



# News from the Drop In

## Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes...

As you all are probably aware Margaret, Keith and Angela have moved offices to 4 Sutherland Avenue where our Housing, Flexicare and Finance teams are located.

What this means is that 4 Sutherland Avenue will become the head office for Westminster Mind. The new main contact number for Mind will now be **0207 266 7424**.

If you need to contact Maria, Jason or any other Drop In staff the number remains **0208 206 6832**.

Maria will now be working on Wednesdays and Fridays only as she

has started working for another organization.

We have interviewed a number of candidates for a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday post and we will be able to

confirm soon that we will have a new member of staff starting on July 8th.

Unfortunately, we were hoping to have a student named Koi doing a placement with us from October to April but he won't be able to do so. I'm hoping to hear soon about

another student and will let you know as soon as there are more details.



Schedule changes as a result of this means that the art group lead by Maria will now be held on Friday from

1 to 3 and the User only social group will come to an end.

There will be some new faces joining us as back-up drop in support workers in the near future as well. We will have to have 2 members of staff for every coffee bar session or we will not be able to open.

## Outing to Clacton on July 8th

The Coffee Bar will be closed on July 8th as we are going as a group to Clacton-on-Sea that day.

The train leaves Liverpool Street Station at 11:08.

We will be leaving Clacton around 5pm.

If you would like to come the cost is £5 towards the ticket cost. If you have a friend or family member who wants to come as well they may need to pay £10 depending on their circumstances.

Please make sure you bring money or your lunch as this won't be provided.

Meeting point is outside the McDonalds on street level inside Liverpool St. station at 10:45.

If you would like to meet others to plan to travel together from 526 Drop In then a suggested time to meet is at 9:30.

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## Want to be involved?

Would you like to be involved in the next newsletter?

We are looking for short articles for the next newsletter.

Would you like to write about your experience?

Do you have information about local services you want to share?

Poems and artwork are welcome.

If you want to help create the next newsletter please let Jason know.

Also a better newsletter title is needed...



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## Letter from Angela

Hi everyone,

Welcome to your first newsletter, the first of many I hope. The newsletter arrives as I leave!

Sadly, after almost 18 years of working here at 526 I am being shipped out and being moved to Sutherland Avenue.

I am really going to miss seeing you all on a daily basis but I will of course be popping in from time to time. I will hopefully see some of you sitting in the café across the

road on my way to and from work.

I will certainly miss 'trying' to help Helen with the crossword but she usually has it finished by the time I arrive down in the coffee bar. I have **never** managed to finish the crossword on my own. I have been trying to persuade her to go on 'Who wants to be a Millionaire'. I am sure she would win the million jackpot.

For now we must still keep doing the Lotto

One good thing about moving up the road is that I should lose

weight because, as you know, I am always coming down to the coffee bar and nibbling at all the goodies down there and 'testing out' the Wednesday meal. I was actually quite slim when I first started at 526!!

Thanks to you all for being so lovely and friendly over the years. I am only up the road so please ring me whenever you like on **020 7266 7424**.

All the best,  
Angela x

## Opportunities for Volunteering

Westminster Mind has a new program available to provide opportunities to volunteer within health and social care organizations including Westminster Mind.

The new member of staff who will be running this program is named Jack Wratten and he will be based at 4 Sutherland Avenue.

There will be opportunities to volunteer as a befriender on psychiatric wards which is being developed with CNWL trust as well as other possibilities.

We will be inviting Jack to the 526 Drop In to talk about the 'Opportunities for Volunteering' program and providing more information as we receive it.

**"To ease one's  
heartache is to  
forget one's  
own"  
-Abraham  
Lincoln**

## ART-Network-IN update

Maria is starting a Project Art Group on Friday June 26th at 1:30pm. The art group aim is to focus on a specific medium for about 6 to 8 weeks and then have a break.

We will display in the Coffee Bar what we made in that period.

Our first project is paper mache, which will run until July 24th.

Anyone is welcome to join the group, but regular attendance is advised, to allow members to learn new techniques, produce artworks and have fun.

The Thursday art group which is user only continues at the usual time between 3pm and 5pm and is also looking for anyone interested in coming to the group.

The ART-network-IN is the

Combined user only art group and staff led group.

The groups are dependent on fundraising activities to be able to purchase materials. All donations are welcome.

The groups are open to anyone with an interest in art.

No experience is required and the group welcomes new members.

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## Outings Group

The Outings Group is a user led group which usually happens on Mondays. Previous outings have included visits to the Cinema, local parks, bingo halls, Pub lunches and boat trips to Greenwich and on the canal.

Some outings are free and some may cost a few pounds. If you have any ideas for future outings please let Alice, Jason or Maria know.

You should bring either money or your own lunch if you are planning on coming on any of the outings.

The next outing is Monday June 29th to Holland Park leaving 526 Harrow Road at 11:15. Please bring your own lunch.

The Outings Group activities are open to all coffee bar users. If you are a new member of the Coffee Bar and would like to go on one of these outings please speak to Jason before.

## Some useful Numbers

526 Drop In 0208 206 6832

Carers UK 0207 490 8818

Disability Living Allowance 08457 123456

Housing and Council Tax 0800 0720042

Housing Options 0207 641 1000

CMHT Duty Woodfield Road 0207 266 9600

Pension Service 0845 606 0265

Samaritans 0207 734 2800

Westminster Council 0207 641 6000

Mind Info Line 08457 660 163

Freedom Pass 0207 641 2266

Mind Head Office 0207266 7424

## MIND Campaign 2009—Men and Mental Health

### Men and mental health: Mind's campaign

#### The problem

Evidence shows that men can struggle with being open about mental health issues and are much less likely than women to seek the help they need. Many believe that men have difficulty seeking help because they are brought up to believe that a 'real man' must be tough and emotionally inexpressive. To make matters worse, if men do look for help they may find that the services available do not meet their needs. GP surgeries can sometimes feel as though they are geared towards women and there are many more groups dedicated to helping women through mental distress than there are for men.

#### The consequences

If men do not seek help they can be left in a very vulnerable

situation. By bottling things up, mental distress can get much worse. In addition, some men may vent their distress by getting angry, becoming violent or self-medicating with alcohol or drugs. The results can be devastating:

- Men account for 75 per cent of all suicides.
  - Men are three times more likely than women to become alcohol dependent.
- 95 per cent of the prison population are men.

#### What we want

1. The Government to prioritise men's mental health.
  2. Primary care services to make it easier for men to seek help.
- Mental health services to provide treatment and support that match men's needs.

#### What you can do

We have created a parliamentary petition (an

Early Day Motion or EDM) that calls on the Government to create a Men's Mental Health Strategy. We need as many MPs as possible to sign this EDM in order to put men's mental health on the political agenda.

But we need your help! MPs are much more likely to sign an EDM if they know that their constituents care about the issue.

So write to your MP today to tell them about the Get it off your chest campaign and ask them to sign EDM 1455 on men's mental health.

Our aim is to get 100 MPs to sign the EDM. Post your letter or email now and help us reach this target!

Current tally: 69 MPs signed

Copy of letter available from office or from Mind website. Information taken from [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## Expert Patients Programme

The Expert Patients Programme (EPP) is a six-week long course for anyone living with any long-term health condition.

The aim is to help you take control of your health by learning new skills to manage your condition better on a daily basis.

Topics include:

Dealing with pain, coping with depression, relaxation



techniques, healthy eating and better communication with friends, family and Professionals.

It runs over six weeks with each session lasting two and a half hours. It is facilitated by tutors with long term conditions.

Benefits from the course are a greater sense of confidence and control in managing your health condition.

There will be another EPP group starting in the autumn at a local venue and there is the possibility of a specialist group for men targeting men with mental health conditions. If you are interested in either of these there is a leaflet in the coffee bar or you can contact Sarah at 0207 243 9720 for more information.

The website to visit for the Expert Patient Programme is

[Www.expertpatients.co.uk](http://www.expertpatients.co.uk)

## “Good to Go” returns on July 1st

Working in partnership with the Mind Housing team we have held two sessions of the ‘Good to Go’ healthy living activities at the 526 Drop In.

In the Coffee Bar we have had the ladies from the ‘Chop and Change’ healthy eating group leading discussions, fun quizzes and providing some delicious food (and fruit smoothies last time).

On July 1st there will be a focus on creating salads as meals and other activities.

At the same time in our basement we have had some complementary therapists providing Indian head massage and reflexology on hands and feet. They will be here on July 1st between 1pm and 3pm doing more of the same.

Feedback has been very positive from participants and we hope to

**“Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon.” - Doug Larson**

continue this activity on a regular basis. Complementary therapy sessions are first come-first served and are free of charge.

## Advocate for Mental Health and Paddington Law Centre

**The Advocate for Mental Health** provides an advocacy service supporting people with mental health issues who are Westminster residents.

They are an impartial organization which supports people with issues around their care and treatment, benefits and housing, and resources available in the

community.

They hold twice monthly sessions every other Friday between 11am and 1pm. If you would like to book an appointment you can contact Mark at 0208 969 3000.

Appointments can also be arranged at their office in St. Charles Square.

**The Paddington Law Centre** provides specialist benefit support ranging from applications to appeals and hold sessions at the 526 Drop in the last Thursday of every month from 11am to 1pm. Booking is done through Mind staff.

Appointments can also be booked at their office at 439 Harrow Road by calling 0208 960 3155. They provide other types of legal support including housing from their offices.

## 526 Drop In

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London W9 3QF

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Fax: 0208 960 6788  
E-mail:  
drive@westminstermind.org.uk



Day	11am -1pm	Afternoon sessions
<b>Monday</b> <b>Open</b> <b>11-1pm</b>	Weekly Outings Group	
<b>Tuesday</b> <b>Open</b> <b>11-1pm</b>	User led Day	
<b>Wednesday</b> <b>Open</b> <b>11-1pm and 3-5pm</b>		Cooking Group led by Maria 3-5pm
<b>Thursday</b> <b>Open</b> <b>11-1pm and 3-5pm</b>	Women's hour 11-12	ART-network-IN User only art session from 3-5pm led by Neville
<b>Friday</b> <b>Open</b> <b>11 to 3pm</b>	Men's hour 11-12	ART-network-IN Bingo 2-3pm Staff led art session 1:30-3pm led by Maria

## What we do..

Westminster Mind 526 Drop-In provides a safe space coffee bar for people with mental health issues and their carers.

The service is available to Westminster residents and is here to assist people with general benefits, housing and mental health concerns.

We suggest places to go for more complex and specialist support and have links with Paddington Law Centre and Advocate for Mental Health.

We strive to help people find activities and services in their community which match their needs.

## Where we are...

