



We'd Just Like to Say...

Newsletter of East Lothian Community Care Forum

Older People's Forum : Learning Disability Forum
Equality Forum : Mental Health Forum

Winter 2010/11 **Have Your Say at www.elccf.org**



Finding work is given high priority by disabled people, says new report

Physically disabled people in East Lothian want to work but rarely get the chance, reveals new research.

So reveals the result of an independent local community action research (CAR) project which asked all physically disabled people aged 16-65 known to the local social work department what they experienced and wanted from day activities.

In the most comprehensive survey of its kind ever undertaken, the team met a list of disability groups and held individual interviews with willing respondents.

The response shows that most disabled people modestly want to do things most able people take for granted - and having a job is a high priority along with more



Get us round the table and get us into work.

opportunity for sports and leisure activities. Importantly, the response shows the unmet desire to get out and socialise more, and the problem of being inactive at home for those with more complex needs.

The report also calls for new approaches towards providing day activities, such as personalised planning where disabled people are treated as individuals with individual needs.

It points out that, given the right support,

disabled people can take up opportunities most able-bodied people take for granted.

The report suggests planners can find solutions by better organisation with current expenditure rather than higher spending.

The research team's James Brown said: "We have to make sure disabled people aren't forgotten when budget cuts are on the cards.

"Their voice has to be heard in the planning process.

"It's all important to add that this research was not carried out by the council, not consultants, not an outside body but by people from East Lothian trained up in community action research."

See the report at www.elccf.org.

What have the ELCCF forums been up to?

Key themes of the agendas of all **Joint Planning Groups** are day services redesign, budget setting, respite redesign, procurement of specialised services, and Telecare.

Foremost on the Mental Health Joint Planning Group agenda is MH day service design.

Day services currently being run by Crossreach at Tynepark are currently being redesigned. Under fire was the lack on transparency on the consultation process from Tynepark users.

To better visualise current services, members of the MHF are developing a 'map' of services in East Lothian. The first draft was presented to the **Mental Health Forum's** October meeting.

Other news from the MHF: CAPS, the consultation and advocacy promotion service, has taken over the work of the now disbanded East Lothian Involvement Group.

Thought is being put into freshening the name of the MHF and shaping its future direction. The next Forum meeting on January 18 in Tynepark Resource Centre will take this forward.

Foremost topic on the Learning Disability Joint Planning Group agenda is day activities.

The **Learning Disability Forum** has discussed day activities, making suggestions on what members did - and what they would like to do.

Support was very important to some while everyone valued socialising highly in a range of proposed activities ranging from cycling and gardening to music groups.

An idea which arose was for the setup of a social networking website for younger disabled people who could 'chat' and organise clubs and events. Work on this is ongoing.

Foremost on the Physical Disability Joint Planning Group agenda is day opportunities.

The topic, on services received - good or bad - came up at the **Equality Forum**, where most members modestly mentioned they would be

happier if current services worked as smoothly as planned.

Work on the CAR project (*see page one*) was highlighted, with the results to be shown to the JPG. Forum members supported the process.

The point was made that physical disability should have a higher profile in planning.

The Older People's Joint Planning Group have only met once since August.

The **Older People's Forum** will be back in action in the new year.

Lothian NHS and East Lothian Council have still to agree on a financial framework for East Lothian's Older People's Strategy.

However, the council have been developing the 24hr response and rehabilitation service, and working with day centres.

There is frustration amongst day centres that not enough is being done to help them cope with increased demand.

Vital funds found for Forum

A new part-time Development Worker is to be appointed to ELCCF's staff.

Thanks to funding from East Lothian Council, the new post will allow more outreach work to be done, contacting more people for the Forum communities and extending links to other groups.

The new post will also be involved with the current heavy workload of organising ELCCF's four forums and bolster the current two part-time staff posts.

Funding has also been won from Lloyds Foundation for Scotland's Henry Duncan Awards to maintain the communication worker's role for another year.

Our gratitude goes to our funders in showing their continued confidence in giving service users and carers a voice in the planning process.

Looking ahead to work in the new year

The coming year bodes well for ELCCF with brave plans and high hopes to extend its work over the coming months.

Still, work priorities will have to be made with tight budgets borne in mind.

With our new 'shop front' premises in Haddington's Sidegate, we hope to open our doors as a 'community hub' - a centre of information with open access to a computer for service users and carers.



Our new Development Worker post (*see left*) will extend the work of the Forums and see regular input and better communication with planning groups.

The post will also free up time for ELCCF to give comeback on many consultations which call for a fast response.

Following the success of this year's Forum video, another production is on the cards, as is the possibility of a social networking web site.

Homecare and human rights

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has launched an inquiry on the quality of care delivered to older people (aged 65 and over) in the home - good or bad - in relation to human rights.

The EHRC wants to find out whether people are treated with respect and dignity, eg., receiving appropriate privacy, and have choice and control over how they live.

If you are interested in

taking part, you can answer a short list of questions. Evidence gathering runs until February 4, 2011.

For more information, see the website www.equalityhumanrights.com.

Contact EHRC at: homecare@equalityhumanrights.com.

A report with recommendations will be published next December.

What do you do?

I work for Partners in Advocacy and here in East Lothian I help support the SMART Talk Group – which is a group of people with disabilities - to speak up and get their voice heard in East Lothian and at the council.



Introducing..

Lorna Wynn of the SMART Talk group

expand the group work – Smart talk will try to get their voice heard in the coming public spending talks and keep trying to get people involved.

What was the high point of your year so far?

At work – helping to change the way specialist

services are procured in East lothian – and people having their say and being listened to. At home - my grandchildren are my highlight.

What's the first thing you would do as ruler of the world?

Change the way people with disabilities are seen by other people – and have a holiday !!!

What's the most important issue facing East Lothian today?

MONEY! MONEY! MONEY! – and how budget cuts will effect everyone – especially people with learning difficulties.

What's the best thing about your organisation?

We are independent – so we can challenge people and get people involved in the decisions made around their lives. I also love seeing people speak up for themselves and making a difference, and how this gives them confidence.

What's next on the agenda?

Would love to have more funding so that we can

Forum meetings

ELCCF Forums are public meetings. Travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Mental Health Forum:
10.30am Tuesday, January 18, Tynepark Resource Centre, Haddington.

Equality Forum:
Replacing the forum is a planning evening about day opportunities on February 9th at the Quayside, Musselburgh 5.30-7.30pm. Please come along.

Learning Disability and Older People's Forum:
dates and venues to be confirmed.

See www.elccf.org for more details.

Let's consult

The Scottish Government is consulting on wheelchair and seating clinical standards for the NHS. See www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/06095313/0 for more info.

Come and join us. Contact us on the web, by email or call on 01620 822 212.



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