

Forward

Midlothian

Disabled People

www.forwardmid.org.uk



Equality - Diversity - Inclusion

2023

Reflecting on some highlights from 2023, Forward Mid continued to be a significant source of support to disabled people, their families and carers in Midlothian.

Forward Mid produced a new up-to-date Directory for Disabled People and People with long-term conditions.

- Forward Mid held the Midlothian Disabled Peoples Assembly, this energetic public event involving around 150 Midlothian citizens and 25 guest organisations.
- Forward Mid protested in the street against proposed Local cuts to essential Midlothian services.
- Forward Mid began regular team meetings @Justinlees, Once monthly minimum, a form of focussing on work and peer support, open to all.
- Forward Mid made a response and encouraged Disabled People and Carers living in Midlothian to contribute towards the Joint Inspection of Adult Health and Social Care Services in Midlothian.

Despite cuts to services and increases in charges for services this makes Forward Mid's achievements even more impressive as does our planned actions for 2024 where we will face much of the same or worse.

2024

Forward Mid's aim for 2024 is to continue the work we do but also work on new plans which will see us connect with different organisations and share the work we do for our community and spread information to inform disabled people around important issues. We will have regular meetings, hopefully more in person meetings with partners in Midlothian health and Social Care Partnership, seeking to involve more Disabled People and People with long-term conditions.

A fresh new updated version of our well renowned Directory will be available early summer 2024. Forward Mid will endeavour to strengthen our relationships with Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues and elected officials.

If you feel curious or want to be involved with our Work get in touch and see where Forward Mid connects and works in partnership

Wishing all our readers well for this coming year, hopefully full of opportunities for all of us and where challenges exist, Forward Mid will meet them as best we can. The team is excited for the year ahead and the path it will take us.

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Why Are GPs Practices still working Differently?

If the Pandemic is over why aren't GPs Practices open ?

The Pandemic is not over. GPs Practices worked hard to provides service throughout lockdown and continue to do so. To Protect everyone we must maintain safe infection control and minimise unnecessary physical contact.



How are practices working now ?

All appointments are to be triaged to help keep you safe and makes sure the people with greatest needs are seen first. We will see everyone who needs to be seen that way.

What is Triage ?

You will be assessed to decide who needs:

- To be seen in person,
- A phone consultation,
- A video Consultation,
- Help from a Community Pharmacy.



Why do receptionists ask personal questions ?

GPs reception staff are a vital part of the health care team and ask questions to direct you to the best support. They are skilled in assisting with triage and treat all information confidentially.



I wanted to see my GP, so why am I seeing someone else?

Many GPs Practices now include nurse, advance Nurse Practitioners (Who can diagnose and treat health conditions), Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists and Link Workers. This ensures you see the right person at the right time more quickly.



What about Emergencies ?

Always DIAL 999 in a life threatening emergency. If you need help with minor injuries at any time or urgent care when your GPs Practice is closed dial 111.



Where else can I get help?

Visit www.nhsinform.scot for advice on Common symptoms and a list of local services or speak to your pharmacist on advice on minor illnesses, Call 111:

- To schedule a minor illnesses appointment
- For urgent Mental Health advice and guidance
- If you are too ill to wait for your GP or Dentist to open.



Please be patient

Our Health services are under enormous pressure, but we are open and are here if needed. Please work together to make sure you get the right care, in the right place, at the right time by the appropriate health professional for your needs.

**Right Care
Right Place**

Patients View

1. Patient A, is deaf and uses Contact Scotland BSL. Phone Contact Scotland BSL, Ask to phone Doctors to make an appointment, Contact Scotland phone GP to be given a time to call. I have to leave to go to work. Call comes when I am travelling, connection is bad. Have tried for over a Month.

2. Patient B, require a medical check for driving HGV. Used to go to Local GP and pay for it. Now I have to go private and pay three times the price. Now my GP wants blood tests before they sign the medical they did not complete.

3. Patient C, Works in a sensitive sector. Any device with photo capability is a security risk. Need to book an advance appointment and request time off. My GP only takes same day appointments so is discriminating against anyone in a sensitive sector.

4. Patient D, Disabled person. Carer arrives between 8am and 9am, therefore unable to make early morning call, call in the afternoon and wait in call queue. Sorry no more appointments available today. What should have been a course of antibiotics at home, turns out to be a 5 day hospital admittance. Right Care Right Place needs re-evaluation.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Most people no longer need to take a coronavirus test. To prevent the spread of infection, you should try to stay at home if you're unwell. You can still access testing if you have a health condition which means you're eligible for coronavirus treatments.

Coronavirus, and other respiratory infections such as flu, can spread easily and cause serious illness in some people. Vaccinations are very effective at preventing serious illness from coronavirus. But there's still a chance you might catch coronavirus, or another respiratory infection, and pass it on to other people.

Symptoms:

To prevent the spread of coronavirus, try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection such as coronavirus and you:

- Have a high temperature,
- Do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities,
- Do this until you no longer have a high temperature (if you had one) or until you feel better.

Symptoms of coronavirus include:

- Continuous cough,
- High temperature, fever or chills,
- Loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell,
- Shortness of breath,
- Unexplained tiredness, lack of energy,
- Muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise,
- Not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry,
- Headache that's unusual or longer lasting than usual,
- Sore throat, stuffy or runny nose,
- Diarrhoea,
- Feeling sick or being sick.

Since 30th November 2023 NHS Scotland has taken over the distribution of home test kits. To request home test kit visit nhsscot.service-now.com/covid_lateral_flow_test_order_results or ☎ 0800 008 6587

Tamzin McDonald

I was 10 months old when I was left in a field.

Old enough to understand I was alone but not old enough to run after who left me.

Luckily a passing family heard my cries and rescued me. I would spend the next few months and years being looked after by police, social services, the family who found me and a foster family.

For roughly the first nine years of my life I was raised by my adoptive parents in the Caribbean with UK trips to visit my adoptive parents' biological children.

We eventually moved to Edinburgh and I went to school here, had my son here and made Scotland my home (we stayed in Leith for five years before moving to Dunfermline and then returning to Midlothian in 2021).

'Better understanding required'

I am sometimes classed as a transracial or transcultural adoption, which means placing a child who is of one race or ethnic group with adoptive parents of another race or ethnic group.

Intercountry adoptee is another term used – that is the process by which you adopt a child from a country other than your own through permanent legal means and then bring that child to your country of residence to live with you permanently.

In a statement given by former First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at the Scottish Parliament on March 22, she apologised for the forced adoptions that took place in Scotland in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

The Scottish apology follows Australia's in 2013 and Ireland's in 2021.

In her apology she also said specialist support and counselling services for those affected by historical adoption practices have been established.

Tamzin was born in the Caribbean before making Scotland her home.

I would also like to see her successor Humza Yousaf review forced adoptions in the 80s as well as looking into those involving children overseas who have been brought to Scotland.

We need to understand the services provided.

While we have more knowledge and support for adoptions and ethnic minorities, it's still a grey area when they intertwine.

Issues raised are shot down

People don't like talking openly about it unless it's to portray the belief these children are "lucky" or the "adopted parents are saints for rescuing unwanted children".

They often argue against any criticism of transracial adoption by saying it's better than going into care, failing to see there are other options before adoption that may have been ignored or not offered.

For example, kinship care, where a child is unable to live with their birth parent and resides instead with a relative or other individual with whom they have a pre-existing relationship.



Tamzin McDonald.

What about assessing the reasons the children can't remain with family and whether or not those reasons – poverty, for example – can be addressed?

Other issues raised that get shot down are intersectionality in transracial adoption.

A lot of people don't want to see race as an issue but for the transracial adoptee, it is a unique experience and deserves its own recognition.

Transracial adoptees from marginalised groups have similar issues as the forced adoptions discussed earlier, like falsified birth certificates and identities, but they also have the racial angle.

'Traumatic experience'

In my case, I'm Caribbean and my adopted parents are white British.

Moving from the Caribbean to Scotland was a traumatic experience in itself.

It was after the murder of Stephen Lawrence and I remember thinking I had been brought somewhere where I could be killed just for the colour of my skin.

Tamzin has reflected on her adoption experience.

There needs to be more knowledge about the after-effects of adoption on children whether transracial, forced or other variations.

We need to stop thinking children are blank slates when it comes to adoption.


First published in the **The Courier Newspaper**.

Dial-A-Bus

HcL Dial-A-Ride and Dial-A-Bus... getting you from A to B!

If you find it hard to get out and about, HcL 'Hop on an HcL Bus' might be able to help. They provide supported door-through-door transport to help you get out and about, do your shopping, or attend appointments and social activities. Dial-A-Ride Choose where you want to go – a medical appointment, the shops, a visit to friends or family, to church, the cinema or theatre, or Edinburgh Airport Dial-A-Bus Hop on an HcL Bus to local shopping centres including Cameron Toll, Tesco Eskbank, ASDA & Sainsbury's Straiton, Tesco Penicuik, Morrison's Dalkeith. Their drivers pick you up from your front door and can support you to leave your house and on the bus if you need a bit of extra help. They can help you put your coat on, lock your house and help carry your shopping home. Each bus can carry two wheelchair passengers. You can use the service on your own or bring a friend or carer.



For more details on the cost and how to register and book, call: Dial-A-Ride: 0131 447 9949 Dial-A-Bus: 0131 447 1718  : edinburgh@handicabs.org.uk

Dial-A-Bus continuing to provide the same great service but with one big change from 1st of February 2024 you will be able to use your CONCESSIONARY BUS PASS!

Health-In-Mind

Creative Photography for Self-Expression

A photography group promoting wellbeing through reflection and creative expression

A beginner-friendly introduction to creative photography,
Colours and Emotions'
Poetry and photography
Self-portrait through shadows and reflections,
Reflective group discussions.

Start: Friday 26 January 2024
13.30hrs - 15.00hrs for 6 weeks in Bonnyrigg

For more information or to book a place please contact Health in Mind

✉: hello@health-in-mind.org.uk

☎: 0131 225 8508

🌐: health-in-mind.org.uk



Cyrenians: John Muir

**Earn Your
John Muir Award
at the Midlothian Community
Hospital Gardens**

Every Friday from the 2nd of Feb —
29th of March, 11 AM - 3 PM

On this 9 day course, you will learn to identify tree, plant and bird species, learn about habitats, learn about Health and Safety outdoors, how to light a fire, plant trees and learn to develop many more green skills. All abilities welcome!

About You:

- Do you love nature or want to learn more?
- Do you live in Midlothian?
- Are you between 25—67 ?
- Are you currently unemployed or facing challenges to employment?

For more information or to book a place and request a referral form, please email:

✉: AlixVillanueva@cyrenians.scot



Cyrenians: Skills

Food Preparation & Budgeting Skills at Midlothian Community Hospital Garden

Learning skills for life



Healthy eating has many benefits, such as reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. It can also boost a person's mood and provide them with more energy. Being able to cook a basic healthy meal can provide long-term health benefits and improve well-being.

At the Midlothian Community Hospital Garden in Dalkeith, Cyrenians are running a fully funded programme of Food Preparation and Budgeting Skills to support participants to be able to make healthier food choices, develop and increase skills and confidence in: preparing and cooking meals from scratch; and shopping with a limited budget.

What will you be learning?

Following a recipe, preparing and cooking 2 dishes at each class and sitting down and eating the meal at the end if desired;

- Understanding basic food hygiene and safety;
- Understanding foods which contribute to a healthy lifestyle;
- Recognising signs of spoilage in food and understanding use by/best before dates;
- Using kitchen equipment safely;
- Demonstrating food preparation and cooking techniques;
- Menu planning and cooking on a budget;
- Using left overs;
- Recipes from every session and a certificate when you graduate.

We aim to provide a supportive space, where participants receive tailored support to address their concerns and anxieties. Participants have the opportunity to cook together, eat together, and develop confidence and independence for themselves.

Importantly, all participants will get the opportunity to achieve a **REHIS Elementary Cooking Skills qualification**, improving their prospects of employment and further training.

Starting:

Monday 12th February for 6 weeks – sessions run 1-3.30pm in the Outdoor Kitchen at the Midlothian Community Hospital Garden, Dalkeith EH22 3HN.

Each session will include sitting down together to eat food which you have prepared, if you desire.

Sessions will be held under cover but outdoors in the beautiful garden, and will include fire as a way of cooking. Please dress for the outdoors.

Funding for bus travel is provided.

This opportunity is for anyone 16 and over and resident in Midlothian Council area and are living independently or are working towards living independently.

If you are unsure if you, or a client you support, are suitable for referral then please get in touch.

How to apply or refer a client:

It is important that before you apply or refer a client, that they are committed to start and complete the programme over the set number of weeks.

On receipt of your enquiry and completed referral form, we will contact you to arrange a suitable time for you (and your client) to visit the Midlothian Community Hospital Garden kitchen and have a more detailed chat about the programme and complete the enrolment form. This will only take about 20-30 minutes.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more please contact:

Emma Stenhouse, Garden Administrator –

✉: Emmastenhouse@cyrenians.scot or call ☎: 07949725924.

Closing date for applications is the 5th of February– please note however applications are processed on a first come first served basis and spaces are limited.

Cyrenians

Alternative Publications

Please like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/forwardmid/

Forward Mid newsletters are available in large print on request from Eric Johnstone ☎: 0131-663-9471 or ✉ eric.johnstone@mvacvs.org.uk write to him at MVA, 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith, EH22 1AE with your request. Electronic copies can be found on www.forwardmid.org.uk. The latest Firefox browser has the reader symbol 📖 in the address bar, click and select narrate from left menu. The latest Safari Browser has the reader symbol **Reader** but does not read aloud. These only work on websites without errors. If you require help please contact Forward Mid and we will arrange to help you.

Edited by Iain Tait for Forward Mid