

# **CASTLE CRAIG HOSPITAL**

## **Patient, Former Patient, Carer and Public Involvement at Castle Craig Hospital**

**A review conducted June 2008**

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## **Introduction**

Castle Craig regularly consults with users of the hospital and the feedback has been important in informing its activities. We present a range of these activities at a patient and at a public level.

## **Patient Participation**

- Castle Craig Hospital has a consistent record, since we opened, of involving our patients in many of our activities. Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2008 is the date of our 20<sup>th</sup> annual reunion and invitations are sent out to several thousand former patients, members of the public and friends of Castle Craig. The day provides the opportunity for staff to speak with our past patients and to update them on advances in the plans for developing the services at Castle Craig. At the reunion former patients are invited to talk about their time at Castle Craig and to share this experience with those patients who are currently in treatment and about how their life of recovery has evolved since departure. Refreshments of the day include two tea/coffee breaks and a barbeque picnic lunch provided by Castle Craig. This is always a highly inspirational day for staff and former patients.
- Each year we hold an open day for the disabled. A large number of carers accompanying those who are wheelchair-bound from the community come to spend a day at Castle Craig where entertaining activities are provided. A barbeque lunch is available to all attending. This day is supported by many of our patients from our Extended Care Unit who assist in looking after the disabled, many of whom are in wheelchairs.
- Every year we seek to involve former patients by inviting them to act as contacts for current patients when they leave treatment. Many of our former patients are delighted to volunteer to be involved in this way. These are immensely valuable contributions to the quality of care and after care provision by Castle Craig.

- Community meetings are held every week both in the intensive treatment unit and the extended care unit. This is not just a forum for placing complaints and highlighting difficulties but also for making suggestions which are always welcome. In some cases where suggestions are in the patients' best interests these are acted upon. One example of this is a request from a patient with an eating disorder who wished to attend a meeting of Over- Eaters Anonymous on a Saturday. This is not a day when transport is available and where transport costs are increased. The request was considered to have considerable merit and to add to the quality of the care we offer and so the transport was arranged.
- The patient satisfaction reports at the end of treatment have led to changes in large and small matters affecting the quality of the care and the environment. We have a complaints policy and while few serious complaints have been raised where there has been a complaint then that matter has led to investigation and shifts in our practice.
- Every year we write to our former patients inviting them to consider applying to join our accredited addiction certificate or diploma course. The course is also advertised to the wider public. Through the knowledge and skills acquired in this course applicants are in a strong position to influence access to treatment and assess and contribute to the delivery of care for those suffering from addiction.
- At present there are a number of former patients employed in different departments at Castle Craig and they regularly inform management about initiatives. Some of our former patients have, on the basis of their merit, been promoted to management positions where they have had an extensive influence in the development of services at Castle Craig. One example of this includes the running of the aftercare services. Without wishing to breach confidentiality and anonymity it is not possible for management to enlarge more specifically on this matter.
- Castle Craig patients are regularly consulted on the décor of the hospital. They were consulted about the wall paper for the drawing room. Unanimously they wished to keep the colour as red. Several patients at the time were consulted about the curtains in the sitting room and the final decision was greatly influenced by the opinion of those patients at that time. They were consulted about the colour of the upholstery in the drawing room. The decoration of the corridors on the first floor was hugely influenced by a number of our patients and at that time we had in treatment a patient

who was an interior designer. She and others assisted and secured the final decision after some considerable discussion. She and a few others with relevant experience also decided on the colour of the paint for the ceiling and doors, short of mixing the paint they were the key decision makers.

### **Participation at a public level**

- Over the years directors and staff have been asked to address local organisations. These organisations include the Rotary, OASIS-a public conference and information organisation- (serving the businesses in Edinburgh and Glasgow) Women's Institute, local Churches.
- Consultants at Castle Craig have lectured to medical groups about this form of abstinence based treatment, providing the public at a professional level with information about the care and services offered by Castle Craig.
- In 2006 Castle Craig Hospital Ltd organised on behalf of the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions a Conference in Edinburgh, the venue being the Church of Scotland General Assembly Rooms. The conference welcomed 300 Delegates from all over the world. The conference was addressed by the then Minister of Health for Scotland. Several of the Castle Craig staff were presenters and others acted as hosts to the delegates.
- Castle Craig is a Member of a number of Associations working in the addiction field. The Chairman of Castle Craig is a Board Member of the International Council of Alcohol and Addictions; he is also a Board Member of and Founder of the European Association of the Treatment of Addiction. EATA is the largest membership organisation for the independent drug and alcohol treatment and aftercare sector. The aim of EATA is to ensure that people with substance dependencies get the treatment they need. Through our membership of EATA we work with providers, referrers, commissioners, and policy makers to improve access to treatment and improve quality of treatment in the independent. EATA is increasingly consulted by the UK government.

Dr. McCann is a Member of the Golden Lion Club of Addiction Specialists meeting regularly in Stirling.

- The wider community of Castle Craig is a presenter, sponsor, exhibition stand participant in a number of national and international conferences including UKESAD in London, the ICAA Conferences and others.
- Castle Craig is currently involved in a Petition to the Scottish Parliament. We were given a slot a very short notice and in a matter of 10 working days collected over 300 signatures from past patients, carers, others working in the field and the local community etc. The Petition has passed the first stages and has now been referred to the Scottish Executive by the Public Petitions Committee who have been asked to respond by 19 September 2008.
- For a number of years we have held regular Professional Open Days, mainly involving professionals from mental health and social services throughout Scotland but also further afield. Short presentations are given and there is an opportunity to view our services and meet patients. There is of course no charge for the day which includes lunch and other refreshments. This is an opportunity to ensure that the public are kept informed about the services and developments at Castle Craig. It is also an opportunity to assure our partners of our commitment to working in partnership.
- Senior Staff Meetings are held at regular intervals and this is a forum to promote communication between all departments and for senior staff to raise suggestions.
- Castle Craig is a sponsor of "Daily Dose". This is the worlds leading Drug and Alcohol News Service and is essential daily reading for everyone in the addictions field. Many of the daily items posted relate to Scotland.
- Earlier this year the Chairman was invited to present a lecture to Stirling University – Department of Applied Social Sciences – Scottish Addiction Studies. This was part of a series of lectures on addiction treatment but for Castle Craig it was another opportunity to provide information on the Twelve Step Approach. we believe that inevitably such activities inform and influence public opinion, benefiting the population of users of our services.

- Castle Craig partakes in research involving external institutes. Ethics Committee permission is currently being sought for a pilot study jointly with Edinburgh University treating liver damage with hyperbaric oxygenation.
- Castle Craig as an organisation and its' staff and patients participated in an important research study, the Doris Study which led to the Doris Report. This research conducted by Glasgow University Department of Drug Addiction Research under Professor Neil McKechnie established some findings which we believe will influence policy makers ultimately benefiting current and future groups of patients.
- Castle Craig's activities have extended beyond the Scottish Community into the wider European Community. Earlier in 2008 we organised and funded an experienced member of Narcotics Anonymous and a former patient from Glasgow to stay in Bucharest for 2 months to establish Narcotics Anonymous in Romania.
- At an European level Castle Craig is also advising the official Drug and Alcohol Agency in Bucharest and in particular regarding their residential services in Romania.
- Castle Craig directors and staff have been advising the Dutch Ministry of Health on Regulation. We have cited to them the good practice existing in Scotland and explained the work of the Care Commission.

## **Summary**

Castle Craig remains committed to consultation with users of the service and widening its approach to seeking feedback from its users and partners.