



**July  
2010**

## **Any complaints?**

At our next meeting we will look at the EUF complaints procedure. We will discuss how it can be improved and what it should include to cover for all possible situations. There have been talks recently about how we need to have a look at it and adapt it. It is also important to keep it as simple and straightforward as possible.

At a recent meeting, we have already started to discuss the format of a complaints procedure, what it should contain and what it should be used for.

Some people said they felt we did not really need a complaints procedure to deal with internal problems. If a EUF member has an issue with another member, then maybe they should be able to sort it out amicably. So do we need a complaints procedure? Should we have a grievance procedure instead?

The Executive Committee has started looking at the current procedure and we have also looked at the procedures from other organisations to get ideas and to make sure we cover the important points.

Someone also suggested that we should look into having a policy for when EUF members represent EUF's views at external meetings. It is important that when attending a meeting on behalf of

EUF, a person gives the collective views of a group and not only their own.

It was suggested that we start a working group that can meet a few times to write up a new complaints procedure and any other documents that we feel will ensure EUF works smoothly and can deal with any issue and conflict.

If you would like to have a say about the procedure and if you have been a member of a user group or an organisation that has a complaints procedure, come and share your ideas at our next meeting.

If you cannot come to the next meeting but would like to give your views or join the working group, please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [donna@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:donna@capsadvocacy.org).

### **Our Next Meeting:**

**Saturday 3 July 2010**

1.30pm - doors open

2.00 - 4.00pm - meeting

McDonald Road Library, Edinburgh

For more information contact CAPS  
on 0131 538 7177.

# Hot Topics

## Crisis Centre

Good news! The Crisis Centre has negotiated a service level agreement with the City of Edinburgh Council. This means they have secured funding for the next three years.

One thing that is being talked about is using an evaluation tool called Core. This is a tool that helps to measure if the Crisis Centre is making anyone feel better after using the service. The idea is that it would help show funders that the Crisis Centre works.

It would mean that when someone comes into the Crisis Centre, they would be asked questions about how they feel and would be asked the same questions when they leave the Centre.

However there is concern that this could change the nature of the service. Some people don't like having to answer this type of questions, especially when they use a service for the first time.

What we need to do is tell the Crisis Centre what we think about this. A decision won't be made until the Crisis Centre hears back from EUF.

We will talk about this at the next EUF meeting. If you would like to give your views come to the meeting. If you cannot make it to the meeting but would still like to have a say, contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [donna@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:donna@capsadvocacy.org).

## Access to Arts Venues and Events

The Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health is running an online survey to get people's views and experiences of attending or participating in arts events. It is open to people who have experienced having a mental health issues or are close to someone who does. The survey is available at the following address: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/artsneeds](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/artsneeds)

This is part of a larger project that the Centre is working on with The Audience Business to explore the accessibility of arts venues and events for people who experience mental health problems.

In the next stage of their research, they will run a focus group in Edinburgh to explore the issues raised from the survey in more detail and find out what could be done to improve people's experience of attending or participating in arts events and what arts venues can do to improve the service they offer.

The information gathered will help to produce a good practice guide to help make arts venues more accessible.

There will be a focus group at the Melting Pot on Friday 16th July, from 2pm to 3.30pm. The Melting Pot is at 5 Rose Street in Edinburgh (near Sainsburys). The group is for people who are willing to talk about their experiences (or barriers) of attending or participating in arts events.

There are 8 places for this focus group so we need to book people in. To book a place, please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [donna@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:donna@capsadvocacy.org).

## Short Breaks

A few months ago, EUF set up a Short Breaks working group.

The group is looking at how a short break scheme could work in Edinburgh and benefit people with mental health issues.

The group will produce a report showing how the scheme could work and how it should be organised and monitored. We are aware there is no funding available at the moment, but when some will become available, we will have already worked out the details of a scheme.

The working group met a few times this year to start discussing short breaks and also to be well informed about what is currently available and make sure that we do not campaign for something that already exists and that we do not duplicate other projects.

We have for example looked at how the scheme successfully runs in Midlothian. We have also met with people who manage programmes such as Cairdeas House. Cairdeas House, located in Coates Gardens in Edinburgh, offers a safe environment where people can come for a planned break from life difficulties affecting their mental health.

They aim to meet individual support needs and interests and there is staff around 24 hours and project workers are there to help guests relax and talk through their difficulties. They also give carers and other family members a break

from the responsibilities of continuous care.

In June a EUF representative met with Andrew Millar from the Short Breaks Team at City of Edinburgh Council. The team provides funding for adults aged 16 and over who have a learning disability and older people, including those who have dementia.

They help with short breaks which offer choice and promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. The team also provide a much needed break for family members who are carers.

The grant pays for the carer's expenses but not the service user. So the team started to look at the short break scheme in a different way a few years ago as not everybody can afford a holiday so not everybody can benefit from the carer's fees being paid for.

All these meetings have allowed us to get a better idea of what we want to campaign for and how a scheme can be as efficient as possible. For example, we will look at how it can work with the direct payment system, how we can try and identify funding and how people can be assessed to have access to grants.

The group will meet in July to start writing a proposal and will then take it to a EUF meeting for approval. We will try our best to come up with an idea that is simple to use and we are also keen to have EUF involved in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

For more information or to give your views on short breaks, please contact Laëtitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [laetitia@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:laetitia@capsadvocacy.org).

## Bridging the Gap Peer Support

Bridging the Gap is a new service run by Health in Mind. It encourages and supports people along their unique paths towards managing their mental well-being.

The project trains and supports volunteers with experience of mental health difficulties to become one to one peer supporters. They can then volunteer for a couple of hours a week over six months.

Peer supporters then work with someone looking for support to help her or him to make sense of the overwhelming amount of information out there about mental health and create a plan to manage and maintain their day to day mental well-being.

The project is just starting and is looking for people interested in becoming volunteers:

1. Do you understand what it is like to struggle with your mental health?
2. Do you want to learn new ways to support yourself as you develop new skills around managing your own well-being and avoiding crisis?
3. Do you want to help someone else on their journey towards understanding and supporting themselves better?

If you answered yes to all three questions, then you might be interested in volunteering with Bridging the Gap.

Before starting to volunteer, people go on two training courses created especially for people with lived experience mental health difficulties. The course help people better understand and use their personal experience to support other people.

For more information, contact Lynn at Health in Mind on 0131 225 8508. You can also text or phone 077607530309 or email [lynn@health-in-mind.org.uk](mailto:lynn@health-in-mind.org.uk).

You can also contact Lynn if you feel volunteering as a peer supporter is not for you but if you think you would benefit from being supported by a volunteer.

### Development groups: Next meetings

Some of the five Community Mental Health Teams have a development group. Service users, carers and staff work in partnership to discuss issues and share ideas on how to develop and improve services.

South West (Cambridge Street): 28 June and 26 July at 2pm

South Central (Henderson Centre): 23 July at 1.30pm

South East (Ballenden House): 30 June at 2pm

North West (Inverleith Unit): 20 July at 11.30am

North East: No group

# At our last meeting.....

## Alternative and Complementary Therapies

Some EUF members want to talk about alternative and complementary therapies. A two members have decided to start looking at what is available in Edinburgh and identify what therapies are missing or are not easily available.

Following their research, EUF will start a working group to look at their findings and campaign for more therapies that can help people stay well and recover.

If you are interested in joining the working group or if you have used some alternative that you have found very helpful, contact CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [contact@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:contact@capsadvocacy.org).

## EUF Annual General Meeting

The AGM took place on Friday 28 May 2010 at Café Camino. There were twelve EUF members there and quite a few professionals also came along.

There are now three executive members: the secretary, convenor and treasurer. They are the same people as last year. The vice convenor and membership secretary posts remain unfilled. If you are interested in one of these posts, please let a member of the Executive Committee know at a EUF meeting.

We launched the Detention Report that

EUF has been working on this year. A member did a presentation which was well received. Some people attending asked EUF to do the presentation again for advocacy staff and service user groups.

There was talk about changing the time and venue of the AGM. It can be hard for EUF members who work to come during the day. On the other hand, holding it during working hours allows professionals to come along.

Please let us know what you thought of the AGM and the venue it took place in. This will allow EUF to have time to plan for a convenient venue for the next AGM.

If you have been to events in good venues that you think are in a convenient and accessible place, please contact CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

## VOX Annual General Meeting

VOX (Voices of Experience) will be holding its annual general meeting on 30 August 2010 from 10.30am to 3.30pm at the Golden Lion Hotel, 8-10 King Street, Stirling.

There will be presentations on the work which has been taking place in the last year. Also using the world café style of workshops they are going to hear from their members on what their key areas of work should be.

## Improving Detention: What Next?

EUf had a subgroup that has been looking at how detention can be improved. The group worked hard to gather people's experiences and wrote a report about it. This report was launched at our AGM and is now available.

We will now send the report to the NHS, Government, Council authorities and decisions makers to get our voices heard. We will also distribute the report to service users and voluntary organisations for them to know about what is currently available and what could be improved, especially in terms of availability of advocacy, safeguards and staff training.

If you would like a copy of the report, please contact Naomi or Laëtitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email [naomi@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:naomi@capsadvocacy.org).

The campaign will be directed by the conclusions in the report. We need to decide on a couple of realistic goals. One thing that came out was that many people did not know about advanced statements. Another thing was about having access to advocacy at short notice and out of hours.

Following the presentation of the report at the AGM, we have been contacted by different organisations that are doing some user-led training. We might be able to have input into their training or become trainers ourselves. We will keep you informed on possible opportunities.

## 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

# Community Happenings

## Saheliya Peer Advocacy

Saheliya is the only Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) led voluntary organisation in Scotland offering services that support the mental health and well-being of women and girls of black, minority ethnic, asylum seeker/refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Their aim is to promote positive mental well-being and reduce discrimination, disadvantage, isolation, depression and the stigma of mental health.

The Peer Advocacy project aims to strengthen a collective voice by using a group of peers. Peers are BME women with similar experiences of life and the challenges it presents.

The group meets every two weeks and is open to residents of all parts of Edinburgh. It is open to BME women with lived experience or secondary experience of mental health issues, including workers and students.

The service accept direct referrals and referrals from agency. It is a free service.

For more information, please contact the project worker, Rosita, on 0131 556 9302 or email [info@saheliya.co.uk](mailto:info@saheliya.co.uk).

## 'see me' Photography Competition 2010

'see me's annual photography competition launched on 31<sup>st</sup> May in over twenty places across Scotland.

The competition is open to anyone living in Scotland who is interested in taking photographs. You don't need to be a professional photographer, they encourage complete beginners to enter and all you need is a keen interest and access to a camera. You can check the 'see me' website for tips on what makes a good photograph.

'see me' works with twenty local hosts who each hold their own local competition with prizes awarded in three separate categories: the Judges' Choice, Under 18s and one chosen by Public Vote. The 3 winners in each local area will go forward to the national final.

This year's theme is '*Support*' and 'see me' is looking for the most creative expressions of Support. It could be anything from Roman pillars to football fans to life support. Just link it with mental health in any way you like. We all give and receive support as we go about our everyday lives - from family, friends, neighbours, teachers, colleagues and everyone in between.

Participants are encouraged to use their imagination and personal experiences as well as the objects and surrounding environment to illustrate the theme and use images to make the links with mental health.

To find your local host and to download an entry form and guidelines visit the photo competition page on [www.seemescotland.org.uk/getinvolved/photography-competition](http://www.seemescotland.org.uk/getinvolved/photography-competition). Closing date for entries is 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

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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)

### EUF Meetings 2010

**Saturday 3 July**

**Saturday 7 August**

**Saturday 4 September**

**Saturday 2 October**

**Saturday 6 November**

**Saturday 4 December**

### 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**.