



**March
2008**

Too Much Gobbledygook?

As service users, we are constantly being asked to get involved in this consultation or go to that event. When you go to these events there are often high levels of TMG (too much gobbledygook). You shouldn't have to learn another language to be able to have a say in things. Not understanding the language can exclude some of us from what people are talking about. There are also a lot of things going on at any one time, so it is hard to keep up with the mental health field which is complicated and forever changing.

There are a lot of demands on our time. When you spend your time and energy you want to know it is well spent. So how do we make sure it is?

Come along to the next EUF meeting in March where we will talk about how we want to be consulted and involved in decision making. Maybe you have some better ideas? What can service providers do to make things more accessible? How can CAPS support us to keep on top of all the changing policies and jargon? We hope to see you on the 1 March 2008.

In with this mailing

- **EUF meeting flyer**

Our Next Meeting:

Saturday 1 March 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

Royal Edinburgh Hospital (REH)

Kaizen Week

Right now, Kaizen week is happening! Kaizen is a management exercise being carried out by NHS Lothian in order to 'to improve the patient journey in Acute General Adult Mental Health', in other words, to improve our experience of using mental health services based at the REH. A member of Edinburgh Users Forum and a CAPS worker will be there. Find out what happened at the next EUF meeting (1 March) and in the April newsletter.

REH Press Release

Following a press release from NHS Lothian, the Evening News published a story on 14 February which suggested that mental health services at REH may be split between the Western General and Royal Infirmary at Little France. However, this has not yet been decided. What will happen to services currently based at the REH is being discussed by the REH Campus Reprovision Project Board, which has representatives from EUF and other relevant user and carer groups. We will update you at EUF meetings and in the newsletter. You can read the press release, 'New future for services provided from the Royal Edinburgh Hospital campus', on NHS Lothian's website www.nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk

Advice and Information About Benefits

There has a lot of discussion in the media about changes to Incapacity Benefit, and this has been brought up at EUF meetings. It is important to explain that we do not provide any information on benefits because this is a very complex subject. We do not have the expertise or the resources to advise people on what they might be entitled to.

If you are worried about benefits, we strongly advise you to get independent advice, e.g. from the council's Advice Shop, 85-87 South Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1HN. Phone: 0131 225 1255.

Day Service Review

The team we have recruited to do the work of the day service review have gone through training and will be working hard from March to the Summer to carry out the important work of the Day Service Review.

They will be going out to talk to service users to find out, how they want to spend their time, if they're doing this now, and if not what is stopping them. If you go to a mental health group, centre or drop-in and can help organise a meeting please get in touch with Kirstie at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

At our last meeting.....

Robert Rae, Artistic Director from the Theatre Workshop came to talk to us about doing a production about 'mad peoples history'.

The Theatre Workshop tries to create good theatre and film around giving people a voice. They look for groups who find themselves excluded and try to take their voice to a public platform. The latest thing they have done is a film about refugees called 'Trouble Sleeping' which will hopefully be screened at Edinburgh Festival and shown on the BBC.

The voice of people with mental health problems is so rarely heard by the general public. People often don't believe the stories we tell. The media isn't helpful when it shows us as dangerous either.

We talked about the imbalance of power between professionals and service users. Robert asked us about times when we challenged the power balance. One of the biggest things we have achieved is the Crisis Centre. This might be one option for a performance. We could show the long fight we went through to get this service. Another idea is to work alongside the 'Oor Mad History' project. This could be a another good opportunity to give the user movement a strong voice and to show the general public what service users can do and what we have achieved.

Robert explained that the idea is to do some kind of performance, it could be anything at this stage.

The project will take around 2 years to finish and there are lots of opportunities for us to get involved.

Robert would like to hear people's stories directly and is willing to meet with people. As well as collecting people's stories Robert would also like to know how we want to show these stories, for example a musical, play or film. Once we know what kind of project we want we can get together to research our history and write a script. If people want to get in contact with Robert they can give their contact details to CAPS.

This is a really good opportunity to have the resources and reputation of the Theatre Workshop behind us. It would give us a chance to be heard by the wider public and to have our stories told.

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.

EUF Website

We would like to let you know about the website and why we have made it the way we have. The website was made to be easy to use for people who use text reading equipment, or who are on dial-up connections. We haven't included graphics and other special effects because it gets in the way of this. There are other websites to get information about what is happening in Edinburgh so we only include information about Edinburgh Users Forum. We will continue to update and develop our website. Take a look at:
www.edinburghusersforum.org.

Oor Mad History

We have now had our first steering group meeting! The group will be responsible for recruiting a worker to support service users to take this work forward. It's made up of representatives of service user groups across Lothian as well as other people we thought would be helpful to us. There will be lots of opportunities for people to get involved in the work in the future. We hope 'Oor Mad History' will show the work and achievements of the user movement.

For more information about 'Oor Mad History' contact Kirstie at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

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)

Community Happenings

North West Edinburgh Service User Group

We are a group of service users who get together to talk about mental health services in North West Edinburgh. At the moment we are talking about things like running our own drop-ins and groups. We are also keeping an eye on what is happening to day services and are feeding-back our ideas and concerns to the Inverleith Day Unit Development Group (see article below). Anyone who uses or has used mental health services in North West Edinburgh is more than welcome to come along. The next meeting is on:

Wednesday 26 March 2008
2:00pm - 3:30pm at CAPS, 5 Cadzow Place, Edinburgh.

Inverleith Day Unit Development Group

This group is for people who want to get involved in having a say about what happens to day services in North West Edinburgh. The group is a mixture of service users and NHS staff and is on:

Friday 28 March 2008
2:00pm - 3:00pm at Threshold
The Rannoch Centre, 6 Rannoch Terrace
Edinburgh

For more information about the meetings in North West Edinburgh contact Donna at CAPS on
0131 538 7177

Emergency Care Summary (ECS)

At our last meeting a member raised a concern about pharmacists wanting to access a persons ECS. An ECS contains your name, date of birth, GP surgery, an identifying number called a CHI number, information about any medicines prescribed by your GP and any bad reaction you've had to medicines that your GP knows about. It is copied from your GP surgery and stored electronically.

An ECS can be looked at on a computer, with your permission, by NHS staff when your doctors surgery is closed and they need to treat you. This includes doctors, nurses and receptionists in out-of-hours medical centres, NHS 24 staff involved in your care and staff at accident and emergency departments. The Community Pharmacy Scotland want access to the part of an ECS that tells them about what medicines you've taken and any bad reactions you've had.

CAPS have ordered the leaflet that NHS Lothian has produced about ECS and the subject will be discussed further at the March meeting.

Community Happenings

Plan 2 Change

The Scottish Executive has funded Plan 2 Change as a pilot peer support project. This was developed by a partnership of organisations, Penumbra, NHS Lothian and the Scottish Recovery Network. Plan 2 Change work on a one to one basis with people who are finding life hard to deal with. All of the team members have overcome significant challenges in their lives and have experienced mental health problems. They share ideas and offer hope and inspiration, informed by their life experiences. If you would like to get in touch with the project you can contact them directly by calling 0131 661 4086 or you can ask the doctors, nurses or other members of the practice teams at Craigmillar Health Centre, Mountcastle Surgery and Durham Road Practice, who can make a referral for you.

Health In Mind

Information Afternoon

Barriers to Physical Exercise
Wednesday 5th March 2008

1:30pm - 3:30pm

Health in Mind,

40 Shadwick Place, Edinburgh

Facilitator: Fiona Lindsay –

NHS Occupational Therapist

For more information phone:

0131 243 0106 or email: information@health-in-mind.org.uk

Forth Sector Workspace Project

The Workspace Project is about helping people with mental health problems return to work. They offer a work placement that doesn't affect your benefits. They also offer job searching skills, CV building, personal development and benefits advice.

Workspace are looking to recruit eight people who are currently on benefits due to their mental health problems. People will receive work experience in a supportive environment with all the support necessary to make the transition into the mainstream workplace.

If you are interested or would like more information contact Alison Stocks on 0131 659 4710 or email alison.stocks@forthsector.org.uk.

VOX AGM

VOX (Voices of Experience) is the national voice of service users in Scotland they will be holding their AGM (Annual General Meeting) on:

Tuesday 11 March

10:00am - 5:00pm

**Scottish Youth Theatre,
105 Brunswick Street, Glasgow**

The AGM is open to all VOX members. For more information contact wmcauslan@mhf.org.uk or telephone **0141 572 1663**.

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.

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

Or visit our website: 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**.

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:

To be confirmed at the next meeting on Thursday 28 February.

EUF Executive:

Thursday 13 March 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS.

North West Edinburgh Service Users Group:

Wednesday 26 March 2008, 2:00pm at CAPS.

EUF Monthly Meetings for 2008

Saturday 1 March

Saturday 5 April

Saturday 3 May

Saturday 7 June

Saturday 6 September

Saturday 4 October

Saturday 1 November

Saturday 6 December