can ask for changes in the service if members are not happy with the way that services are running. The group welcome and encourage all past and present service users to attend the meetings which are held on the first Wednesday of every month **next meeting 6 February 2008 at 10.00am at 29 Morningside Park** (Just outside the Royal Edinburgh Hospital).

For more details please contact:

Elizabeth Watson 0131 537 6747  
(office hours)

or

Brian McConnachie 07935 735 584  
(outwith office hours)

### Incapacity Benefits

There have been many changes to benefits lately. If you been affected by any of these changes and would like to get some help or advice contact:

The Advice shop on 0131 225 1255

or phone your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

### Bipolar Fellowship Scotland

#### Lothian Bipolar Self-help group

Meeting Tuesday 22 January 2008,  
7:00pm at Quaker Meeting House.

Topic: Re-provisioning of Royal Edinburgh Hospital - your chance to give your views

Note: all future meetings in 2008 will be on the 3rd Monday of the month.

### Nisus Scotland

#### Free Courses

Nisus Scotland is running free courses for adults with disabilities and health concerns. These include European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) Computer Qualifications and communications training with additional support to help people move into further education or volunteering opportunities. Applicants must be unemployed or working less than 16 hours per week. All students receive an individual learning plan and will have regular reviews throughout the period of the course. For more information contact Nisus Scotland:

Phone: 0131 554 5656

or email: [info@nisusscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@nisusscotland.org.uk)

---

## 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

**Write to:**

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

**Phone:** (0131) 538 7177

**Fax:** (0131) 538 7215

**Email:** [contact@edinburghusersforum.org](mailto:contact@edinburghusersforum.org)

**Website:** [www.edinburghusersforum.org](http://www.edinburghusersforum.org)

## 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**.

## Other dates for your diary

As well as our monthly meeting these are some other service user meetings. See articles inside for details.

### **Oor Mad History:**

Tuesday 15 January 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS.

### **Bag of Tricks:**

To be confirmed.

### **Day Service Review:**

Tuesday 8 January 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS.

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

Wednesday 9 January 2008, 1:30pm- 3:30pm at CAPS.

## **EUf Meetings for 2008**

Saturday 5 January

Saturday 2 February

Saturday 1 March

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