

QuickTime™ and a  
PowerPC class are  
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## New Forensic Mental Health Advocacy Service for Carers

At the beginning of June, Edinburgh Carers Council welcomed a new Development Worker (Forensic Advocacy) to work with carers of those using forensic mental health services. Jacqueline Munro took up the post and brings with her a background in therapy, education and mental health. The post has several aspects and carer input will make it more successful so please feel free to get in touch. The post is funded for 12 months and Jacqueline will be identifying and bringing together resources for forensic mental health carers using our own website, newsletter, workshops, talks and training events.

Jacqueline is available for individual advocacy appointments and covers both hospital and community issues in Lothian, Borders and Fife. It is hoped that collective advocacy issues will be addressed through the Forensic Carers Group that has been re-launched at the Craiglockhart Centre, REH. This group previously ran within the Orchard Clinic at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and is now open to all carers of those using forensic services both within the Orchard Clinic, and other hospitals and the community.

ECC has been given a SeeMe grant to tackle stigma and marginalisation of forensic mental health carers and is hoping to make a DVD that can be used as a resource for carers and professionals to help tackle these issues and help others understand their situation and reduce stigma they experience. In order for this to be a success carers we are looking for carers who would like to get involved – for more details please contact Jacqueline on 0131 2706089 or e-mail: [jacq@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk](mailto:jacq@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk)

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# Focus on...Advocacy

## Individual Advocacy



### ***Carers Soundbite*** *by Sheila*

*“Though living in Edinburgh, I was the part time carer and main emotional support for my only son, aged 24, who had severe OCD and Tourettes, and who was a patient in a rehab ward in Fife when he died suddenly of natural causes. Prior to his death, I had been concerned with the lack of support he had received outwith the hospital, when living in his own tenancy, and had many questions and issues to raise around this. Still in shock at his passing, I approached the ECC asking for advocacy, as someone had recommended them to me. With their help (I couldn't have instigated my enquiry without them) I initiated meetings with some of my son's care team to raise questions as to what had happened in the last part of my son's life. During this time, and there were lapses of months between meetings, I was supported and accompanied to meetings with my advocate and was also visited at home for consultation. Although I'm glad I did it, and the outcome was a surprise, it was a painful experience and I could not realistically take it any further. I'd like to thank the Carers Council so much and the bonus is it's all free to carers, former and otherwise.”*

Edinburgh Carers Council continues to offer a free advocacy service to individual carers. The service is open to anyone who supports someone experiencing mental health difficulties. It aims to support carers to represent their views on a wide range of issues. If you would like to know more about this service, contact Andrea on 0131 270 6089 or email: [andrea@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk](mailto:andrea@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk) or check out the advocacy page on our website on [www.edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk](http://www.edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk)

## Collective Advocacy

### **News & Views**



The News and Views group will be meeting between 10.30am and 12 noon at The Canon Mill, Canon Street. Dates for future meetings are:

- 18<sup>th</sup> August
- 28<sup>th</sup> October
- 30<sup>th</sup> September
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December

The group gives carers the opportunity to share new information and raise and discuss issues related to mental health. Recently the group has looked at new NHS Lothian information on community services and at proposed new developments in respite services by CEC and provided feedback on both. All carers welcome!

Come and join us for interesting discussion and information sharing over coffee and cake. For more info, contact Andrea: 0131 270 6089

### **Forensic Mental Health Carers Group**

The re-launched carers group offers a forum for discussing collective issues and will meet on the last Saturday of each month at 1.30-3pm at The Craiglockhart Centre, REH, (2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Andrew Duncan Clinic).

- August 29<sup>th</sup>
- September 26<sup>th</sup>
- October 24<sup>th</sup>
- November 29<sup>th</sup>

There is an online discussion forum for this group being developed so if you can't make the group you can still be involved. For more information, contact Jacqueline: 0131 270 6089 or email: [jacq@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk](mailto:jacq@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk)

## What's New?

### **New project looking at people's experience of living with BPD.**

CAPS will be running a 6 month project funded by NHS Lothian to explore people's experiences of Borderline Personality Disorder and using these experiences to develop a 'toolkit' about BPD which will hopefully be used to promote better understanding of BPD and provide information for service users, carers and staff.

For more information about this project or how to contribute to it; contact Naomi Salisbury on 0131 538 7177 or email: [Naomi@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:Naomi@capsadvocacy.org)

It is hoped that a similar idea will be developed specifically around carers' experiences in the near future. If you feel you may be interested in getting involved, please speak to Linda at Edinburgh Carers Council.

### **New BPD website**

A new website offering a forum for people who have attracted the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder, their friends, carers, families and professionals that work with them, can be found at:

<http://living-on-the-borderline.socialgo.com/home.html>

The site will give people the opportunity to exchange ideas, experiences and knowledge from their different perspectives.

### **Stress Control**

**Do you want to learn how to control your stress more effectively?**

Then come to a series of six free evening classes to be held at Drummond Community High School,  
Tuesday 1st September - 6th November 2009.  
6.30pm - 8pm • Delivered by NHS Lothian staff •  
Open to adults of all ages • 200 places available  
To book a place contact: Information Resource Centre, Health in Mind on: 0131 243 0106 •  
10am - 4pm

## Carers Support Groups

### **CARA Carers & Relatives Alliance**

Ballenden House 6.45-8.30pm

A support group for all those affected in some way by mental illness.

Contact: Lorraine Keith 0131 662 2280 or email: [lkeith@nsfscot.org.uk](mailto:lkeith@nsfscot.org.uk)

Next meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> September • 6<sup>th</sup> October • 3<sup>rd</sup> November • 1<sup>st</sup> December

### **Edinburgh Bipolar Fellowship**

Edinburgh Bipolar Fellowship hold a support group at the Stafford Centre, 102 Broughton Street, from 6-8pm on the second and fourth Thursday of every month.

Drop-in, coffee, advice, chat. Telephone 0131 623 0119 for more information.

### **BPD Support Group for Carers**

The BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder) Support Group runs on the third Tuesday of every month here at Edinburgh Carers Council from 10am – 12 noon.

It has been our experience that carers in the situation feel more stigmatised and isolated and it is for this reason that we have set up this group. The group gives carers a safe and confidential space to talk and discuss what they are experiencing while at the same time they provide each other with a listening ear and support.

We recently had two service users who have attracted a diagnosis of BPD come along to the group to discuss their lived experience of BPD. The carers found this really informative and helpful and they have been invited back to our August group on the 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss more.

We would welcome any carer to come along. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information Linda MacLeod on 0131 270 6087

## Sessions For Carers at Edinburgh Carers Council

### NEW WRAP SESSIONS

A number of our carers recently completed our eight-week training session on WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)

This was facilitated by Rona McBrierty who is a WRAP Trainer and works for the Lothian Recovery Network. The WRAP gave carers the opportunity to consider what their needs were and look at how they could take care of their own mental health and well being.

The following was some of the feedback that carers gave us:

- ❖ *“ although it was difficult at first to concentrate on myself and not the person I care for Rona was brilliant at bringing the focus back to ourselves”*
- ❖ *“The ‘How are you?’ bit at the beginning started all sorts of deep thoughts and discussions which were helpful. As were the ‘How are you now?’ at the end, which made you realise you had ‘travelled’ during the session”*

There has been a lot of positive feedback and carers have found it beneficial.

Our next WRAP sessions start September 2009  
If you would like to attend the above sessions or would like to find out more about them. Please feel free to contact Linda on 0131 270 6087

### SUPPORTING THE SUPPORTERS

If you are a carer, and find yourself in the position of supporting someone who may be at risk of suicide, the above course offers six sessions of information and support.

The course will be facilitated by Ruth Rooney from Edinburgh Carers Council and Lorraine Keith from NSF Scotland. It was developed with input from Choose Life, the National Strategy addressing suicide, and there are 10 places available.

Dates: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Time: 11.30am-1.30pm (with light buffet lunch provided)

Venue: Edinburgh Carers Council  
The Canon Mill

To book a place, please contact Ruth on 0131 270 6087 email: [ruth@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk](mailto:ruth@edinburghcarerscouncil.co.uk) or Lorraine on 0131 662 2280 email: [lkeith@nsfscot.org.uk](mailto:lkeith@nsfscot.org.uk)

At the beginning of the year Edinburgh Carers Council was awarded a SeeMe grant to address the issue of carers supporting someone who attracts a diagnosis of Personality Disorder. Carers in this category as well as service users, experience a lot of stigma, discrimination and isolation. Dennis Lines who is the carer representative from Borderline UK was invited to talk with carers in April. Dennis spent two days talking to carers about many issues relating to PD, such as understanding what the service user is experiencing when they become unwell, how carers can respond, while at the same time taking care of their own needs etc. Carers found this opportunity incredibly helpful and are looking forward to Dennis returning in the autumn to discuss more. We will keep you updated on developments and will inform you of the event nearer the time.

**see me ...**

Edinburgh Carers Council is a Charity in Scotland: SC 028469. Funded by NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council.  
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