

Otago Mental Health Support Trust



Bipolar Network & Signpost

NEWSLETTER

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**April/May
2006**

Newsletter Date:
3 April 2006

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Tuesday 2nd May 2006
1.30pm (following Trust Board meeting)

This is later in the year than usual. There will be afternoon tea and all are welcome. It would be helpful if you could let us know if you are coming, to ensure there is enough biscuits to go around!

It would be good to see as many of you as possible, as it will be: **HAZEL'S LAST DAY!** Yes, I am finally resigning after 8 years. I am really going to miss the place and all you people so I hope to catch up either at the AGM or the shared lunch day on April 11. For those of you I don't manage to see, look out for me at a Christmas Do or on the street- I'll be around. My very best wishes and thanks to you all for a great work experience.

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**Office Hours: Monday
to Friday
10 am –2pm.**

Mike: Tuesday - Friday
Denise: Monday - Thursday
Hazel : Tuesday
Greg : Tues/Thurs
Kate : Tues/Wed
Jan: Tuesday & Friday
Helen : Monday- Friday

Crisis Plans

As in previous years we have included a copy of a crisis plan, or advance directive as they are called. In our experience it is very useful to plan how you want to be treated if you become unwell and who you want to be involved. We can help you set this up- give Mike or Denise a call.

REPORT FROM THE OFFICE

HOSPITAL/COMMUNITY INTER-FACE MEETING.

The Trust will be holding this in the Bipolar /Signpost rooms on Wednesday 17th May 2006 at 8.30am. Come and network with other Mental Health Agencies in Dunedin and enjoy some morning tea.

Women's Groups.

The monthly daytime group has been continually well attended with new people coming along to join us. As I was unavailable for the March group Helen offered her support and the group had a leisurely stroll in the Botanical Gardens.

I am looking forward to the April group. Kirsty is giving a demonstration on facials, manicures and massage. Come along and join us for an afternoon of pampering.

However the attendance at the evening group held on the first Wednesday of every month at 7pm has dropped off. If you are interested in the night time group please ring the office on or before the day and leave your name and phone number. I will contact you and let you know whether it is on or not.

Denise.

W.R.A.P.

We still have copies of Mary Ellen Copeland's WELLNESS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN (W.R.A.P.) booklet for sale. \$10 for members and \$25 for organisations.

STAFFING.

Don Hillier has resigned and we would like to let everyone who saw Don regularly know that we are here to support you. We will be in touch with people over the next few weeks but if there is anyone who would like a chat, a visit, some support or advocacy of any kind, please call Mike or Denise at the Office.

We are in the process of recruiting a new staff member in a managerial role. This takes a bit of time. The position will be advertised in the Otago Daily Times early in April- watch this space for a new person to be introduced, hopefully in the next newsletter.

VOLUNTEERS.

Thanks to Chris Riley and Ian D who have been helping answer the phones in the office. Also to the regular team of David, Kirsty, Jennifer and others that help get the newsletter out.



DISCLAIMER

The opinions and research articles expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Otago Mental Health Support Trust or anyone associated with the organization.



HOME INSULATION



You may qualify to have this installed for free!

There is a government initiative to install insulation in people's homes as an energy saving measure. To qualify you must:

- 1) own your home, not rent
- 2) Have any kind of health issue
- 3) Be on a low income or benefit.

We have had several clients get \$1000's of work done on this scheme, there is a long waiting list but if you think you qualify ring us and we can refer you. A small contribution towards installation may be required.



SPECIAL BENEFIT CHANGES

Many people on low incomes rely on a Special Benefit to help them meet essential costs when times get tough. This benefit can be used for things like rent, extra costs related to your disability, car repayments etc. You may have heard that the Special Benefit is being abolished from the first of April and that's true. Don't panic! If you already receive a Special Benefit then it will continue. From the first of April those people who go to Winz for extra assistance will apply for Temporary Additional Support instead. This will be more restricted and not so easy to get as Special Benefit was. There will also be a strict set of rules which Winz will use to determine how much extra support they will give people.

So if you already receive a Special Benefit then don't worry, nothing is changing. If you need support to apply for extra help from Winz then we will be happy to be there with you.

FIREWOOD

Last year a group of us spent some very enjoyable weekends gathering firewood from the Wenita forest near Milton. Several people were the recipients of free firewood as well, some of nice and dry, some not so dry! The firewood season begins again in early April and we will have a permit to gather wood at Akatore or Berwick. If you feel like a day in the fresh air, some good healthy exercise, and maybe even some free firewood, then leave your name at the office

CURIOUS BOOK

We recently bought "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time" by Mark Haddon. This is not specifically a book about mental illness. It is a murder (of a dog) mystery narrated by 15 year old Christopher who has Asperger's. It is a reminder to us that we do not all think in the same way and that there may be very logical reasons for what looks initially like bizarre behaviour. The Sunday Telegraph reviewer said: "...both funny and deeply moving. When we look at the world through Christopher's eye's... we see it more clearly and understand ourselves better. What more would you want from a book?"

NEW LIBRARY BOOK

"Before Your Kids Drive you Crazy, Read This!"
Battlefield wisdom for stressed out parents. By
Dunedin Clinical Psychologist Nigel Latta.



Vanessa Paton

Art Exhibition

Bipolar/Signpost rooms

115 Lower Stuart Street

Dunedin

10 am - 2pm

Prices from \$4 - \$10

Cards only \$2

"People are incomplete until they are married. And then they are finished!"

"We do not remember days, we remember moments."

"Being kind is more important than being right."

"A smile is a curve that can set a lot of things straight."

Article from the BALANCE NZ Bipolar Network.
 www.balance.org.nz
<http://balance.org.nz/mod/resource/view.php?id=126>

THE WINTER BLUES AND LIGHT THERAPY.

Advertisement for Helios Lightbox

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (S.A.D) commonly known as the winter blues is a particular form of depression that affects most people to a certain extent on gloomy winter days and is a problem in approximately 10% of the population (USA and UK). It is recognized by the DSM-IV, a manual that assists with diagnosis of illnesses like depression. Symptoms often begin in the late autumn or early winter and cease in spring.

Typical symptoms are:

- * Change in sleep patterns, particularly difficulty waking or reduced quality of sleep.
 - * Changes in eating habits, particularly weight gain and craving sweet or starchy foods.
 - * Depressed mood.
 - * Irritability.
 - * Decreased energy levels.
 - * Decreased socializing.
 - * Decreased sex drive.
 - * Decreased concentration.
- Light treatment has shown in many studies around the world to be effective in alleviating or completely curing the effects of SAD. Light levels need to be between 2500 and 10000 lux (much higher than standard room lighting of 500 lux). It can be used instead of or in conjunction drug therapy and has many advantages over other treatments such as which include:
- * It is non-invasive, benign and cheaper.
 - * It has only occasional mild and temporary side effects which might include slight headache, nausea, sore eyes or feeling agitated.
 - * It is fast acting (benefits are typically noticed within 4 days).
 - * It has a high success rate (typically 80% of SAD sufferers respond dramatically)

- * **NOTE:** Do not cease any medication without first consulting your GP or psychiatrist.



The Helios Sunbox

*Helios - from Greek meaning sun.

Order Form (Please tick box)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual Rate: I would like to purchase a Helios Sunbox (\$500).
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisation/Institutional Rate: We would like to purchase a Helios Sunbox (\$600).
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to hire a Helios Sunbox (\$30/week or \$100/month). Any rental payments are deducted from the purchase price if you decide to buy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to have cool white spectrum tubes fitted which are warmer to look at with slightly higher light output.
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like to have daylight spectrum tubes fitted which are closer to normal daylight than the cool white spectrum tubes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	

Name:

Address:

Phone/Fax:.....

Email:

Please return to:
 Dr Carolyn Doughty
 P.O. Box 13266
 Christchurch

Ph/Fax: +64 3 366 3631

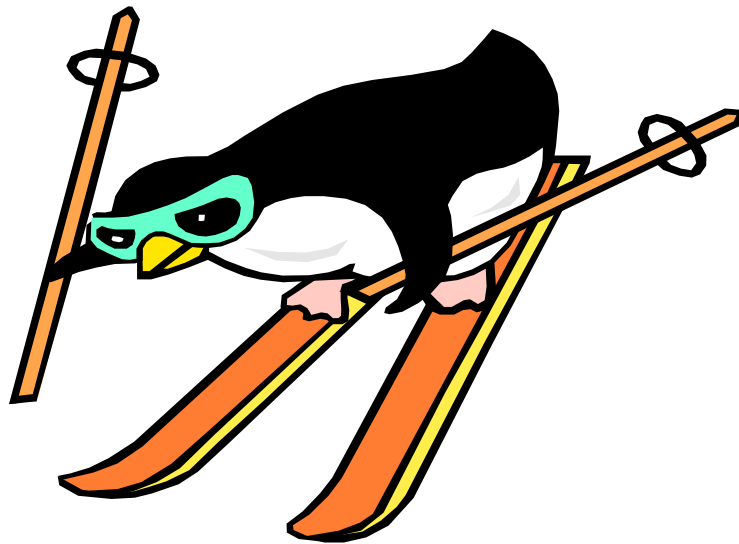
Email: sunbox@balance.org.nz

SOCIAL RECREATION GROUP

With Greg McLeod

EVERY THURSDAY
2PM

Meet at Bipolar/Signpost Rooms
115 Lower Stuart Street
Dunedin



The best kept secret around. Come and find out more.
The destinations, outings, activities and friendships.

Beat the Winter Blues and feel happy and fulfilled.
Ring Greg Ph. 477-2598 for upcoming events.

Be part of a group for a healthy body and mind.

Outings are subject to change depending on who turns up, what the group would like to do together and of course the weather!

Some WET WEATHER options include: table tennis at the bipolar rooms, tennis at the Edgar centre, badminton, swimming, basketball and UNIPOL .

Please meet at 2pm at the Bipolar rooms, 2nd floor, 115 Lower Stuart Street, Dunedin. Ph: 477-2598.

SOCIAL DIARY

April 2006

Women's Group (Day Group)

Wednesday 19th April

meet at the rooms at 1.45 pm

Women's Group (evening)

Wednesday 5th April

Meet at the rooms

7 pm

Takeaway Lunch

Tuesday 11th April

KFC \$4

12 noon

Followed by a new release
Video. Phone in please.

May 2006

Women's Group (Day Group)

Wednesday 17th May

meet at the rooms at 1.45 pm

Women's group (evening)

Wednesday 3rd May

Meet at the rooms

7 pm

Takeaway Lunch

Tuesday 9th May

Pizza \$3

12 noon

Followed by a new release
Video. Phone in please.

Social Recreation Group

Run by Greg Mcleod

THURSDAY

2pm to 5pm

Meeting Place is the Bipolar/Signpost rooms, 115 Lower Stuart St. If you are interested in joining in please ph. me at 477-2598.

Types of activities: Wet or fine days catered for

Table tennis, pool, art gallery, scenic walks at beach, bush, town etc; indoor cricket, cards, board games, Badminton, Unipol, local attractions, swimming, meals, frisbee- many more ideas.