

# Otago Mental Health Support Trust



Bipolar Network & Signpost

## NEWSLETTER

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**June/July  
2006**

Newsletter Date:  
**1 June 2006**



# Annual Mid Winter Do

FRIDAY 30th JUNE 2006  
5 PM - 9 PM

This is a nice time to catch up on friends of the Trust. Come along and meet the new Team Manager Teresa Mulligan. Supper will be provided and taxis can be arranged for those who need transportation home.

Anyone interested in helping with preparation, please give us a call.

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### Office Hours:

**Mon to Fri  
10 am – 4 pm.**

Teresa: Mon - Thurs  
Mike: Tues - Fri  
Denise: Mon - Thurs  
Greg : Tues/Thurs  
Kate : Tues/Wed  
Jan: Tues & Fri  
Helen : Tues – Fri

# REPORT FROM THE OFFICE

## STAFFING.

Hi to everyone, my name is Teresa Mulligan and I am the new Team Manager. If I can be of any assistance to anyone or you want to say hi, I will be in the office Mon - Thurs.

May has been a busy month with the Youth Expo held on the 10th & 11th. The community interface meeting was held at our rooms on the 17th followed on the 18<sup>th</sup> by a well attended workshop called "Mind Your Health" held here .

Over the next few weeks Hazel is helping me to familiarize myself with various aspect of the job (thank goodness).

Thank you to everyone that made the effort to put in submissions regarding the re-location of services to Wakari, they have been sent along with a cover letter from The Trust Board.

After reading various reports regarding the move in the ODT all indicating support for this move it is easy to be pessimistic.

However sharing your views is important so in the next newsletter we are starting a Letters to the Editor column,. Letters can be topical or inquiring about health related topics, which we will do our best to answer.

As some of you know, one of the Trusts founder members (Trish) is in Leslie Groves hospital. It has been suggested that a roster be set up to provide her with company (maybe reading the paper to her, or other material). A meeting will be held at our rooms to discuss this on the Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm. This is the day of our shared lunch (KFC).

Last but not least, we would like to thank the **DCC Community Grant Scheme** for a grant of \$2000 which we used to purchase a second computer for all to use in the Library area.  
Teresa

## VOLUNTEERS.

Thanks again to Chris Riley who been helping answer the phones in the office. The following quote was contributed by Chris.

*" Friendship is a priceless gift that can't be bought or sold. To have an understanding friend is worth far more than gold."*

Helen Steiner Rice

## COMMUNITY INTERFACE

### MEETING.

The Trust hosted this for the month of May. 33 people from Mental Health Agencies in Dunedin attended and networked over an early 8.30 am morning tea. It was a great opportunity to put faces to names and meet other agencies working with the same clients and similar goals. The next meeting will be held by the Volunteer Centre in Community House on June 21st at 8.30am.

## WOMEN'S GROUP.

Last month we had a wonderful massage and pampering day thanks to Kirsty who is a trained beauty therapist. We had pedicures and a foot massage as well as head and shoulder massage which worked well for a bit of de-stressing. The candles and the aromas of the oils absolutely transformed the meeting room as we know it and we hope to do this again soon. Unfortunately Kirsty has had a physical injury so we wish her a speedy recovery and hope to have her back on board soon.

This month we had a leisurely walk to the museum where we stopped and had a coffee at the café followed by a stroll around the Maori exhibition. Unbeknown to us there was a patchwork quilters exhibition where we saw some wonderful works of art. If you have any ideas for our group please let us know or feel free to come along and share them with us. Denise

## 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.



What is a green prescription you might ask? This is a scheme, introduced in 1998, where your GP will write you a prescription for physical activity instead of for pills if they think it is more appropriate. It is estimated to have been used by 50% of New Zealand general practitioners. To encourage you to follow the doctor's advice, there is a free follow-up phone service. This service is run by Sparc (Sports and Recreation New Zealand). You will be given continued encouragement and information on activity on recreation options in your area.

What has physical activity got to do with mental health? Here is what the Sparc website has to say:

*There is increasing research into the relationship between physical activity and mental health. Evidence shows that at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week can improve mood and decrease anxiety and stress. Physical activity is also thought to have a role in preventing serious mental illness such as depression.*

*Physical activity is effective in the treatment of clinical depression and can be as successful as psychotherapy or medication, particularly in the longer term. It may also help people with generalised anxiety disorder, phobias, panic attacks and stress disorders, and can have a positive effect on psychological well-being in people with schizophrenia.*

*Kei te piki haere te maha o nga rangahautanga mö te pätahitanga o te kori tinana ki te oranga hinengaro. Kua kitea e ngä kairangahau mehemea ka eke ki te 30 meneti e korikori ana te tangata i te nuinga o ngä rä o te wiki, ka kitea he whakamämätanga mö te ngäkau, ka whakahekea hoki te pöuriuri me te mäharahara. E whakaarotia ana he wähi tö te kori tinana i te aukati i ngä mäuiuitanga hinengaro, me ngä ähuatanga pënei i te pöuriuri.*

Well, that all sounds pretty much common-sense. Now if your doctor hands you a green prescription you will know what she is talking about. There is a free phone number for more information about Green Prescriptions (0800 ACTIVE) or you could ask your doctor or practice nurse. Don't forget also that Greg has a recreation group meeting at the office every Thursday at 2pm. He makes sure that exercise is fun as well as being good for you.

If you're a patient, ask your doctor or practice nurse whether a Green Prescription is right for you. Or call 0800 ACTIVE (0800 228 483) for more information.

#### 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.

## Excerpts from the book "Essential Life Skills"

Available in our library

### SEVEN STEPS TO STOP SMOKING

**1 DECIDE TO STOP** List 10 advantages of not smoking, starting with "a longer life". Pin your list on the wall where you can see it every day.

**2 CUT DOWN GRADUALLY** Work out how much you smoke per day over a week and plan a realistic reduction programme. Cut out a certain number of cigarettes per day, starting with the easiest ones. Reduce this each week until you gradually stop.

**3 AVOID OBVIOUS TRIGGERS** Don't sit in a smoking area or smoky bar. Break old habits - instead of coffee with a cigarette, try tea with a biscuit.

**4 CHALLENGE YOUR THOUGHTS** If you feel like a cigarette, instead of saying, "I must have a cigarette", say to yourself, "I would like a cigarette but I don't need one". Run through the reasons why you are trying to break this habit.

**5 COLLECT YOUR STUBS IN A JAR** Put old cigarette stubs in a small jar with the cap on. When you feel the urge to smoke, remove the cap and sniff the foul odour.

**6 SAY "I DON'T SMOKE"** Practise in front of the mirror until it becomes easy. Don't say, "I've given up".

**7 TREAT YOURSELF** Use the money you have saved by not smoking to buy yourself a gift.

ESSENTIAL  
LIFE SKILLS

SAYING  
"NO"  
See pp.90-91

GOAL  
PLANNING  
See pp.96-97

RATIONAL  
THINKING  
See pp.104-105

CHALLENGING  
DISTORTED THINKING  
See pp.106-107

SELF-CARE  
See pp.126-139

### BUILD UP YOUR CONFIDENCE

**1 DON'T PUT YOURSELF DOWN** Use the word "I" to ask for what you want and learn to be assertive.

**2 PRACTISE** Confidence is gained through practice. The first time you ride a bicycle you fall off, but with practice you can become as good a cyclist as anyone.

**3 ACT THE PART** Try to act out the posture, actions, thoughts, and speech of a confident person.

**4 LOOK THE PART** Treat yourself to some new clothes or a new hairstyle to make you feel good.

**5 VISUALIZE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS** Mentally rehearse something you plan to achieve. Focus on how you might look, feel, and even what you taste, smell, and hear.

**6 LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES** If you make a mistake, rather than criticize yourself, learn from it.

**7 DON'T BLAME YOURSELF** Ignore or challenge that inner critical voice: "I did it wrong, I'm useless". Tell yourself positively, "Next time I will get it right".

**8 MIX WITH PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD** Avoid friends who undermine your confidence.

**9 TREAT YOURSELF** Don't punish yourself. Learn to treat yourself and give yourself rewards.

### HOW TO ENSURE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

**1 RELAX BEFORE GOING TO BED** Take a warm bath, sip a milky drink, or listen to soothing music.

**2 AVOID STIMULANTS** Cut out tea, coffee, or cola drinks a few hours before retiring. Also avoid spicy food or a heavy meal.

**3 MAKE SURE YOUR ROOM IS QUIET** Is your bed comfortable? Leave a window open for fresh air.

**4 KEEP A REGULAR ROUTINE** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day whether you are tired or not. Resist catnapping during the day.

**5 SAVE YOUR BED FOR SLEEP** Do not eat, watch TV, or discuss troublesome issues in bed.

**6 TAKE MODERATE EXERCISE** Include some exercise in your day, such as swimming or walking.

**7 DON'T DRINK TOO MUCH** Avoid having to get up and use the bathroom during the night.

**8 PLAY DISTRACTING MENTAL GAMES** Distract yourself by remembering the names of football teams in the league, people at school, or by counting prime numbers.

**9 DO SOMETHING UNSTIMULATING** If you have not fallen asleep after half an hour, get up, go to another room, and do something undemanding such as reading or ironing for 10-15 minutes.

**10 LEAVE YOUR PROBLEMS BEHIND** Before you go to bed, write down your worries on a piece of paper and leave them behind in another room.

**11 CARRY OUT A PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE-RELAXATION EXERCISE** As you lie in bed, tighten up muscle groups in the body and slowly relax them (see p.129).

ESSENTIAL  
LIFE SKILLS

CHALLENGING  
DISTORTED THINKING  
See pp.106-107

DEMOLISH  
YOUR WORRIES  
See pp.112-113

LEARNING  
TO RELAX  
See pp.128-129

RELAXED  
BREATHING  
See p.130

PHYSICAL  
EXERCISE  
See pp.132-133

ON KINDNESS.

“As we move around this world and as we act with kindness, perhaps, or with indifference or with hostility toward the people we meet, we are setting the great spider web a ‘tremble. The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what place my touch will be felt.”

*Frederick Buechner*

*“ Youth is a gift of nature and old age is a work of art.”*

( As seen in a Doctor’s rooms)

Exert from the book “END THE STRUGGLE AND DANCE WITH LIFE”, pg. 215, by Susan Jeffers (Author of “Feel the Fear And Do It Anyway”) available from our library and resource room, 115 Lower Stuart Street, Dunedin.

\* *LAUGHTER* is very healthy. It changes our internal chemistry from negative to positive.

\* *LAUGHTER* balances the heavy with lightness.

\* *LAUGHTER* gives us an internal massage, reaching many organs of the body.

\* *LAUGHTER* is contagious.

\* *LAUGHTER* brightens up the world!

\* *LAUGHTER* is an amazing exercise: It tightens the belly.

\* *LAUGHTER* releases tension.

\* *LAUGHTER* makes life wonderful.



# ALCOHOLISM & BIPOLAR DISORDER.

This article comes from the following web site:

[www.obgyn.net/newsheadlines/womens\\_health-Bipolar\\_Disease-20030522-1.asp](http://www.obgyn.net/newsheadlines/womens_health-Bipolar_Disease-20030522-1.asp)



## **RISK OF ALCOHOLISM LEAPS 7-FOLD AMONG BIPOLAR WOMEN.**

A new University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) study identifies a substantially higher risk of alcoholism among bipolar women than previously considered, suggesting a need to closely monitor alcohol use among female patients with the disorder.

Published in the May 2003 edition of the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, the study found that men with bipolar disorder and alcoholism have a deeper family history of bipolar disorder, alcoholism and drug abuse compared to other men with bipolar disorder was associated less with family background and more with bouts of depression and social anxieties.

The researchers found the prevalence of alcoholism in bipolar men (49%) vs. bipolar women (29%) involved in the study mirrored that of the general population. However, epidemiological patterns of the illness left bipolar women with more than seven times the risk of alcoholism than that of other women, while the risk for bipolar males was less than three times that of other men.

“Our findings show that while the prevalence of alcoholism is higher in bipolar men, the risk for

developing alcoholism is far greater in women. There’s something about ‘Jane Bipolar’ that puts her a higher risk for alcoholism. That point has not been fully appreciated until now,” said Dr. Mark Frye, director of the Bipolar Mood Disorders Research Program at the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute.

Other studies have noted serious consequences of alcohol abuse in women. The National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiology Survey found that women had a higher rate of binge drinking and acute intoxication than men and were less likely to receive treatment for alcoholism.

“We know that many bipolar patients try to self-medicate their depressive symptoms with alcohol, drinking to numb themselves, or help them with sleep. But we have limited controlled studies to guide patients and physicians on how to help these people get better,” said Frye, an assistant professor in residence of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

“We need to address this toxic combination of elevated risk and serious consequences by pinpointing clinical relationships between bipolar disorder and alcoholism in women that will allow researchers to develop more effective treatment and prevention programs,” Frye said.

Overall, about 3.5% of the population has bipolar disorder, occurring equally among men and women.

In conducting their study, the researchers used structured clinical interviews to evaluate the prevalence of lifetime alcoholism in 267 outpatients enrolled in the Stanley Foundation Bipolar Network. They used patient-rated and clinician-administered questionnaires to assess the relationship of alcoholism with the disorder. The research was supported by the Theodore and Vada Stanley Foundation.

# SOCIAL RECREATION GROUP

*With Greg McLeod*

**EVERY THURSDAY  
2PM**

Meet at the Bipolar/Signpost Rooms  
2nd Floor, 115 Lower Stuart Street  
Dunedin



A variety of locations were visited by the Social Recreation Group for the months of April/May from the historic buildings on Matanaka Hill, Waikouaiti to beach combing at Karitane. Even an afternoon spent at UNIPOL playing table tennis and badminton.

The response has been getting better and the outings well worthwhile.

Come and join in this Thursday experience. Meet at the Bipolar Rooms, 2 pm and be refreshed throughout Winter.

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

## June 2006

Women's Group (Day Group)

*Wednesday **21st** June*

meet at the rooms at 1.45 pm

Women's Group (evening)

*Wednesday **5th** June*

Meet at the rooms at 7 pm

*If interested please phone in.*

### Takeaway Lunch

*Tuesday **13th** June*

*KFC \$4*

12 noon

Phone in please.

## July 2006

Women's Group (Day Group)

*Wednesday **19th** July*

meet at the rooms at 1.45 pm

Women's group (evening)

*Wednesday **3rd** July*

Meet at the rooms at 7 pm

*If interested please phone in.*

### Takeaway Lunch

*Tuesday **11th** July*

*Pizza \$3*

12 noon

Phone in please.

## *Annual Mid Winter Do*

FRIDAY 30th JUNE 2006  
5 PM - 9 PM

## 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. 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.