

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter– a lot has happened since the last one! A key event was our AGM on 3 June. The meeting had an air of energy and positivity and the number of members who attended could just (and no more!) be accommodated at the Centre.

Annual General Meeting

Our guest speaker, Dr Alasdair FitzGerald, Consultant Neurologist, gave an interesting overview of, followed by a discussion on, the provision of neuro–rehabilitation services in NHS Lothian. This is particularly relevant given the recent relocation of the Lanfine Unit, which provides respite facilities for those with MS, to the Astley Ainslie Hospital. As we provide therapies to aid symptom management and rehabilitation, we really need to complement what is being provided elsewhere. Whilst much of the remaining business was routine, there were some important points to note.

FINANCE: The Annual Report for 2012 was presented– there had been a significant shortfall in finance (£30,000 for the year) which had to be met from reserves. This was mainly due to reductions in donations received. Plans for fundraising and applications for project funding are in place for 2013 but these may take some time to come to fruition. As the feasibility study indicated last year, we have to offer our services to a wider clientele if we want to exist in the longer–



We are delighted that Joanna Cole–Hamilton started as Project Development Coordinator on 10 June. Her previous experience on a community outreach project in Malawi will be very useful in developing the project. She works part–time with most of her time being spent out and about across Edinburgh and the Lothians. Joanna will be at the Centre at various points, and information about the community–based exercise classes and network of tutors will be available in the Centre as they develop.



Congratulations

To Chris and Louise on their marriage! We are glad your special day went well and wish you every happiness for the future.



We all know how much we rely on our volunteers to help in so many ways around the Centre and at fundraising events. We are always on the lookout for new additions to the team—so if you know of anyone who might be interested, please contact Chris@mstc-lothian.org.uk.

term. Expenditure has been pared back as far as possible without adversely affecting services and maintaining previous commitments to developing these services. However it is critical that we find ways to increase our income— this is not just the job of the trustees and staff but of all members and service users. If we want to see the Centre thrive we all have to put the effort in— many hands make light work!

CONSTITUTION OF THE CENTRE: Feedback from the questionnaire issued to members in May was discussed. The response rate was 20–25%. Whilst this is disappointing, we have to assume that those who had something to say had commented and that others were content with the proposals. Copies of the results of the questionnaire can be obtained from the Centre.

There was overwhelming support for the proposed changes to the Objects of the Charity (92%) and almost as much support (88.5%) in favour of the proposed amendments to membership criteria. This change makes the distinction between customers (who use our services) and members (who have voting rights and therefore a say in the running of the Centre) clearer. There was also general support (80.5%) for changes to subscription levels and for access to services (87.5%). On the final question about introducing service charges (as opposed to donations), the majority of respondents wished to retain the donation system. Any changes to the Constitution would be considered and approved at either an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). It is hoped to provide details soon of an EGM to take place in the autumn.



Recent Donations

A huge THANK YOU to all our fundraisers and donors:

Edinburgh's Got Soul Choir concert – £201.67

Greenbank Church Easter Appeal – £1700

Edinburgh Marathon runners – £3600 and counting!



Dates for your diary

30 June 2013 - Can collection at Ocean Terminal

7 July 2013 - Can collection at Ocean Terminal

25 July 2013 - Gullane Golf Club Captain's Day

22 August 2013 - Can collection at Tesco's, Hermiston Gait

16 October 2013 - Can collection at Tesco's, Duke Street Leith

Volunteers needed for can collection events - contact Louise@mstc-lothian.org.uk

Annual Subscriptions

Some of you may have noticed that as yet we have not requested annual subscriptions for 2013. This was in part due to awaiting feedback from the recent questionnaire. All members will shortly be receiving a letter requesting subscriptions for this year. From 2014, we have decided to align our subscriptions to our financial year (ie 1 January–31 December) which will ease administration.

Suggested Donation Levels

As mentioned above, we really need to increase our income levels and members favour maintaining the donation system. We continue to provide improvements in our services and in line with comments in the questionnaire as well as helping us to maintain our service levels, the appropriate donation level will rise to £12.50 per session for oxygen and physiotherapy. It is some time since donation levels have been reviewed and this change will be effective from the beginning of September.

Physiotherapy

As highlighted previously, keeping continuity in our physiotherapy service has been challenging. We are therefore very pleased to confirm that Liz Day (currently working in NHS Fife) will be starting with us on 8 July. She will be working 30 hours per week and to ensure a smooth transition, Emma Sawyer will continue to provide support for the first month. After this Gillian Robinson will be devoting a few hours per week to developing the service and providing



Electric Wheelchair Available

A nearly-new Karma Falcon 2 Electric Wheelchair, 18 inches wide is available to someone who needs it. Please contact Chris@mstc-lothian.org.uk for details.

professional supervision for Liz. This will significantly enhance the service we provide and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to providing a service of excellence. We are also investigating demand for physiotherapy services in the evening and at the weekend so if you have any views on this please drop a note in the Suggestion Box in the Centre or email to Louise@mstc-lothian.org.uk. The group physio exercise classes remain an important aspect of this service—so if you are interested in attending, please contact Lynne in the first place.

Fundraising Committee

A Fundraising Group, consisting of members of the Service Users Group (Helen Cormack and Fi Burns), has been set up to help with events and activities. If you have an idea for organising/running a fundraising activity, or you are interested in joining the fundraising committee, please speak to Louise or one of the group in the first instance.

Please look out for the Fundraising Newsletter – coming soon.

