

... on some things that might be of interest, in AdvoCard and beyond!

Mental Health Assessment Service (MHAS)

The Psychiatric Emergency Team (PET) is now the **Mental Health Assessment Team (MHAT)**, still based at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, tel 0131 557 6000. It provides round the clock cover for the city and anyone over 18 can self refer. One of the options for the MHAT is that they can refer people to the new **Intensive Home Treatment Teams (IHTT)**. The IHTTs also provide round the clock cover for the city. There is one team in North Edinburgh, based at Allander House, and another in South Edinburgh, based at Ballenden House. The team of 18, which include a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker and OT as well as nurses, can work in someone's house as an alternative to hospital admission. They will also work on the wards at the REH to support people to leave as soon as possible. You can't self refer to the IHTTs, but other professionals and the Crisis Centre can.

These new teams aim to reduce the number of hospital admissions, and thus beds that are required. Consequently there will be some changes at the REH; one ward has closed already.

Edinburgh Crisis Centre has been holding days for people to meet staff and find out more about the centre and what they offer. Remaining dates:
Wed 14th January 09 – 12pm-2pm - service users and carers only.

Thurs 15th January 09 – open to all

Wednesday 18th March 09 – open to all

You need to book a place in advance with Jacqui on 561 0082.

ILA Scotland is a Scottish Government scheme that helps you pay for learning that you can do at a time, place, pace and in a way to suit you. It's for people who have an income of £18,000 a year or less, or who are on benefits. Visit <http://www.ilascotland.org.uk> or contact Jane C for more information.

Relaxation Podcasts

The Mental Health Foundation has launched a range of Podcasts to help people relax and improve their sense of wellbeing.

They are free to download from their website

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/relax

Some are designed to be quick fixes and some are longer programmes that look at developing skills and strategies for managing life's stresses and pressures.

Time for Advocacy

AdvoCard's next training programme for Volunteer Advocacy Workers will begin in Feb 09. Contact staff to find out more or visit our brand new website at

www.timeforadvocacy.org.uk

to find out more about the excellent work of our volunteers!

Our **Annual Report 2008** is now available. Contact the office if you would like a copy.

'The Way Forward for AdvoCard'

AdvoCard launched its Strategic Plan – 'The Way Forward for AdvoCard' – and its Equality and Diversity Strategy at its AGM. To support and progress these aims, 6 working groups are going to be set up. If you have any skills, knowledge or interest in working in one of the following areas, please contact the office and a member of staff would be happy to talk to you about what this would involve.

The 6 working groups will be:

Service user involvement group

Fundraising group

Equality and diversity group

Developing long term advocacy group

Marketing group

Training group

Christmas opening hours

The AdvoCard office will be closed from Wednesday the 24th December and will reopen on Monday 5th January 2009.

Contact us:

If you have anything that you would like to see included in a news sheet, please contact Jane C.