



# Report of the October 12th, 2009 meeting of the Learning Disability Forum in Port Seton Resource Centre.

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## Who was there?

Lorna Wynn  
Margaret Cessford  
Robert Auld  
Jean Auld  
Jackie Stewart  
Margaret Stewart  
Willie Ferguson  
Carla Hulbert  
Lesley Aithenhead  
Sheila Ross

**Partners in Advocacy**  
Smart Talk and LD Forum rep  
Smart Talk and LD Forum rep  
Smart Talk and LD Forum rep  
Carer  
Carer  
Service user  
Service user  
**ELCCF Development Manager**  
ELCCF Administrator

### In attendance:

Shannon Leslie                      Planning and Commissioning, ELC  
Laura Marsh & Carol Jenner      Business and procurement, ELC

## News and previous reports

The meeting began with introductions and sharing news.

***Congratulations went to Margaret and John Cessford on their 25th wedding anniversary.***



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## **News from Smart Talk Group:**

### **New Look Group**

The Smart Talk group is trying to join two collective advocacy meetings into one as Lorna Wynn, facilitator is funded to provide only 7.5 hrs in East Lothian. The proposed venue is the Loch Centre and Lorna is confident that the transport problems can be overcome as most of the members will be able to self-travel. The new group will have two parts to it:

1. A skills group to support members develop collective advocacy skills.
2. An officers' group that will tackle the more difficult aspects of collective advocacy.

Lorna is hoping that some members from a group in Edinburgh will be able to offer peer support to the new group.

### **Nicola Sturgeon hears from Smart Talk**

The Smart Talk Group have also been to the Scottish Parliament and met Nicola Sturgeon to promote the work of collective advocacy. It was a very successful visit.



## **Feedback from the Learning Disability Planning Group:**

Shannon said:

- **Priorities.** the Planning Group is looking at what they are going to do and achieve next year. The Learning Disability Forum will help make the choices.
- **Social Work redesign.** A new team has been developed in the Social Work department called the 'Transformation Team'. It will help implement the plans from all the community care strategies and will make a big difference to
- **Procurement for care at home services.** There is also a small group called the 'Getting it right Group' that is gathering information about specialist services to help Council to make sure that they get it right when they make decisions about the specialist services.

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➤ **Transitions.** The Planning Group has done a lot of work on transitions over the last year. There is now a new worker in post, Caitlin Dempsey who has done a lot of good things to help young people in their transition to adult services.

***One Forum member said: "We should be more receptive to the needs of younger people aged 16-25."***

Lorna said that Smart Talk wants to encourage young people to take part in collective advocacy.

There is also a gap in transitions for older people with a learning disability. This needs to be addressed in the Older People's strategy. Shannon will raise this issue to be discussed at the Joint Planning Group for Older People.

### **Procurement - care at home service**

Phyllis introduced Laura and Carol to the meeting.

Although Self Directed Support was on the agenda, Carol explained that Self Directed Support/direct payments is better to look at on an individual basis.

Carol said that she is very interested in hearing about people's experience of their 'care at home' service.

The Council are looking at how 'care at home' services are provided and whether they are getting value for money from the services. This is called 'procurement' or buying services. They have just finished the first stage of the process - general 'care at home' services.

The Council are now looking at the 2nd stage – buying specialist services. This will be done in using the following steps:

- Gathering information about the services, what they do, how many people use them and how much they cost.
- Talking to people about what they like or don't like about their services.
- Asking providers what they can do to improve their services and if they can save money by working together.
- Finding out if people would like to take the option of self-directed

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support.

There are 29 providers of specialist services. No decision has been made about what changes will be made.

Shannon reassured members that this process is not about taking services away but making services more efficient and better value for money.

Carol and Laura asked members for ideas on how they could get information out to people. There were lots of suggestions, such as:

- Having a questionnaire
- Asking on a website
- Holding focus groups
- Having individual interviews

It is important to get information that tells us about the quality of service that service users expect.

Lorna said it can be difficult to capture views from people with a learning disability. Sheila said people may not want to criticise their service for fear of losing it.

There is also a lot of information about services from previous consultations. The procurement team have also met with a few small groups and have received very powerful information.

- Lesley suggested the Smart Talk Group make up a questionnaire. Instead of the next forum meeting, members could go in small teams to the day centres with the questionnaire and interview service users about the services they receive.



Members thought this was a good idea. Lesley will speak with Lorna and Shannon to see if this can be arranged.

- It was also agreed that the council have gathered a lot of information about what service users think of their Care at Home services and it is important the Council look at these and take account of views already gathered.

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➤ Jackie spoke about his experiences in not getting a service for his son, John, and waiting for months for a service provider to contact him. He is concerned that we reach people who are less able to speak out.

Members agreed that this was a point well made.

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**The next meeting of East Lothian Learning Disability Forum  
will be in the next year**

**We will send out information about meetings for 2010**

**In the meantime if you wish to contact ELCCF you can reach  
us in the following ways.**

**write to us or visit us at Tynepark House, Poldrate,  
Haddington EH41 4DA.**

**Tel: 01620 822212,**

**email [info@elccf.org](mailto:info@elccf.org).**

**Visit [www.elccf.org](http://www.elccf.org).**

**Visit the Learning Disability Forum on the web at [www.elccf.org/forumld.asp](http://www.elccf.org/forumld.asp)**