

Newsletter issue 11 July 2007

www.forwardmid.org.uk

FORWARD MIDLOTHIAN DISABLED



NHS Lothian Moving forward

Midlothian Community Hospital

After ten years of planning Midlothian is finally set to get it's new hospital after the land was bought, NHS Lothian paid £750,000 for the site at Hardengreen



When opened at the end of 2009, the £15.5 million hospital will mean out-patients can be treated locally rather than having to travel to Edinburgh. It will also provide a replacement for the ageing Rossllynlee and Loanhead hospitals.

The new community hospital to be sited at Hardengreen, opposite Tesco's it will provide 88 beds - 40 frail elderly continuing care beds (of which 20 will be registered as care home beds) 24 assessment beds for older people with mental health problems and 24 continuing care beds for older people with mental health problems.

The new community hospital will also include a day hospital for older people with mental health problems, an out-patient department, including x-ray service, childhealth clinics, physiotherapy and a range of other health services.

Public consultation is already underway and anyone with an interest in how the services are delivered or access to the facility should contact Catherine Evans at Catherine.Evans@lpct.scot.nhs.uk

smart Centre opens

The South-east Mobility and Rehabilitation Technology (SMART) Centre is based at Astley Ainslie Hospital, and it will provide mobility and rehabilitation services to around 25,000 patients each year from Lothian, Fife and the Borders.

The mobility service provides a wheelchair service, disabled living centre and a national driving assessment service. The rehabilitation engineering service offers prosthetic, bio-engineering and children's mobility service (Enabling Technology for Children) and adult and children's seating services.

Karen Muir a physiotherapist at the wheelchairs services says, The new building is fantastic. The mobility centre where we worked before was in two old huts and the comparison with the SMART Centre is night and day. Here we have a dedicated reception area, people are made welcome, they understand what's happening and we have plenty of space to work in.

In the past, we did the majority of our work in people's homes and hospitals. We went to them and took the equipment with us. Now we can bring patients to the SMART Centre and do as much as we can in a single visit. And if patients want to visit the disabled living centre, or have a prosthetics appointment, we can co-ordinate that under one roof. The SMART centre is ideal for disabled visitors.

Discrimination doesn't work:

Disabled people's experiences of applying for work in Scotland

A research into the discrimination facing disabled people in comparison to non-disabled people when applying for jobs in the private sector.

This report by Leonard Cheshire foundation demonstrates that the Government will have to do much more to change the attitudes of employers towards disabled people if they are to realise their target of moving 100,000 disabled Scots off benefits and into work.

The report shows that when a disabled person and a non-disabled person with an equal education and similar skills and experience apply for the same job: Non-disabled people were twice as likely to receive a response to a job application than disabled applicants.

Of those who did receive a reply, non-disabled applicants were invited to twice as many interviews as disabled candidates. Disabled people's applications were rejected at the first stage twice as often as non-disabled applicants.

We responded to 120 private sector job advertisements by sending out a pair of fictionalised matched CVs who were of the same gender, race, age, qualifications, and similar skills and experience either by e-mail or post. The only notable difference between the two candidates was the presence or absence of an impairment (cerebral palsy, or registered blind), which was included in a sentence in the first paragraph of the CV.

We received 98 responses from employers from which we were able to conclude that: Employers were twice as likely to discriminate in favour of a non-disabled applicant as to treat both candidates equally. Less than one in three employers responded to both applicants equally. 7% of employers positively discriminated in favour of the disabled applicant. Employers invited non-disabled applicants to twice the number of interviews than disabled applicants. Disabled applicants were 36% more likely to be rejected for an advertised post than non-disabled applicants were.

From the responses we did receive we found that There was no pattern to the types of

organisations likely to discriminate against disabled applicants. Large and small companies, from household names to small community businesses, demonstrated apparently discriminatory behaviour towards potential employees because of their disability. Of those who were invited to interviews 60% had a positive experience but 60% were never offered the post

A stated aim for the 2006 Welfare Reform Bill is to move 1 million of the 2.7 million claimants off Incapacity Benefit (IB) and back into work. To achieve this it proposes replacing IB with a new two-tier 'employment and support' allowance. Under the new allowance people with more manageable conditions will risk facing cuts in their benefit if they fail to engage with work-focused interviews, agreed action plans and work-related activity.

The Government's plans to support disabled people back into work has focused on creating new legal protections against discrimination and a tougher welfare climate to make work pay. Leonard Cheshire fears that it has not taken sufficient account of the availability of suitable work, local unemployment levels or employer's attitudes towards disabled people. Without a willingness by employers to take on disabled people and to see their skills rather than their impairment, the Government's ambitions will not be met.

Leonard Cheshire Scotland is calling on the Scottish Executive and the UK Government in Westminster to undertake a public awareness campaign to encourage employers to recruit disabled people. We believe that the Government should conduct further research into employers' attitudes and actions towards disabled people as a matter of urgency. Finally we are calling on the Government to ensure that the rights set out in the DDA protecting disabled people against discrimination in the recruitment process are fully acknowledged and implemented by employers. A full report can be found www.leonard-cheshire.org



British
Red Cross

The British red cross East Lothian and Midlothian division have an office at 131 High Street Dalkeith,

they offer a wide range of services in the Midlothian and East lothian area.

They have a medical loan service that can provide people with disabilities a range of equipment on a short term loan, they can supply such aids as wheelchairs to bath aids to everyone who is recovering from an illness or accident or simply looking for help to maintain independence.

Transport and escort service this is a service to help people who have difficulty getting out and about, they can provide a suitable vehicle and where needed an escort to enable people to keep important appointments and maintain their independence.

The British Red Cross Skin Camouflage Service aims to teach individuals, who have to cope with a disfigurement, the simple techniques necessary to apply creams effectively, and enable them to feel more confident about their appearance. The service is open to men, women and children through a medical referral from a consultant or GP.

The British Red Cross Therapeutic Care Service is available on short term basis to anyone who needs it during particularly stressful times. Provision may range from one week to six months. Users of the service are offered a relaxing 30 minute session.

The British Red Cross, the acknowledged experts in providing First Aid training at all levels, provides a range of courses to suit all needs. These include courses in basic First Aid, Child and Infant Resuscitation, and First Aid for Motorists.

The red cross will also recycle any aid equipment you no longer need ,For more information visit the red cross on line at www.redcross.org.uk or phone the office in Dalkeith on 0131 654 0340

Two Ticks

When you're applying for jobs, look out for employers using the disability 'two ticks' symbol. It shows they are positive about employing disabled people and will be keen to know about your abilities.

All vacancies based in Great Britain (GB) where the employer has been awarded the Disability Symbol. It is only applicable to vacancies where the posts will be located in England, Scotland or Wales. Employers that use the Symbol, but are advertising vacancies based outside of GB are not obliged to use the Disability Symbol criteria during recruitment.



It means the employer will guarantee to interview you if you meet the minimum criteria for that job. Find out from the employer what the minimum criteria are. That way, you'll have a good idea of whether it's worth applying and what to expect.

I Have been on the job centre website looking for work up to 16 hours or job sharing in a local job but there is no information on Job Sharing or how to go about it useful information like this seems to be lacking. Jobs that are advertised with this symbol do not say if they are suitable for physically disabled.

Parking Problems

The NHS Hospitals in Edinburgh, are moving Disabled persons parking bays behind barriers, the access to these parking bays are through an automated barrier, Surprise surprise, they have amalgamated disabled persons parking bays with able bodied

persons parking bays. To curb abuse. The automated system only counts able bodied parking bays, therefore if the car park



has 5 disabled parking bays and 15 able bodied parking bays the automated system only allows 15 vehicles into the parking bays so if you are disabled there can be up to 5 empty disabled parking bays available, except you can not gain access because the car park is full according to the automated service. If you have experienced this discrimination then please write your complaint to Pat Nicolson, Patient Liaison offices Support services Western General Hospital Crewe Road Edinburgh EH4 2XU

The Food Train



The idea of the Food Train is to make sure that people who are physically unable to shop for themselves should be able to access a wide variety of food and household goods delivered free to their homes. The idea of the Food Train is to make sure that people who are physically unable to shop for themselves should be able to access a wide variety of food and household goods delivered free to their homes.

How the service works

Blank shopping lists are given to customers on a nominated day, Orders are made up by our volunteers on delivery day, Original list and till receipt packed in the box, The goods are delivered by our volunteers on a nominated day Upon delivery members pay the volunteers the cost of the shopping and a new list is supplied, The Food Train is a free Service We can also unpack shopping and put away if required.

The areas covered at the moment are Bonnyrigg, Carrington, Dalkeith, Gorebridge, Loanhead, Mayfield, Newtongrange and Pathhead. We are due to start in Penicuik by the end of May this year.

The food train is run Midlothian volunteers providing a free home shopping & delivery service to the housebound, elderly & disabled The Food Train exists to provide a service that enables it's customers to: Obtain a wide variety of food & household goods at reasonable prices, Enjoy a healthier diet, Have regular contact with people.

For more information please contact The Food Train, Brown Building, 80 Hunterfield Road, Gorebridge EH23 4TT or phone 01875 823922 The Food Train is in association with C.H.I.R.P (Community Health Improvement & Regeneration Project)

Thanks to Eunice Astles for this article

Forward MID invited to talk at Citizenship Academy

Marlene Gill and Iain Tait Participated from Forward MID to give a talk on the progress that physically disabled people have on raising awareness of the obstacles that disabled people face on every day of their life. Amy Parker from Leonard Cheshire Foundation invited Forward MID to the meeting held in the Holiday Inn Express, Leith, Edinburgh. The talk centred around the work that Forward MID as already achieved in such places as the Newbattle Abbey College and highlighting how we go about challenging Midlothian council to make services more accessible to people that require them, Also about advisory capacity in such areas as helping NHS lothian to have a better understanding of

the difficulties disabled people Face when visiting a doctors practice, in areas such as signage, seating



and transfer methods for wheelchair users. All the participants of the academy enjoyed our visit. Amy Parker from Leonard

Cheshire has intimated that she will keep in touch and if Forward MID required any support for our campaigns then we ask Leonard Cheshire for assistance. This event strengthened Forward MID

Alternative Publications

The editions of the Forward MID newsletters are available in large print or a E-mail publications For alternative publication please E-mail to eric.johnstone@mvacva.org.uk or call Eric Johnstone on 0131-663-9471 or write to him at MVA 4-6 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE with your request.