

# ABOUT ADVOCACY



MARCH 2006

## WELCOME TO THE SCOTTISH INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

### OUR NEWS

#### **THE SIAA DIRECTORY OF ADVOCACY ORGANISATIONS IN SCOTLAND**

The new electronic version of the Directory is now available on our website at [www.siaa.org.uk/directory.php](http://www.siaa.org.uk/directory.php).

#### **THE SIAA E-BULLETIN**

Our weekly E-Bulletin is sent at the end of each week by email. The E-Bulletins contain updates on developments in the advocacy movement, and relevant developments elsewhere in the voluntary sector. They contain discussion points, information on new consultations, publications and resources, information of funding opportunities and recruitment. If you would like to receive our E-Bulletin at your own email address, please let us know on [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk).

#### **PHASE TWO OF THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT TRAINING**

We are still waiting to hear about funding for the second phase of our training programme on the Mental Health Act. We will update advocacy organisations on any developments in our weekly E-Bulletin.

### **OUR 4TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The SIAA is holding its 4th AGM on Wednesday 28th June 2006 at the Salutation Hotel in Perth. We are very pleased to announce that our keynote speaker is the President of the Mental Health Tribunal Scotland, Eileen Davie. As well as the AGM, the programme for the day includes the opportunity for discussion and debate about all the new developments in Advocacy and the chance to network with people from other advocacy organisations. You will receive more information by post and in the E-Bulletin over the coming months.

# SCOTTISH ADVOCACY WORKERS FORUM

The next SAWF meeting will be taking place on Thursday 20th April and Friday 21st April at Gartmore House near Aberfoyle. The meeting is open to members of the advocacy movement who join SAWF. Membership costs £10.

At the Spring Meeting, some of the topics to be covered are Tribunals, The Roots of Advocacy, Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004, Mental Health Act and Learning Disabilities, and the Adults with Incapacity Act 2000.

The cost for attending the two days is £75.

You can get further information about joining SAWF and the Spring Meeting, by contacting Sharon Smillie on **(01555) 840293 ext 831** or email **sharon.smillie@tsh.scot.nhs.uk**.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

### SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The SSSC have produced a CD-Rom which includes sections on the Codes of Practice for Social Service workers and Employers. If you would like a copy, contact the SSSC Communications Team on **0845 6030891**.

### SCOTLAND'S MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

SMHFA is a training course based on the concept of first aid training. It teaches people to recognise the signs and symptoms of someone with mental health problems and to help deal with a crisis situation. For more information go to **www.healthscotland.com/smhfa/smhfacourses**.

### WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) are launching an awareness raising day to be held on 15th June 2006. For more information go to **www.inpea.net**. Further information will be in the SIAA E-Bulletin nearer the time.

### REPRESENTING SERVICE USERS

A guide for trainers by Jean Blackman and Michael O'Sullivan.

This pack aims to provide structured training for those who represent the views and wishes of users of mental health services. Workers who represent service users need a range of skills including communication, attending and chairing meetings, training stakeholders, and time and workload management. This trainer's pack will provide a framework for the development of

these skills.

For more information, go to **www.pavpub.com/pavpub/trainingmaterials**.

### THE DIVERSITY TRAINING HANDBOOK

Authors: Phil Clements, John Jones.  
This is a practical guide to understanding and changing attitudes. It provides clear guidelines on diversity issues and on designing diversity training. For more information, go to **www.kogan-page.co.uk/bookdetails.aspx?ISBN=0749444762**.

### THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES HANDBOOK

Authors: Phil Clements, Tony Spinks.  
This is a practical guide to implementation of equal opportunities training in the workplace. It gives information on how to spot and eradicate workplace discrimination through training and guidance and includes updated legal guidance. For more information, go to **www.kogan-page.co.uk/bookdetails.aspx?ISBN=0749444827**.

### CHANGING LIVES: REPORT OF THE 21ST CENTURY SOCIAL WORK REVIEW

The report of the recommendations made by the 21st Century Social Work Review Group for the future of social services in Scotland has been published. For more information go to **www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/02/02094408/0**

## **PART-TIME ADVOCACY COMMISSIONER**

Angela Forbes, who is the manager of Advocacy Service Aberdeen was appointed Part-time Advocacy Commissioner with the Mental Welfare Commission. Here are Angela's comments on her appointment:

"I was delighted to be offered the challenge of being the first part-time Mental Welfare Commissioner with an independent advocacy background and I am looking forward to participating in the Mental Welfare Commission's important work of safeguarding individuals' welfare and their human and legal rights. It is a very exciting time to become involved with the Mental Welfare Commission – the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 has increased the responsibilities of the Mental Welfare Commission and, significantly, embedded Principles into Mental Health legislation that should be considered by everyone involved in the provision of mental health services. Equally important is the new legal right to independent advocacy that all people with a mental disorder have been given. I am eager to explore how these changes are going to effect people who use services and whether the expected benefits to service users materialise. The role of part-time commissioner will allow me to gain a greater insight into the impact of the new Act over a much wider area of Scotland than my 'day job' will permit.

My role will primarily involve visiting individuals in various settings - in hospital and in the community – to ascertain their views about their care and treatment. If concerns are raised by individuals, part of my role may be to investigate these concerns and to make recommendations when appropriate. Consequently, I will be involved in meetings with senior management of the NHS, Local Authorities or voluntary organisations.

Commissioners are expected to bring their area of expertise to the work of the Mental Welfare Commission. I intend to bring an advocacy perspective to my work that will hopefully sit well with the user perspective. I hope that my involvement with the Mental Welfare Commission will be of benefit to people who use services and their carers. I can be contacted about my new role at [angela@advocacy.org.uk](mailto:angela@advocacy.org.uk)."

## **ADVOCACY DILEMMA**

In your advocacy organisation, there may be advocates supporting people who have severe communication difficulties. What are the dilemmas for the advocates and care provider staff? What are the advocacy organisation's responsibilities?

For the advocates, a dilemma might be that they have to be able to evidence that they are accountable, that the manner in which they work is transparent and that they have knowledge of the relevant legislation.

For care provider staff, there may be issues around understanding how the advocate is effective if their advocacy partner has difficulties in giving clear and definite instructions, especially so in cases where the advocate seems to contradict what the person's Carer, Social Worker, Welfare Power of Attorney, or Guardian is saying.

The organisation's responsibilities in this case would be to organise advocacy awareness raising for care providers in order to help staff understand what advocates do. Other responsibilities are to have clear policies and procedures, and to ensure advocates have a comprehensive induction and ongoing training.

This is a debate that is constantly being raised. We would like to hear your views and experiences of working with people who have limited communication or are unable to instruct their advocate. How do you advocate in these circumstances? What would make your job easier?

We would also like to hear from service provider staff about their experiences of working with advocates in these situations.

## YOUR NEWS

### Advocacy Service Aberdeen

Advocacy Service Aberdeen have begun a pilot advocacy project called Local & Vocal in the Seaton area of the city. The project aims to work with individuals and groups, recruiting and training volunteer advocates from the local community. For more information, contact Colin Garrow on **01224 524 209** or email **colin@advocacy.org.uk**.

### Partners in Advocacy

Partners in Advocacy has been commissioned by Greater Glasgow NHS Board to provide independent advocacy to children and young people with mental health issues. The service started in January 2006 and staff are currently working to promote the service to health professionals, service providers, young people and their parents/carers. Partners in Advocacy operate an open referral procedure, which means that in addition to referrals from professionals, young people can self-refer. To make a referral or for further information contact: Cath McQuistan or Julie Dowds on **0141 847 0660**.

## EVALUATION SUPPORT SCOTLAND

Evaluation Support Scotland is a new organisation that has been set up to provide specialist support to voluntary organisations and funders to enable them to evaluate and learn. They will help voluntary organisations access evaluation tools and expertise. They will also work with funders to join up and simplify monitoring requirements and focus efforts on learning about what works. For more information, call 0870 850 1378, or visit the ESS website at **www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk**

## CONSULTATION ON PROTECTING VULNERABLE GROUPS: SCOTTISH VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME

On the 8<sup>th</sup> February, the Scottish Executive published the consultation on Scotland's plans to tighten the law for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. The proposals take forward recommendations of the Bichard report following the Soham tragedy and are designed to prevent unsuitable people gaining paid or voluntary work with children and adults at risk. A list will be introduced of those unsuitable to work with adults at risk, to run alongside an extended Disqualified from Working with Children List. There will be continuous updating of the barred lists and if new information comes to light, the person's employer will be notified. A list of people disqualified from working with adults at risk will be introduced through the new bill, so that vulnerable adults have the same protection as is currently available to children. The Protection of Adults (Scotland) Bill, to be introduced in March, will contain complementary measures to improve the care and protection of those adults who require it. The consultation period ends on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006. To access the consultation document, go to **www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/02/07134454/0**.

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of **About Advocacy**, please send or email information to us by 26th May 2006.

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