

Fife Bipolar Group

www.cfbg.co.uk

Issue 29 April 09



AGM at Volunteer Centre

Empowering Bipolar People in Fife

About the Fife Bipolar Group

We meet once a month in Kirkcaldy but welcome people from all over Fife. The main purpose of the group is to offer a supportive environment to those affected by bipolar affective disorder and allow them to talk about and share their experiences with others. To attend is free & you do not need a referral.

We also provide an information service through our website, this monthly magazine & a library of reading material relating to bipolar & mental health. This we hope will help you address the issues that affect you in your life. If you have anything you'd like to talk about or would like to come along to a meeting, please get in touch!

People with bipolar disorder

Friends Relatives Carers

Meeting

2nd Tuesday of every month
7 - 9pm

Address

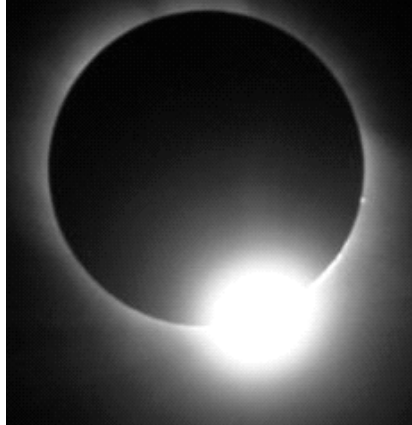
Fife Bipolar Group
Express Group Kirkcaldy
110 Rosslyn Street
KY1 3AD

Contact

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0753 863 9461

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making sense of darkness



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Our Committee

CHAIRPERSON VACANT

Secretary Pauline

Website James

Magazine Ross

Treasurer Barbara

Fundraiser Barbara

Librarian Margaret

Support Mark

fifebipolargroup@cfbg.co.uk

If you would like to submit something to be included in the magazine, simply send it through to us. The deadline for inclusion in the magazine is 16th of every month

Latest Bipolar News

Appeal to Members

The role of Chairperson is now vacant and we urgently seek someone with the energy and commitment to take over the role. Get in touch to discuss it more and please come join us. We need to keep the group meetings running otherwise we face an uncertain future.

Maureen Sangster Course

I'm running course in the unique venue of Kirkcaldy Museum and Art Gallery. This course takes as its inspiration a photography exhibition called Black Diamonds by Colin Cavers as well as the general theme of coal mining.

Two speakers are coming to talk to the group- Colin Cavers to the combined groups (I'm doing a Thursday group as well) on Thurs 23rd April and Alan Kenney, an ex mining engineer who worked at Longannet is coming on Wed 15th April. **The course is free.** If you're interested yourself do come along - if you can't, do tell other folk about the course. If you'd like to come along get in touch and we'll pass your details onto Maureen.

Crisis Phone lines

Breathing Space

0800 83 85 87

Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

Saneline

0845 767 8000

Social Work out-of-hours

01592 415000

NHS Direct

0845 24 24 24

Mind

0845 766 0163



FIFE BIPOLAR GROUP AGM

Due to redecoration of Express Group Premises our
AGM & Meeting will be held

**VOLUNTEER CENTRE
10, ST BRYCEDALE AVENUE
KIRKCALDY KY1 1ET**

On 14th April

From 6.15pm

**Our usual meeting will start at 7pm
At the Volunteer Centre**

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Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network

What is SIGN?

The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) was formed in 1993. Our objective is to improve the quality of health care for patients in Scotland by reducing variation in practice and outcome, through the development and dissemination of national clinical guidelines containing recommendations for effective practice based on current evidence.



The membership of SIGN includes all the medical specialties, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, professions allied to medicine, patients, health service managers, social services, and researchers. The work of SIGN is supported by an Executive based at Elliott House, Hillside Crescent in Edinburgh. Since 1 January 2005 SIGN has been part of NHS Quality Improvement Scotland.

SIGN has a programme of 113 evidence-based clinical guidelines - published, in development, or under review - covering a wide range of topics. Many of the SIGN guidelines relate to the NHS priority areas of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and mental health. Comments on any of the published guidelines are welcome and will be used to inform the review process.

What are guidelines?

Clinical guidelines are systematically developed statements to assist practitioner and patient decisions about appropriate health care for specific clinical circumstances. Guidelines provide recommendations for effective practice in the management of clinical conditions where variations in practice are known to occur and where effective care may not be delivered uniformly throughout Scotland. There are many guidelines available, but most are based on a consensus of 'expert opinion' or a non-systematic review of the scientific literature. The evidence based guidelines developed by SIGN are derived from a systematic review of the scientific evidence, and are therefore less susceptible to bias in their conclusions and recommendations.

How are guideline topics selected?

Any group or individual can propose a topic for a SIGN guideline. For a topic to be suitable for the development of a SIGN guideline there must be evidence of variation in practice which affects patient outcomes and a strong research base providing evidence of effective practice. In addition, the potential benefit to patients must be sufficient to justify the resources invested in the development and implementation of a SIGN guideline. If you are interested in proposing a guideline topic, contact the SIGN Executive, for advice on preparing a proposal.

How are guidelines developed?

SIGN guidelines are developed by multidisciplinary working groups with representation from across Scotland. The

guideline development groups are selected in consultation with the member organisations of SIGN Council. Each guideline is based on a



systematic review and critical appraisal of the current scientific literature. This means that the evidence base for the guideline is identified, selected, and evaluated according to a defined methodology. In this way, potential sources of bias in the guideline are minimised and the likely validity of the recommendations is maximised. The guideline recommendations are graded according to the strength of the supporting evidence. This provides groups of practitioners working in NHSScotland with information to help select and prioritise recommendations for local implementation, depending on local needs, priorities, and resources. [SIGN Methodology]

Participation and consultation

A national open meeting is held to discuss each SIGN guideline in draft form. The national meetings are widely publicised and are open to all, providing an opportunity for health care professionals, patients, health service managers, and other interested groups to comment on the draft recommendations and to influence the final form of the guideline. [National Meetings]

All SIGN guidelines are also independently reviewed by specialist referees prior to publication. Three years after publication (or sooner if required) the guideline is formally considered for review and is updated where necessary to take account of newly published evidence.

Scottish Stovies

.....
Serves 6 as a meal

- 3 lbs potatoes
- 1 large onion or 2 small
- 1 lb steak mince or lamb or diced pieces of meat or cheese or vegetables
- 2 ozs butter or olive oil
- 1/2 pint of water
- Meat stock cube or veg
- Salt to taste, and Pepper

Chop the onions into a pot, add oil, and gently cook for 4-5 mins until soft. Add meat, stir into the onions and cook until a light brown. Peel, slice and dice your potatoes as you'd normally do. Add them into the pot with the onions and meat. Add the water, stock, salt, pepper. Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes with the lid on, shaking or stirring the pot occasionally to make sure it doesn't all stick. Cook until the potatoes are soft (push a table knife through a piece to test). Don't worry if the bottom layer is a bit burnt as this adds to the flavour of the rest. Mix it all up a little more, if necessary, and serve steaming hot onto plates or bowls.

Variety is the spice of life, so try some of these varieties

*Add herbs for your health and a delicious flavour
Grate cheese over the top and brown under the grill
Leftover vegetables; gravy instead of a stock cube
A carrot or two, grated or sliced, cooked or raw
Try some garlic, crushed and cooked with the onion
For an Exotic flavour add cumin or curry powder*

Employment and Support Allowance... Explained

As many readers will know, a new benefit (Employment and Support Allowance), has replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support for new claimants after 27 October 2008. We feel that this has been an important change to the benefits system and will affect some of our readers, so in this edition of OTL Marion Cunningham explains how ESA will work. However, in the Spring edition of OTL, Marion will resume her column answering readers questions on Welfare Rights issues.

Employment and support allowance Employment and support allowance (ESA) is a new benefit paid if your ability to work is limited by ill health or disability and you are claiming after 27 October 2008. It replaces both incapacity benefit (IB) and income support (IS) paid on the grounds of incapacity. When someone becomes entitled to Employment and Support Allowance they will enter a 13 week assessment phase. The assessment phase applies to all new ESA claimants, with the exception of those who are terminally ill. During this period claimants undergo a work capability assessment and a work focused interview.

The ESA work capability assessment (WCA) is more complex than that currently used for incapacity benefit. The assessment will be carried out by a health care professional working on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. It is intended to:

- find out whether you have a 'limited capability for work'.
- find out whether you have a 'limited capability for work-related activity'.
- carry out a 'work-focused health-related assessment'.

The test for 'limited capability for work' has many similarities to the incapacity benefit PCA. Points are scored based on your ability to carry out a range of physical or mental health activities as appropriate. If you fail this part of the test you will be moved onto jobseeker's allowance instead.

The 'limited capability for work-related activity' test is used to decide whether you are placed in the support group of claimants or the work-related activity group. The test has a list of descriptors, relating to both physical and mental functions. If at least one of them fits, you will be placed in the support group of claimants.

The 'work-focused health-related assessment' (WFHRA) collects information about your 'functional capacity' to carry out tasks. This focuses on the things you can do as opposed to the limited capability for work assessment, which focuses on the things you cannot do. The WFHRA also collects information about any health interventions that could improve your functional capacity and thus support a move back into work. This could include the use of appropriate aids and adaptations. The information collected in the WFHRA is put into a 'capability report' which is used in the work-focused interview.. The initial work focused interview will normally take place during the 8th week of the ESA claim. At this interview a 'personal adviser' will discuss your work prospects, the steps that you are working on and the support avail-

able to you. Ase willing to take to move into a guide, the personal adviser will be using the capability report that was produced in the work-focused health-related assessment.

If it is decided that you have a limited capability for work-related activity, you will be placed in the support group of claimants. If you are placed in this group, you will not have to undertake work-related activities (though you can volunteer to do so if you want). If it is decided that you do not have a limited capability for work-related activity, you will be placed in the work-related activity group of claimants. You will have to adhere to strict work-related conditions in order to continue receiving the benefit in full. This will involve attending a series of five further work-focused interviews in addition to the initial work-focused interview.

There are various rates of ESA payable dependant on which group you are placed in. If you are already receiving incapacity benefit (IB) or income support (IS) paid on the grounds of incapacity now that ESA has been introduced you will continue to receive those benefits, rather than ESA, for the time being. You will also continue to come under the rules and conditions which apply to IB or IS. So, for instance, your incapacity will be tested under the old IB personal capability assessment rather than the new ESA work capability assessment . It is proposed that between 2009 and 2013 all IB claimants will be reassessed using the new ESA work capability assessment. If you pass the assessment you will be transferred over to ESA. If you do not pass the assessment you will be moved onto jobseeker's allowance (JSA).

It is also proposed that the IB age addition should be abolished from April 2009. However, if you are moved onto ESA, you should receive 'transitional protection', which will bring your ESA up to the same level as your existing rate of IB or IS. The green paper also recommends the abolition of income support, replacing IS with either ESA or JSA. As with those on IB you will be reassessed using the new ESA work capability assessment and if you pass the assessment you will be transferred over to ESA. If you do not pass the assessment you will be moved onto JSA.

Further information can be found at www.dwp.gov.uk

A Call to Action - your help needed

Working to understand the interaction between genetic and environmental factors in bipolar disorder.

Equilibrium - the bipolar foundation are working together with researchers at top international centres in the UK and USA to help establish the genes involved in making some individuals more vulnerable to bipolar disorder than others and how they interact with environmental factors. We are doing this because we strongly believe that in the medium term, and certainly for the next generation of people with bipolar disorder, it will start to make a practical difference especially with regard to

developing new treatments and treatment planning via prediction of response to treatments and avoidance or reduction of side-effects.

Want to Register Interest?

The page enabling you to register interest is already live. Simply click [here](#) to go to the contact form.

The Background:

This study is one of the types of project the Bipolar In-Touch Network was set up to facilitate- an important complex issue, which can only be solved by groups of researchers from different places working together with a large number of people affected by bipolar disorder. If you are someone who has been directly affected by bipolar disorder, your participation in these studies is invaluable.

It is important to understand that the methodology of these studies does not require you to know about your family history or for the researchers to be in contact with anyone else in your family.

Only very recently has the technology become available to carry out these studies. The main issue now determining the success of the studies is the size of the samples and therefore the number of people willing to participate.

We are convinced that things are now at a stage that a concerted, large scale effort by people with bipolar disorder is required. To reliably unravel the complexities of a problem like bipolar disorder where there is an interaction between a variety of different genes and environmental factors, the need is for thousands of participants.

Lots of people have already taken part in the studies but we now need at least 4000 more participants.

Similar large scale studies are being done in diabetes, cardiovascular disease, various forms of cancer, other diseases. and it needs to be done in bipolar disorder.

What we are doing:

We are keen to support as many people with bipolar disorder participating in these studies as humanly possible. Below is an outline of some of the contents of the information sheet which will be made available shortly.

All the research protocols involved have been approved by the local ethics committees, multicenter ethics committees or appropriate review boards for the individual centers involved.

Confidentiality and "Results"

If you are interested in participating, Equilibrium would link you up with the appropriate local research team. You will not be making a final commitment to participate by filling in the contact form which will shortly be available and you will be free to discuss any questions you may have when a member of the local research team makes contact. If you did decide to participate, your clinical details, will be dealt with absolutely confidentially by the local research team in a way that they will explain to you themselves.

People sometimes ask if they will be told the results of genetic analysis on blood samples. The answer to this is NO and YES. NO- you will not be given any specific 'test result' about your own blood sample as a specific blood test is not being carried out. YES- we will ensure that every person who participates will receive a summary of the results of the findings of the studies when they are

published and the initial outcome is known.

What would it involve for me?

We appreciate that most people are very busy nowadays and will try to take as little of your time as possible. If you were to agree to assist in the studies, generally what it would involve for you will be only two things:

- A short interview which takes approximately 45-90 minutes. Ideally this would be carried out face to face, but depending on where you live, may need to be carried out over the phone.
- Giving a sample of saliva or a small blood sample, taken much as a routine sample your general practitioner/ family practitioner would take.
- Some centres may also leave a single set of questionnaires with you to complete and return if you have time. In a minority of cases, depending on your location, we may ask you to complete a web interview and return a small saliva sample in a special tube by post rather than have a blood sample.

Any Questions?

If you are personally affected by bipolar disorder, please do seriously consider participating. If you think of any further questions you may like answered you may contact us at genes@bipolar-foundation.org.

Want to Register Interest?

Go to the bipolar foundation website and access the contact details.

What's on in Fife?

Art of Giving Exhibition

Free admission

Ever wondered how objects end up in museums? This is your chance to find out what, why and how museums collect by looking at the stories behind the objects. The exhibition features objects relating to the town of Newburgh - including social history, archaeology and ethnography - and also celebrates the bi-centenary of the birth of one of the town's great benefactors, Dr Alexander Laing.

Laing Museum
Laing Library
High Street
Newburgh

During Museum opening hours

Crail Car Boot Sale

Sunday 26 Apr 2009
12:00

Fancy picking up a bargain? Come along and see if you can find that next priceless antique.

Crail Airfield
Balcomie Road
Crail

Free admission

Come & Join ...

Bipolar Fellowship Scotland

Membership is open to anyone who has an interest in Bipolar Disorder and/or the need to increase understanding of the illness. Every new member strengthens the voice of those affected - if you have the illness, are a carer, friend, relative, a caring professional or an interested individual.

What membership offers:

- The Bipolar Fellowship Scotland regular newsletter On the Level Quarterly issues of the MDF The Bipolar Organisation's UK Journal—Pendulum
- Access to a wide range of information covering all aspects of bipolar disorder/manic depression at our lending library (no need to come to the office, we can post things out to you)
- Free entry to self help groups network events
- Access to the self management training courses
- Access to facilitators' training events if you are/plan to be an organiser of a self help group
- Free entry to our annual national conference
- Legal Advice Line
- Insurance Services

Please complete this page and send it to Bipolar Fellowship
Scotland at the address below:

I enclose my membership fee (tick as appropriate):

Individual	0	£20.00
Unwaged Individual	0	£ 5.00
Family	0	£25.00
Corporate	0	£35.00

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

TEL:

E-MAIL:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Please make all cheques/postal orders payable to Bipolar
Fellowship Scotland.

Studio 1016, Mile End Mill
Abbey Mill Business Centre
Seedhill Road
Paisley PA1 1TJ

Telephone 0141 560 2050
e-mail tildab@bipolarscotland.org.uk

affiliated with Bipolar Fellowship Scotland

Bipolar Fellowship Scotland

0141 560 2050

www.bipolarscotland.org.uk

The Bipolar Foundation

www.bipolar-foundation.org

Breathing Space Scotland

0141 435 3901

Helpline 0800 83 85 87

breathingspacescotland.co.uk

Fife Carers Centre

01592 642999

www.fifecarerscentre.org.uk

Depression Alliance Scotland

0131 467 3050

www.depressionalliance.org

Scottish Assoc for Mental Health

0141 568 7000

www.samh.org.uk

Fife Advocacy

01383 511155

www.fifeadvocacy.org

Fife Families Support Project

01592 641401

www.fifefamilies.org.uk

Drop-in Centres around Fife

ENERGI

01333 730477

www.energi.verycool.co.uk

Barony Housing Contact Point

0871 700 7777

rowangroup.org.uk/barony.htm

Express Group Kirkcaldy

01592 652975

gavin@expressgroup.fsnet.co.uk

Express Group Dunfermline

01592 652975

www.expressgroupfife.org.uk

The Cottage NSF Scotland

01334 657421

thefifecottage@hotmail.com

Link Living

01592 644048

www.linkliving.org.uk

Would you like to see your organisation here? Simply get in touch with your details! We'll add you to our list.

We meet 2nd Tuesday every month

No referral needed, simply come along! All welcome

7pm The Express Group Kirkcaldy
