



Registered Charity
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The Friends of Fulbourn Hospital Newsletter 2013 No.1

The Friends in Action. Rebecca Turner-Neal and Clive Brown collect Christmas Gifts for Fulbourn Residents kindly donated by staff of South Cambridgeshire District Council. Councillor Tony Orgee Chairman of the Council.



(Picture courtesy of South Cambridgeshire District Council)

The Chairman Comments: some thoughts from David Livesey

We are grateful to those whose subscriptions and donations and their voluntary help have continued to support our work. There is a growing need for our activities and funding. This newsletter aims to encourage your generosity to continue and to raise awareness among mental health professionals of the resources which we have to offer.

Over the past few years marked by the cuts in public spending, the Friends, who are committed to supporting mental health patients in Fulbourn Hospital and the community through the provision of activities, visits and in other support, have endeavoured to ensure that they continue to support the care, welfare and recovery of sufferers from mental illness, whatever their age, who are or who have been associated with Fulbourn Hospital.

This newsletter describes some of our long established activities like the Forum Lunch Club and the provision of Christmas presents for ward patients. It details our financial support to wards which have little in the way of spare funds to spend on the additional items needed to improve the lives of those in their care. It also describes our instigation of and funding for the bereavement support for service users faced with the death of a carer.

Since our aim is also to increase the understanding of mental illness and the needs and problems of patients, and their carers, amongst people outside the Hospital, recent AGMs have included talks by: Peter Jones, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Cambridge, on *'Early Intervention: Is the future earlier &*

earlier or wider & wider?'; Dr Caroline Lea-Cox, the Executive Board Member of Cambridgeshire Association to Commission Health (CATCH) Ltd who leads on Mental Health who spoke about 'The Future Commissioning of Health Services - what the future holds for mental health services'; and, Dr Attila Vegh, Chief Executive of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, who talked about 'Delivering Excellent Mental Health Services for Today's Needs with Today's Resources'.

One of the consequences of the cuts in public spending is the replacement of Incapacity Benefit by the Employment and Support Allowance and in this newsletter Christina Rowland-Jones describes the problems that this is creating for those with mental illness. Accordingly we are pleased to be able to support the training costs of a volunteer who is giving advice on such matters to patients at Fulbourn hospital.

In looking to the future, I am pleased that we continue to have good links with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust and in particular with Jane Schultz and Stephanie Clifford, the members of staff with responsibility for volunteers. We have taken part in stakeholder meetings about the extensive management and service re-organisations undertaken over the past twelve months. Inevitably these have disrupted our plans to maintain and enhance our work in wards and we hope that as things settle down we will make progress with this.

Are you a member of "the Friends"? See the membership form at the back of this newsletter

The Bereavement Project:

Christina Rowland-Jones introduces an account by Gina Jolley

For some years I have been particularly concerned about people with an enduring mental health condition, who reach a point when they have to face up to the ageing, and inevitable loss of the close family carers who have been offering loving support, usually for many years. Equally ageing carers themselves worry about bereavement support which might be available for their relative, before, during and following their death; not everybody has younger family members, who not only live near enough but are prepared to support somebody with a mental illness through the trauma of close family bereavement.

Before I stood down as the *Friends'* Chair I therefore initiated a new 'bereavement project' to be run by the Friends' Management Committee; I was fortunate in finding an enthusiastic, voluntary project co-ordinator, Gina Jolley. With Gina's help my successor as Chair of the *Friends*, David Livesey, kindly took over work on the project, and has been developing it in collaboration with John Nicholson, the senior chaplain for the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Foundation Trust. Gina here describes how this project is progressing.

Since a well attended public meeting at Michaelhouse on 'The Complexity of Bereavement' work on the project has continued and evolved. In the last year a coordinated team of professional volunteers and a steering group that meet regularly and discuss issues of the unmet need within bereavement in the community for mental health users once their primary carers are no longer around.

With the encouragement of a network of key professionals from organisations and charities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough we delivered specific, unique, and valuable training compassionately led and managed by John Nicholson. The cohort of professional volunteers has maintained a close bond and continues to meet, share knowledge and maintain their continuous professional development to help those in need at a difficult time in their lives. The dedication, commitment and enthusiasm from all those involved are inspiring the involvement and journey forward for everyone, including all members of the Friends Bereavement Project Steering Group.

The Friends management committee is working on the funding for the cohort's voluntary working structure and coordinates the steering group. Every step is taken to ensure good practice thus providing a concrete and secure foundation for the future quality of care for all those who seek and use the services in the future. We want to create a bereavement service that helps people in our mental health community when they experience grief, particularly the loss of their significant carer and also support the primary carers who experience significant loss if their loved ones with mental health illness pass away.

At this moment in time we are close to completing the final stages of assessment and matching. John Nicholson Senior Chaplain at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust reported that there are four clients at the moment who are at the preliminary stages of receiving this valuable service.

Members help by volunteering in running the activities described in this Newsletter, and by providing funds to help in the ways it describes. Do join "the Friends".

How the Money is Spent. Clive Brown, the Treasurer, explains.

Over recent months, we have concentrated on giving support to wards which have little in the way of spare funds to spend on the additional items needed to improve the lives of those in their care. Last year, the Cedar Recovery Unit wanted to establish a library of books which will be helpful for those recovering from mental health problems, and we provided the funding for this. Willow Ward suggested that having the local newspaper available would be welcomed, and so we have given money for this to happen, and it is apparently much appreciated.

The "Outlook" scheme provides a taxi service to enable people to be taken on local outings. This has proved popular in the past with some wards, but tends to be used spasmodically.

Last Christmas, the South Cambridgeshire District Council once again provided presents for Denbigh and George Mackenzie wards, and we added to these for Cedar, Willow Ward,

and an inpatient ward at Ida Darwin. Willow needed a choir for their Christmas party, and this was provided by Little St Mary's through the good offices of Mary Ward.

We regularly receive requests for grants to individual service-users, particularly when they are going into their own accommodation and need to buy items of equipment. While we ask that the Friends are used as a last resort for such requests after other funding avenues have been explored, we have met such requests on several occasions over the past twelve months.

We have agreed to pay the expenses of volunteers who are called upon to give counselling under the Bereavement Project. This has had a slow beginning, but we hope that it will gather momentum.

The Forum Lunch Club: a Growing Service: Tish Berkley describes Forum and Announces a Promising New Development

The Club was established nearly twenty years ago. Meeting at St. James' Church Wulfston has been quietly providing a hot two course lunch for its members and helpers, with lecture style talks/music on a variety of subjects each month offering those older people of an academic/professional background, who have a mental health issue and for whom conventional day care is inappropriate, an opportunity to meet and socialise together in a friendly and relaxing environment.

We have a dedicated team of helpers who do a variety of tasks, including preparing and cooking the meal, looking after front of house and welcoming members as they arrive, and those who sit with members and encourage and facilitate conversation as and when they might need to. We try to remove all 'labels' where possible so new members don't necessarily know who is a helper and who is a member, just that we are a

friendly group of up to 40 members enjoying a meal together.

We are always pleased to hear from anyone who might like to join our team of helpers on the last Wednesday of the month., particularly those who might like to cook for us.

Because the format has been so successful over such a long period of time we continue to have a Waiting List for membership and are very pleased that the Little St. Mary's in Trumpington St. who have recently built an attractive Community Room, with a kitchen attached, are now starting a new Forum at Little St Mary's, which will be run on the same lines, and also be under the umbrella of the Friends of Fulbourn. Their first session on 9 April 2013 went well, and future sessions will be run on the second Tuesday of each month.

If you know of anyone whom you think might appreciate joining *Forum* do contact Tish Berkley for some preliminary discussion

Employment and Support Allowance: Christina Rowland-Jones describes the problems with this new Scheme

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is replacing Incapacity Benefit, and existing recipients are being assessed for their eligibility for this new benefit. Face-to-face interviews are carried out by healthcare professionals employed by Atos Healthcare, a private contractor working for the Department of Work & Pensions.

These WCAs were the subject of an emotional Parliamentary debate in January, and there has been continuous criticism from mental health charities, Citizen's Advice Bureaux, GPs, psychiatrists and other mental health professionals, because the present interpretation of ESA entitles disadvantages the mentally ill. The ESA50 questionnaire concentrates on physical ill-health, with limited reference to mental ill-health that may make somebody unsuitable for work. Although medically trained, most Atos interviewers have little knowledge of mental illness and the Department for Work & Pensions does not specifically request an expert medical report. If the interviewee provides one it is not necessarily taken fully into account. This has led to serious problems at interview. A mentally ill person may lack insight into their condition, experience chronic fatigue, lack confidence, or suffer from varying degrees of cognitive problems such as concentration, planning and memory as a result of their illness, yet they may present as physically fit and be deemed able to work.

The reasonable change which campaigners and claimants want is that expert medical evidence be requested at the outset, and taken fully into account. This would ensure that the sick are exempted from a distressing process, and those who have to attend are assessed within the correct medical context. The considerable danger of forcing back to work those who are not well enough, are unable to cope with the stress and who fear the loss of the benefits on which they depend, has already led to increases in medication, re-hospitalisation and attempted suicides, some of which were successful.

A *Rethink Mental Illness* survey of over 1,000 GPs found that some 21% have patients who have had suicidal thoughts as a result of undergoing, or fear of undergoing the assessment, and three-quarters say that patients who have been negatively affected have needed increased medical sup-

port. The present system has led to thousands of appeals, with a high success rate; some 40% upheld on Appeal. But, since 1st April the new Legal Aid bill means that those on benefits will no longer be automatically entitled to legal aid. If they wish to appeal, and cannot afford it themselves, they may have no way of doing so.

In July 2012, two members of the *Mental Health Resistance Network* sought permission from the High Court to bring a claim for Judicial Review against the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, to challenge the operation of the WCA. In granting permission the Judge stated: '*It is reasonably arguable that the adjustments required (by the Equality Act 2010) include the early obtaining of independent medical evidence where the documents submitted with a claim show that the claimant suffers from a mental illness, and that this has not been done, or at least not on a sufficiently widespread basis*'. The result of this Review was expected in mid-February but it is now mid-April and the conclusion is still awaited.

And there is more. From 8th April Personal Independence Payment (PIP) replaces Disability Allowance. Based on assessment of need, it focuses mainly on physical illness and an ability to carry out key activities necessary for every-day living. Then the new Universal Credit is bringing together most existing benefits and aims to simplify payments. Simplification is certainly needed but there is online access only; fine if you can afford a computer and have the necessary skills. The payments will be monthly and some may struggle to manage this and end up in debt. Lastly, people who currently have their housing benefit paid directly to their landlord will be given the money directly, as part of their Universal Credit. Some, unused to this change, may fall behind on what they owe and face possible eviction, and landlords may take the opportunity to increase rents.

Rethink Mental Illness has produced a Benefits Pack covering the changes so far, which is free to whoever needs it. Find their website and click on the right-hand side link:- *What's happening with benefits – all the changes, and how we can help*'. This Benefits Pack can be downloaded at www.rethink.org.

The officers of the Friends of Fulbourn Hospital

Chairman: David Livesey

Secretary and Bereavement Project: Virginia Jolley

Treasurer: Clive Brown

Forum: Tish Berkley

Membership Secretary: Tim Wheatley

Contact details: e.mail: infor@fofhc.org.uk

Web address: www.fofhc.org.uk (Web site undergoing renewal)

More information about Mental Health services

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CBFT) web site, www.cpft.nhs.uk, contains a directory of local, national and online services of relevance to mental health designed to support potential and actual end users of services and healthcare professionals. There are currently about 300 entries in the directory including CPFT services and the Friends of Fulbourn Hospital and the Community. The Friends entry is at: <http://www.cpft.nhs.uk/services/friends-of-fulbourn-hospital.htm> and is in the process of being updated.

Harry Specters Chocolates

<http://www.harryschocs.co.uk>



Harry Specters, is a Cambridge based company committed to providing fresh, aesthetically pleasing handmade chocolates created using only the highest quality ingredients. It was set up not only to provide customers with delicious, fresh handmade chocolates, but to further a social aim. Behind the mouth watering chocolates there is a higher aim that is the basis for the company's existence.

It was established also to provide employment opportunities for people on the autism spectrum.

Here they can be assured of a safe and supportive environment, where they have the

freedom to use their strengths to grow and develop into satisfied and contributing members of society. And it doesn't stop there! A percentage of the profits will go towards furthering the social aims of the business, providing social activities for staff and opportunities for personal development. At Harry Specters, our people are at the core of everything we do and they are the true drivers and inspiration for the business.

More details on their web site at www.harryschocs.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Tim Wheatley, Membership Secretary, Friends of Fulbourn Hospital and the Community,

30 The Levels, 150 Hills Road, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 8PB. Telephone:01223 246079

E-Mail tim.wheatley@BTInternet.com

Please fill in the details below. Members who assist the Friends in a practical way, for example as a volunteer or committee member, are not normally expected to pay a subscription, though contributions are always welcome. The current regular annual subscription is £10.

If you do wish to make a payment to the Friends, and wish to pay regularly through your bank, could you also complete the Bankers Order Form? If you are a UK income tax payer, and could complete the Gift Aid form, this would be an additional benefit.

Please return forms to the Membership Secretary at the above address.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Membership Secretary if you have any questions.

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POST CODE

e-mail

BANKER'S ORDER FORM (will be detached, noted by the Treasurer, and sent to your bank.

PERSONAL DETAILS (please print)

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To: The Manager of (Bank)

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Starting on(date) please pay Friends of Fulbourn Hospital, CAF BANK Ltd, 25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ A/C 00010894, Sort Code 40-52-40

the sum of £ Annually, until further notice.

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Prof/Dr):

SignatureDate

TAX RECOVERY GIFT AID FORM

To be completed only if you pay UK Income Tax at the full rate. Completing this form enables the Friends of Fulbourn Hospital to recover income tax on your contribution. At present rates this adds 25% to its value at no cost to you.

Details of contributor

Title Forename(s).....

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*the enclosed donation of £

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*all donations I made from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise.

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*delete as appropriate

Payments made as membership subscriptions count as donations.

Signature Date

Please return to:

Tim Wheatley, Membership Secretary, Friends of Fulbourn Hospital and the Community, 30 The Levels, 150 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8PB to whom any questions may be addressed.