



May 2011

It's a Celebration!

On 27 May 2011, EUF will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Melting Pot on Rose Street.

The theme of the AGM this year is a celebration of our user-led research and how it has changed things for the better!

We will look back at pieces of user-led research that EUF has done in the last years. Taking user-led research seriously is a strong theme in the Lothian's Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2011-2016 (A Sense of Belonging). The strategy talks about supporting the development of user led research, particularly in areas of service redesign and development.

EUF has been involved in pieces of research such as the Day Service Review, Improving Detention and Short Breaks. We will look at why and how we got involved in the research, what we have found and what has changed.

At the AGM, we will also be electing Executive members. There are five positions on the Executive Committee. These roles are very important as they allow EUF to be a fully independent user group. More information on the different roles are available on page 5. We will also elect EUF representatives on the CAPS Management Committee.

A lot has happened in advocacy over the last year with the review of all the advocacy services in Edinburgh and it is very important for EUF members and supporters to come together at the AGM to celebrate the work and influence of service users and to build on this work to make sure collective advocacy continues to enable people to have a voice for the years to come.

The AGM is open to all, service users and professionals. If you would like to attend, please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email donna@capsadvocacy.org.

Join us to celebrate the voice of service users!

Our Next Meeting:

Saturday 7 May 2011

1.30pm - doors open

2.00 - 4.00pm - meeting

McDonald Road Library,
Edinburgh

For more information contact
CAPS on 0131 538 7177.

Hot Topics

Walk a Mile in my Shoes

On 6 April 2011, Chris Young started a two-year walk around the coast of the UK.

Chris lives in Edinburgh and has been involved in the Personality Disorder project run by Naomi Salisbury at CAPS. He was a social worker for around 20 years. He has always had mental health issues but they got worse three years ago and he had to stop working.



Chris explained that he had always known that people with mental health problems feel they are on the periphery of society, but when it happens to you it really strikes home. He took inspiration from the Scottish mental health charity Penumbra (meaning fringes of shadows) and decided to walk the edges of the UK as a symbol of how marginalised certain groups can become.

His motivation comes through the feelings of isolation and prejudice he has experienced because of his condition, and his knowledge of the discrimination felt by so many users of social work services - older people, people with a physical disability, people with mental

health problems, people with a learning disability, people from minority ethnic groups, people who choose a different god and people who choose to live their lives in different ways.

People with mental health problems are not the only people who feel excluded. If you look at society, we all feel marginalised for one reason or another. Chris wants to show that there is a 'Big Society' out there that does not have anything to do with David Cameron. "It exists, with kind, generous, caring and loving people."

To prove his point, Chris started off on foot heading north from Cramond and for two years he will not carry any money and rely on the kindness of strangers to house and feed him. He is only taking a tent with him in case he does not always find a bed to sleep in.

Chris says: "I want to demonstrate that trust, kindness and tolerance are like prejudice – they're contagious. Just as prejudice can spread like wildfire, so can trust."

Chris says: "I know I'm chancing my arm going round saying 'Hello! I would like to stay at your house. I'm a big bald guy wearing a black kilt and a T-shirt with 'walk a mile in my shoes' on it'."

You can follow Chris' journey on Twitter (@walkamileuk) and on his blog (<http://walkamileinmyshoesuk.tumblr.com/>). You can even phone him on 07535 035 900 if you are interested in walking with him or email him via the website.

And spread the word if you know people living anywhere on the fringes of the Britain!

Rapid Improvement Event Update

There is still a lot of work going on to improve NHS Lothian community mental health services. EUF members have been going to some of the working groups working on this.

One working group we are on is the Communication and Information group. This group has been set up to organise a yearly information event for service users. It will be a chance to meet staff from different services and get an idea of what services are available.

Another project we are working on is creating a brief list of the services available across the city. Some services have become city-wide now and people need to know what they can go to. The group is also trying to get clear and consistent information sheets on different diagnoses.

EUF is also involved in a group looking at how to offer city-wide group activities. They are looking at different ways of working to be able to provide this. We have asked that the EUF Day Services Report is used when considering what to offer.

The Development Groups run by the Community Mental Health Teams have met for a city-wide meeting on 27 April 2011 to look at how they are going to work in the future. There will be updates in the next newsletter and at the EUF meeting.

There is a presentation about all the changes (in Microsoft Power Point format). If you would like a copy of this or more information contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email donna@capsadvocacy.org.

Crisis Centre Event

The Crisis Centre will be holding an all day event on 10 June 2011 at Waverley Gate. The event will be launching the Infusion three year evaluation report. People from all over Scotland will be invited to learn more about the Edinburgh Crisis Centre.

EUF has been there from the start campaigning for the Centre. They are also members of the Partnership Group which oversees the management of the service. There will be a speaker at the event who was involved in the original campaign and will talk about the history of the Centre.

Places at this event are limited. If you would like to attend, please contact Donna at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email donna@capsadvocacy.org.

Disabled Bus Pass

Some people have talked to us about the experience of using their disabled bus pass.

Someone said they had some bad experiences with bus drivers being unpleasant and felt it was because they had a disabled bus pass.

Someone said that it does not matter what disability people have and whether it is "visible", we should all be treated the same by bus drivers.

We have our names on bus passes but drivers don't have a name tag. Would some behave better if they had a badge and could be identified and reported? It

would be a good idea to be able to identify them, both to report unacceptable behaviour but also to report good drivers who are helpful to passengers.

EUF will write a letter to Lothian Buses to see if we can find positive solutions to this issue.

Have you had a negative experience? Or have you found some bus drivers very helpful? DO you have ideas on how things could be improved? If so, contact Laëtitia at CAPS on 0131 538 7177 or email laetitia@capsadvocacy.org.

Join the 'Festival Group'

The Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival will run for three weeks in October 2011 and is entering its fifth year. The theme this year is 'Memory, sleep, dreams'.

Do you like painting, cartooning, photography, writing, music, anything arty?

Would you like be part of a group, based at CAPS, planning our contribution for this year's Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival?

Oor Mad History, CAPS Personality Disorder Project and CAPS Experiences of Psychosis Project are joining forces to plan exciting arts based advocacy activities and they are looking for service users to join their festival planning group. The group wants to hear your ideas. Let's use the arts to get ourselves heard!

Get involved in planning workshops, a film screening night, and an evening

extravaganza of poetry, music and book readings.

If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Kirsten or Naomi at CAPS on 0131 538 7177. You can also email kirsten@capsadvocacy.org or naomi@capsadvocacy.org.

Call for Survivor Art submissions

The group is also looking for "survivor art" to go in their festival exhibition. Please get in touch with Kirsten or Naomi at CAPS if you have any artwork you would like to submit.

And the Winner is...

A partnership between the Royal Edinburgh Hospital Self Harm Service and CAPS Personality Disorder Service has won a People's choice award at the Principle Into Practice Awards.

The award was for Service User Participation and Influence. The Principles Into Practice Network aims to provide guidance to mental health professionals and organisations on how best to work with people who use mental health services.

CAPS Development Worker Naomi Salisbury explained that such an award puts personality disorders and self harm on the agenda and these issues can no longer be ignored or dismissed.

These projects being recognised makes it clear that services for people who are given a diagnosis of personality disorder or who use self harm are important and needed. People with these issues can too easily be written off or pigeonholed. These projects have given people a much needed space to find mutual support and have a voice.

At our last meeting...

Executive Committee Officers

At the AGM on 27 May 2011, we will be electing people on the Executive Committee and choose representatives on CAPS' Management Committee.

The Committee needs to have at least three positions filled to be fully operational. Please contact Donna at CAPS if you are interested in one of the roles or if you would like to know more about the Executive and EUF's Constitution.

It is also important to note that for decisions to be valid at the AGM, at least twelve members have to attend. If less than twelve members are at the AGM then any decision made must be approved by the next General Meeting at which has twelve members or more at it.

The Executive is made up of 5 officers:

Convener - usually chairs the Forum Meetings, and the Executive meetings. This means they have to make sure everyone has their say, that everyone behaves, that we decide things that need to be decided, and that we don't get side-tracked.

Vice-convener - is in charge of the meetings if the Convener can't be there, or needs a bit of a rest.

Secretary - is responsible for the mail we get from other people, and the mail we send to other people. They are also

responsible for making sure somebody takes notes or minutes of meetings.

Treasurer - is responsible for giving expenses at meetings, for keeping records of money paid out, cheques written, and money paid in. They also help to apply for money to pay for the running of EUF. The CAPS Office Administrator helps them to do the accounts of EUF at the end of the year.

Membership Secretary - makes sure that new members get all the information and support they need. They also look for new ways to recruit members.

Closure of the Inverleith Unit

At the last meeting, some people said they are very concerned about the closure of the North West Community Mental Health Team at the Inverleith Unit and its move to Leith Walk.

People feel it is a nice environment and they are worried about what will happen to the quality of the services and activities they access when the Community Mental Health Team is merged with the North East Team at Inchkeith House on Leith Walk.

People feel there are a lot of rumours but they do not get actual facts on how and when things will happen. CAPS will investigate.

Community Happenings

Book Launch: A Journey Into Madness

Alistair McIntyre lives in Edinburgh. He has been active in mental health advocacy and used to be the convenor of CAPS. He has also been involved in user led groups such as SEASONS. He does regular talks about his experience to raise awareness about mental health issues.

Alistair has written two books about his experiences of schizophrenia called A Journey Into Madness and A Journey Out of Madness. In this books, Alistair talks openly and honestly about his experiences with schizophrenia and the journey that led him to share his story.



These personal and refreshing accounts of schizophrenia are now available in one collection. To celebrate the publishing of this new book, join us at the

launch and book signing, A Journey on Tour, where Alistair will share his story and answer any questions.

The two events will take place in Edinburgh at Piershill Library on Tuesday 3 May between 6.30pm and 8pm and at Portobello Library on Wednesday 16 May between 6.30pm and 8pm. For more information and future dates, please contact Beth on 0131 661 9910.

The book is also available to buy on Amazon.co.uk, tesco.com and Waterstones.co.uk.

Online CBT

If you feel it is time now to make some positive change in your life, you can learn how to take one step at a time to feel more motivated, do more, enjoy things again and importantly make time for you. CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) is a talking therapy that works on identifying and directly changing thoughts and behaviours that may be maintaining symptoms of depression.

Depression Alliance Scotland are offering a free computerised CBT self-help course to people with mild to moderate depression. You will get access to resources to guide you through the course and individual telephone support from their worker to encourage you as you go and help you achieve your planned goals.

For more information, you can watch the demonstration video on the website of Depression Alliance Scotland at www.dascot.org. Please note that you

don't have to be referred by a therapist or doctor and you can refer yourself.

If you are interested in doing the course, Contact Depression AllianceScotland by email at info@dascot.org or phone 0845 123 23 20 (11am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday). The service is confidential.

You can also visit Living Life to the Full Interactive website to find out more about it and take a preview of the first session at www.daslltffi.co.uk/

Anxiety Management Workshops

Health All Round is a charity aiming to support people living in Gorgie/Dalry and surrounding areas of Edinburgh to live longer, healthier lives. Using a holistic approach they provide services focusing on physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

Health All Round is organising workshops to people recognize the signs and symptoms of anxiety and understand their underlying causes.

In gaining a better understanding of your symptoms, people can learn how to cope with them more effectively. Practical strategies and tips for relaxation and coping with stress are also provided.

The next 5-week course starts on Monday 9 May from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm at Health All Round, Springwell House, Ardmillan Terrace, Edinburgh EH11 2JL. To book a place, contact Annie at info@healthallround.org.uk or phone 0131 537 7530.

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 7 May

Saturday 4 June

Saturday 2 July

Saturday 6 August

Saturday 3 September

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**.