



Report of the

October 14, 2008 meeting of the Learning Disability Forum in Mansfield Road Resource Centre. Musselburgh.

- If you receive this report in PDF format, you'll be able to click on the words highlighted in this colour of **red** to link to the relevant site in your web browser.

Who was there?

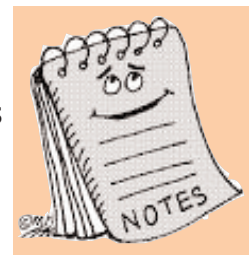
Paul Roger	Smart Talk and LD Forum rep
Lorna Wynn	Partners in Advocacy
Margaret Cessford	Smart Talk and LD Forum rep
Robert Auld	Smart Talk and LD Forum rep
Jean Auld	Smart Talk and LD Forum rep
Anne Gray	Vice Chair Smart Talk
Linda Currie	Chair, Smart Talk, lay assessor Care Commission
Elaine Waugh	AK Care and Accommodation
Helen Macmillan	Service User
Kevin Ramsay	Service User, Scottish Society for Autism
Tod Hollern	Support Worker, Scottish Society for Autism
Phyllis Wilson	Carers of East Lothian
Laura Fazard	Service User
Alan Oliphant	Service User
Sue Van Der Broek	Carers of East Lothian + LD Forum Representative
Val Vincent	Carer Member
Lesley Aitkenhead	ELCCF Development Manager
George Paterson	ELCCF Communications Worker

Feedback from Joint Planning Group:

Margaret, Robert and Lorna reported on the main points:

- The Council are struggling with a lack of money and are cutting down on spending. Care packages are being reviewed and it's likely most people will get less support.

A lot depends of how the Scottish Government and East Lothian Council organise their money.



Visit the Learning Disability Forum on the web at www.elccf.org/forumld.asp

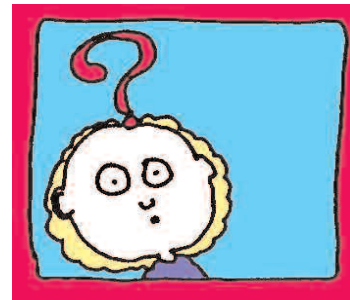
"What they are looking to do is match need and resources but the majority of people will get less support or none at all if they decide you are more able than your care package says."

"I think we should stage a revolt."

- People were having meetings with social work about their care packages and not understanding what they were agreeing to.
- The Partnership in Practice agreement is nearly a year behind. The agreement, or PiP, which includes guidelines for learning disability services worked out between health and local authorities, is going to the Chief Officer Group in December for draft approval in January or February from NHS. The PiP will be seen by the Forum after the Chief Officers Group.
- The Council are reviewing respite services, which should take another six months. The Council is taking on a Respite Co-ordinator who will shortly be in post.

Problems and Answers

As a Forum, we're trying to concentrate on the main problems people are having with the services offered to them - and what we think could be done about them.



We've narrowed the problems down to issues and recommendations, or problems and answers.

It's likely the other Forums - to do with Older People, Mental Health, and Equality - could have the same issues. So maybe with some of these issues, the Forums could act together.

From the meeting, the following Issues were raised:

- 1. Primary Care Services**
- 2. Activities**
- 3. Employment**
- 4. Housing**
- 5. Social Exclusion**

Visit the Learning Disability Forum on the web at www.elccf.org/forumld.asp

Issue 1. Primary Care Services:

People have difficulty contacting the NHS or even talking with their GP. The Forum believes there is sometimes a lack of awareness of how to communicate with people with a learning disability. There have been experiences of doctors being dismissive.



- Regular health checks should be 'diaried-in' with the GP, on the same lines as regular dentist appointments.
- There should be use of pictures to help patients.
- More time is needed during GPs' consultations.
- Advocacy support should be available to make a complaint.

Issue 2. Activities:

Activities are often guided by what the person knows, such as going to cafes or shopping. There's also an all round lack of focus when planning what to do. Getting support during holiday time is difficult when services grind to a halt.

There are very few weekend and evening activities. It would be great if there were evening group activities such as bowling, but someone needs to organise.



- Support workers should get better at person centred planning and using it as a tool to introduce new activities to people.
- A guide about what kinds of activities are available in East Lothian would be really helpful.
- Day Centres should be more imaginative and open at weekends and evenings.
- An East Lothian activities co-ordinator should be appointed to draw together information on activities and travel, and pass it on to day centres.

Visit the Learning Disability Forum on the web at www.elccf.org/forumld.asp

- More support to provide opportunities for exercise; for example, a different coloured pass which could be produced at a leisure centre so staff can help integration without embarrassment.
- More help is needed on one-to-one basis in various issues such as eating, smoking and sexual matters.

Issue 3. Employment:

Better employment opportunities, and more support for people with higher dependency needs, to get into work.

- Jobcentres should help in this and employers urged to take on people with learning disabilities..



Issue 4. Housing:

- There should be a stepping stone between leaving home and moving to independent living, with life planning support and flexible accommodation available.



Issue 5. Social exclusion:

Transport is a big issue particularly for people with more profound difficulties.



Issue 6. Security:

- A more effective relationship with the police would boost confidence about personal security, bullying and general safety.

.....
 The next meeting of
 East Lothian Learning Disability Forum is in Port Seton Community Centre
 on Monday 1st December, from 10.30 - 12.00.

Visit the Learning Disability Forum on the web at www.elccf.org/forumld.asp