



January 2011

2011 and Beyond

At our next meeting, Linda Irvine, NHS Lothian Strategic Programme Manager for Mental Health and Wellbeing, will come and present the draft strategy for Lothian's Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2010-2015.

Over the last year, many people have given their views and attended workshops to look at the future of mental health services in Lothian. Some areas need to be revisited to improve care and to fit with changes in policies, society and services.

We think important aspects of it will be changes in the transition of services between children and adult services and between adult services and older people's services. We also anticipate a focus on services delivered in the community.

We have been waiting for the new strategy for some months now and unfortunately it will not be available until the end of the year. The delay has been partly caused by the review of national budgets following the recession. Once the strategy is available, it will be open for consultation for a couple of months.

Linda Irvine will answer people's questions about the strategy and make clear what will mean for them and the services they use. This is a good opportunity to

understand how it will affect our care and to give our views.

CAPS is also organising a Lothian-wide event for people to find out more about the strategy and get a chance to have a say. The event will take place on 19 January 2011 from 10am to 1.30pm at the NHS Lothian offices at Waverley Gate, Waterloo Place, Edinburgh.

For more information, please contact CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email donna@capsadvocacy.org.

Our Next Meeting:

Saturday 8 January 2011

1.30pm - doors open

2.00 - 4.00pm - meeting

**NB: Exceptionally on
the second Saturday of
the month**

McDonald Road Library,
Edinburgh

For more information contact
CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

Hot Topics

Oor Mad History Update

What have coffee cups and typewriters got to do with Oor Mad History? They were all part of the Oor Mad History exhibition.

We held our book and exhibition launch on 1 October 2010 as part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival. It was a fantastic afternoon, with over 70 service users and supporters attending.

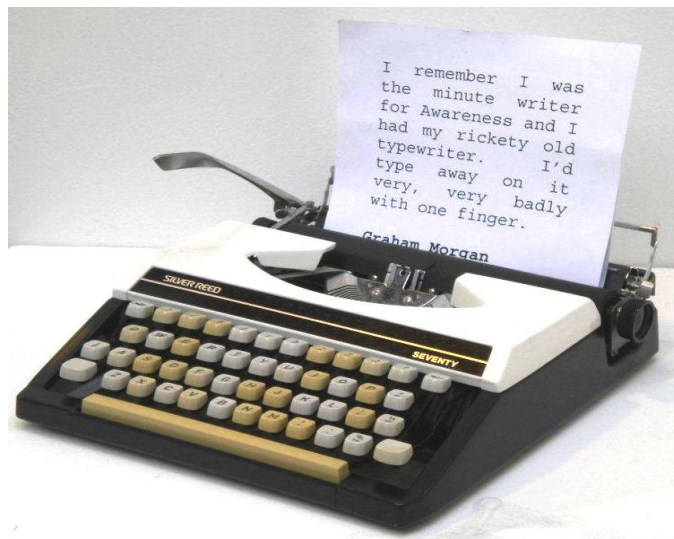
Malcolm Chisholm MSP said a few words and then we had a couple of speeches from the Community History Worker and Jim McGill, service user volunteer and Oor Mad History steering group member. Afterwards people had a chance to pick up a copy of the book, look at the exhibition and chat over a glass of wine.

The exhibition certainly got people talking. It included quotes from the oral history interviews, images from the archive and a sculpture donated by a volunteer about the way people with mental health problems have been portrayed by society and the media over the last century.

We also had some interesting objects in our exhibition to bring it to life. We had dirty coffee cups for a great quote about one of the first Patients' Council meetings, where service users felt too scared to put their coffee cups on the Royal Edinburgh Hospital Boardroom table – "we better no' put out cups on this table!"

We also had an ashtray for a quote about the amount of smoking that went on at early service user meetings. We

used an old typewriter with a quote about remembering writing the minutes of an early service user group on a rickety typewriter.



So what next for Oor Mad History? We are planning to take the exhibition on tour around Lothian and run workshops for service users to discuss the issues it raises. We would love people to come along and come up with their own object ideas. We hope the exhibition will change and grow to reflect what people say.

We are still working on building and cataloguing the archive. We always welcome new donations. If you would like to visit the archive, volunteer with us or be interviewed for the oral history archive, please contact Kirsten.

We have lots of other plans for the future, including developing a course similar to the 'Mad Peoples' History' course in Canada and setting up a website. To find out more, get involved, or to get a copy of the book please contact Kirsten at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email kirsten@capsadvocacy.org. Be part of the future of Oor Mad History!

Care and Support Commissioning Consultation

The City of Edinburgh Council is consulting on a commissioning strategy they are writing for care and support services (2011 to 2016). They are also consulting on a commissioning plan for adult services.

The Council has decided to do this partly as a result of the Care and Support Tender campaigning and review which showed there was no clear commissioning strategy.

The two draft strategies are part of the Edinburgh Care and Support strategy that will decide on the way the Council plans, delivers and buys care and support services.

There are two parts to the consultation:

- One for every care and support service for adults and children of all ages. The Council's vision is that all the people who use care services get good and affordable services and can live as independently as possible.

- Linked to this general strategy, there are three more detailed plans for adults, children and families, and housing and homelessness.

The plan for adult services is more detailed and covers older people, mental health and wellbeing, learning disability, physical disability, drug and alcohol addictions and HIV/AIDS.

We have only just been told about the consultation and the deadline is 18 February 2011. To get a copy of the questionnaire and the draft strategy you can contact Kate McVie on 0131 553 8314 or visit www.edinburgh.gov.uk/commissioningstrategy.

Self Harm Consultation

The Scottish Government is currently doing a consultation about self harm and self harm services in Scotland. They have organised some events for staff, but CAPS is trying to find out as many service users' views as possible before the end of January 2011.

We are doing this by running focus groups and putting out a survey. The first focus group will be in Edinburgh at 2pm on Tuesday 21st December at Waverley Gate, and there will be more focus groups after Christmas.

We also have a survey online at: http://www.kwiksurveys.com/online-survey.php?surveyID=HCMNLF_9d93cfbd. It can also be posted or emailed.

CAPS feel it is very important for as many service users as possible to give their views. If you would like to come to a focus group or give your views please contact Naomi at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or naomi@capsadvocacy.org as soon as possible.

Experiences of Psychosis

CAPS Experiences of Psychosis Project has been set up for people who have lived experience of psychosis to come together, share their views and have an impact on the support services they can access.

We will be running discussion groups and surveys and if you would like to get involved please contact Naomi at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email naomi@capsadvocacy.org

Advocacy Review

At our last meeting, we talked about the review of independent advocacy services City of Edinburgh Council has been carrying out. The Council wants to extend advocacy to more people AND save money.

The final report of this review was made public on Wednesday 1 December. The report recommends that the Council should only have only three contracts/ organisations providing advocacy:

- one for Learning Disabilities
- one for Older People and People with a Physical Disability
- one for Mental Health and Carers

The report also said that the organisations who provide these services should be decided by going out to competitive tender.

The competitive tendering process means that organisations from outside Edinburgh could bid for and become the providers of advocacy, rather than the current organisations and groups providing individual and collective advocacy. In fact, any organisation in Europe could put in a bid to provide advocacy in Edinburgh!

CAPS think this is not a good idea for a number of reasons. It is important that councillors understand advocacy is about giving people a voice and should be provided by organisations that are based locally and as much as possible controlled and accountable to the communities and the people they help to speak up.

The advocacy organisations in Edinburgh have grown out of service users campaigning and most are service

user-led. We are worried that organisations who bid for contracts will not have the same roots in the communities they support and trust from service users. We are worried that the pressure on them will just be to deliver a service on behalf of the Council.

Organisations from other areas will also not have the same level of experience or understanding about Edinburgh. The strong relationships that have developed between service users and current advocacy organisations could be lost.

On Thursday 16 December 2010, the report went to a meeting of City of Edinburgh Council. CAPS, Partners in Advocacy and Powerful Partnerships all went along with service users and voiced their concerns about the recommendation to go to competitive tender how it would affect service users.

After the deputations spoke, they answered questions from councillors. However, the Council decided to postpone making a decision until its next meeting, on 3 February 2011.

The reason for this delay is that the Council wants to take legal advice on whether or not they have to go to a competitive tender process. The other alternative, which we support, is that they work with existing advocacy organisations to come up with a solution that would still allow them to make savings, while keeping the expertise and relationships that grassroots organisations have established over the years.

We will keep you updated on further developments.

At our last meeting...

EUF and CAPS

In November, we talked about having an agreement between CAPS and EUF about what kind of support we can expect from CAPS and what CAPS can expect from EUF. We are still looking for people to meet and discuss the agreement.

If any EUF members are interested in meeting with CAPS to work on an agreement, please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email donna@capsadvocacy.org.

Work Capability Assessment - Review

We talked about the work CAPS is doing around the Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) and the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).

Everyone who applies for ESA has to go through a WCA to decide whether they can do some type of work. This assessment is done by doctors and nurses employed by an organisation called ATOS.

Many people with mental health issues have found the assessment process very stressful and some find it is not adapted to the needs of people with mental health issues.

A working group got together to discuss the assessment and a questionnaire was distributed with the last newsletter. If you have not got a copy of the questionnaire, please contact Laëtitia or Naomi at CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

It is important that we hear as many people's experiences as possible to make sure the process is reviewed. Even if you have not been assessed, you can use the questionnaire to tell us how the thought of the assessment is making you feel.

Harrington Review

A first review of the WCA was published in November. Some recommendations match the concerns of people with mental health issues.

An important recommendation is that ATOS will provide "champions" with additional expertise in mental, cognitive and intellectual conditions to improve the service to individuals and to provide opportunities for staff to further develop their skills.

We need to keep giving our views on the fairness of the assessment for people with fluctuating mental health issues so that these "champions" can ensure people can be assessed properly the first time and can avoid having to go through the stress of an appeal and a second assessment.

Another recommendation is to run the assessment in a more compassionate way. The review highlights how the assessment is impersonal, lacks empathy and people can be confused about its purpose.

The review and the Government's response are available at www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/employment-and-support/wca-independent-review/

Community Happenings

Support in Mind - new name for NSF Scotland

As from 28th October 2010 NSF (Scotland) and its projects will operate under the new name of Support in Mind Scotland.

They want their new name to reflect who they are and what they do. They will continue to:

- be focused on people affected by mental illnesses – many of which are broadly described as psychosis – rather than those affected by mental health problems.

- be an organisation of and for people affected by mental illness.

respond to local needs within our services;

- represent the views and perspectives of people in influencing national and local policies that affect them.

The adoption of a new name is not because of the stigma attached to the diagnosis of schizophrenia, but because:

- It no longer really reflects the range of their activities. Their services are for service users and carers/family members affected by a range of different mental illnesses, not only schizophrenia.

- Some service users and carers/family members have been put off from using their services, or becoming members, because they thought they are only for people affected by schizophrenia.

For more information, phone 0131 662 4359 or visit their website www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk.

Dismissed Campaign

In November, SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) launched a new campaign called “Dismissed?” The campaign focuses on the employability journey of people with mental health problems.

From claiming benefits to which people are entitled when they are sick or disabled, to applying for, getting and keeping a job, people with mental health problems are currently disadvantaged in employability.

The 2.6 million current claimants of Incapacity Benefit in the UK will be re-assessed for their readiness to work from February 2011 and will move people either on to the new Employment and Support Allowance or onto Jobseekers' Allowance if they are found fit for work. In 2008, almost half of all the people on Incapacity Benefit were claiming it because of a mental health problem.

SAMH wants more people with mental health problems to be supported in the workplace and for more support for people with mental health problems who are too unwell to work.

The campaign aims to work with employers to help them learn about mental health, and about equality law and to help them to recruit and retain staff who experience mental health problems.

It also aims to influence the benefits system to make it fairer and easier to navigate and empower individuals to campaign for themselves.

There are many ways people can get involved in the campaign. One way is to contact your local MP. There is also information on the SAMH website on how employers can support the campaign.

For more information, visit www.samh.org.uk/events.php?display=dismissed_four. You can also contact SAMH's information service on freephone 0800 917 34 66 or email info@samh.org.uk.

Speak Out About Stigma

'see me' volunteer speakers provide talks in a range of settings, including schools, community groups and businesses, about their own experiences of mental ill-health, with two specific focuses: the stigma and discrimination that people with mental ill-health face, and how positive support and recovery has helped them. The speakers also give a short introduction to 'see me'.

All the speakers are given public speaking training and have the opportunity to practise this skill with a wide range of audiences. By being involved with the Speakers' group you can attend a variety of events and meet lots of new people. You can also have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping to change people's attitudes and behaviour towards people with mental ill-health.

'see me' is looking for new volunteer speakers across the country, and also new audiences. If you would be interested in speaking out, please contact Becky Duff on 0131 554 0218 or email becky.duff@seemescotland.org.

Before it's a crisis...

Here is a list of numbers you can phone for support when most services are closed. It is a good idea to keep these numbers 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

08454 24 24 24 (24 hours)

Emergency Social Work Service

0800 731 6969 (out of hours only)

Crisis Centre

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 individual advocacy you may contact:

Advocard 0131 554 5307

(Monday to Friday 9-5pm)

Royal Edinburgh Hospital Advocacy Service

0131 537 6004

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:
info@edinburghusersforum.org
Or visit our website:
www.edinburghusersforum.org

EUF Meetings 2011

Saturday 8 January
(exceptionally, the second
Saturday of the month)

Saturday 5 February

Saturday 5 March

Saturday 2 April

Saturday 7 May

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**.