

# A BOUT ADVOCACY

JUNE 2005

## WELCOME TO THE SCOTTISH INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER.

### OUR NEWS

#### FUNDING FOR SIAA

We are happy to announce that we have secured funding from the Scottish Executive Health Department for the SIAA for the remainder of this financial year, and are now in the process of recruiting an Administrator and a Mental Health Act Development Worker.

#### ADVOCACY AND THE NEW MENTAL HEALTH ACT

As you will be aware, the implementation date for the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 is October 2005. The SIAA and ASA are keen to monitor the impact the Act has on existing advocacy provision. We want to develop a system that can be used by advocacy organisations across the country to collect information on who is being referred to and then offered advocacy support by your organisation. The aim is to collect standard information, so that

comparisons can be made and trends highlighted. On a local level, it is anticipated that the information will be used by advocacy organisations to back bids for further funding. On a national level, we need this information to highlight the need for advocacy amongst groups in addition to those covered by the Act. The paperwork will be kept to a minimum and will be based on the kind of information that is already being collected.

We would like this piece of work to begin before the end of August 2005 so that at least two months of data can be collected before the implementation of the Act in October. This would then allow us to report accurately and confidently on the impact of the Act.

We urge all advocacy organisations to take part in this process. For information, please contact **Emma Harvey** at [Emma@advocacysafeguards.org](mailto:Emma@advocacysafeguards.org) or telephone **0131 524 9380**.

### OUR 3RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The SIAA is holding its 3rd AGM on Thursday 30th June 2005 at COSLA in Edinburgh. The programme for the day includes the opportunity for networking with people from other advocacy organisations and the chance to have your say on the proposed changes to the "Principles and Standards in Independent Advocacy Organisations and Groups". If you would more information, then please contact us on **0131 455 8183** or by email at [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk).

## POINTS OF INTEREST

### **'HAPPY TO TRANSLATE' INITIATIVE**

This innovative idea has been launched as a pilot project to encourage organisations to show their commitment to good practice in overcoming language barriers and providing equal access to information and services for members of Scotland's Black and Minority Ethnic communities. For more information, contact **Tamiko Mackie** at [mackie@trustha.org.uk](mailto:mackie@trustha.org.uk) or call **0131 225 7246**.

### **OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING**

The Office of Fair Trading carried out a market study of Care Homes for Older People in the UK. This study was launched in June 2004 and was initiated by a super-complaint made by Which? in 2003. The report makes recommendations on some key issues including the provision of advocacy and what help individuals get to make complaints. A full copy of the Report and annexes can be downloaded at [www.offt.gov.uk](http://www.offt.gov.uk).

### **OFFICE OF THE SCOTTISH CHARITY REGULATOR**

OSCR have produced a report on 'Monitoring Scottish Charities'. The report contains the findings of a pilot project run in 2004 involving 306 charities to test OSCR's proposed monitoring system based on annual returns, and from a wider consultation of the charitable sector.

A full copy of the report can be downloaded from [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk) or from **OSCR, Argyll House, Marketgait, Dundee DD1 1QP**.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE**

The HSE has launched an Internet-based tool to help small organisations gauge their health and safety performance. For more information go to [www.hspi.info-exchange.com](http://www.hspi.info-exchange.com).

### **UPDATE (SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL DISABILITY INFORMATION SERVICE)**

UPDATE has redeveloped its website. There are two separate areas; the public area and the members' area. The public area contains information on disability related information, including the Directory of Local Disability Information Providers. For more information go to [www.update.org.uk](http://www.update.org.uk).

### **RNID**

RNID have launched their new website which has information on services for deaf and hard of hearing people, including how to access the Tynetalk service, and how to qualify for the 'Louder than Words' Charter Mark. For more information go to [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk).

### **MAKING DECISIONS ALLIANCE**

The MDA are promoting the practice of writing a Living Will with regards to medical treatment given and instructions to the medical practitioners involved. For more information go to [www.makingdecisions.org.uk](http://www.makingdecisions.org.uk).

### **PROJECT SCOTLAND**

Project Scotland has been launched to give young people in Scotland the opportunity to gain experience through full-time volunteer placements. If you would like more information, or to register your organisation, go to [www.projectscotland.co.uk](http://www.projectscotland.co.uk)

## FREE HEALTH & SAFETY AUDITS

The SCVO/STUC (Scottish Trades Union Congress) Partnership are offering free support to organisations that want to review, update or introduce new Health & Safety policies in their workplaces. Support will be provided by the Worker Safety Adviser who will visit the workplace, assist employers, and encourage worker involvement. The free service is available to all voluntary organisations.

For more information, contact **Terry Anderson** on **0141 337 8100** or by email at [tanderson@stuc.org.uk](mailto:tanderson@stuc.org.uk).

# THE SCOTTISH HUMAN RIGHTS TRUST

The Scottish Human Rights Trust provides training which aims to raise awareness of human rights, and encourage best practice in policy and procedure, as well as providing additional skills that may directly benefit people using voluntary organisation services.

The training is both dynamic and participatory. It is designed to suit the specific needs of individual organisations. An introduction to human rights and the Human Rights Act is followed by workshops focusing on case studies relating to your area of work, these can be developed by the Trust or in partnership with your organisation. The training also provides an opportunity for exploring your organisational policies and practices in relation to human rights.

The training provides an introduction to human rights and the Human Rights Act; discussion on how human rights affect the voluntary sector; a knowledge review, facilitating and supporting learning and understanding; an introduction to the new Guide to Human Rights for the Voluntary Sector produced in partnership with the Scottish Executive; and a comprehensive pack of support and learning materials.

Training can be brought to your workplace for as little as £15 per participant for smaller organisations and up to £25 per participant for larger organisations.

If you would like to know more about the Human Rights Act or would like to book training contact **Jan Mullen** at the Trust on **0141 352 6944** or email [contactus@scotrights.org](mailto:contactus@scotrights.org)

## PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS: A JOINT RESPONSIBILITY CONFERENCE

**THURSDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2005 AT MURRAYFIELD STADIUM, EDINBURGH**

**Keynote Speaker: Rhona Brankin, Deputy Minister for Health.**

British Association of Social Workers Scotland are organising a conference which will concentrate on the themes of:

- Advocacy
- Conditional Confidentiality
- Self Determination and Risk
- Residential Care and the Care Commission
- Elder Abuse
- Human Rights and Learning Disability
- Vulnerable Witnesses
- Mental Health - Care and Treatment Orders
- Communication and Consultation

The purpose of the Conference is a joint sharing of good practice through developing a National Framework which will take account of possible new legislation.

**To lodge expressions of interest and a full programme, please contact Mrs Johan Grant, BASW Scotland, 17 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh EH1 3BG or email [j.grant@basw.co.uk](mailto:j.grant@basw.co.uk).**

## STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

The Mental Health charity, Mind commissioned consultant specialists in occupational stress to produce research on the extent of the problem of stress in the workplace in England and Wales, and what can and should be done about it. The report looks at the issue from the point of view of employers, employees and from the perspective of mental health service users. It looks at workplace stress as a trigger for mental ill health and covers issues of concern to service users such as Disability Discrimination. The report provides case studies of organisations making effective interventions to prevent and manage stress. For more information, contact **Mind** on **0844 448 4448**.

# SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

The SIAA has been contacted by several advocacy organisations needing clarification around the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and Service Level Agreements. Concerns have been raised about the information advocacy organisations may be required to provide under the Freedom of Information Act. However, the Act refers to public bodies and how these bodies operate and account for their actions. Therefore advocacy organisations are not covered by the Act in relation to service user records. These are of course covered by the Data Protection Act 1998.

## ASYLUM SEEKERS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Save the Children have published survey findings in a report called "My Mum is now my best friend" which highlights the mental health problems faced by refugees and asylum seekers dispersed in Glasgow under asylum rules. Save the Children surveyed nearly 100 adults and children from 15 different countries, and found that feelings of isolation and persecution have left a large number of families experiencing mental health problems. For more information and/or a copy of the report, "My Mum is now my best friend" in pdf format, go to [www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/resources/publications](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/resources/publications).

## MENTAL WELFARE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND

### PART-TIME COMMISSIONER WITH ADVOCACY EXPERIENCE

The First Minister will shortly be recommending the appointment of two part-time commissioners—one with a legal background, the other with an advocacy background—to serve as members of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland. Part-time Commissioners are expected to visit and interview people with Mental Illness or Learning Difficulties throughout Scotland and participate in regular commission meetings.

Applicants for the Advocacy position must have a minimum of two years knowledge gained as an independent advocate, working with people with Mental Illness or Learning Difficulty.

Enquiries about these appointments can be made to **Alison McRae, Head of Corporate Services** at the **Mental Welfare Commission** on **0131 222 6168**.

For an information pack, contact **Public Appointments, PO Box 7332, Glasgow G51 2ZA**.

**Tel: 0870 240 1818. Email: [publicappointment@response-handling.com](mailto:publicappointment@response-handling.com)**

Closing date for applications in Friday 8th July 2005 at 5.00pm.

### SCOTTISH INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of **About Advocacy**, please send or email information to us by 22nd August 2005.

[www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

138-140 Slateford Road  
Edinburgh  
EH14 1LR  
Tel No: 0131 455 8183  
Fax No: 0131 455 8184  
[enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk)

#### Who's who?

Director:  
Shaben Begum  
Development worker:  
Mandy Reid