



BLACK BOX THERAPY.

WHAT IS ACU – STIMULATION “Black Box” THERAPY?

Also called Black Box, Acu- Point Electro Stimulation

Acu-Stim is a safe and simple form of treatment, which is used in many forms. Gentle pulses are passed through the body’s Acu- Points system to stimulate the productions of natural chemicals, which form part of the body’s natural defences that deal with stress, pain relief and healing.

Acu –Stim treatment is like acupuncture, but with no needles, risks or pain. First a few points on one ear are stimulated for a few seconds each, then a small self stick on pad is placed on one or two acupuncture points on the body. You lie down and relax for half an hour and feel gentle pulses. Fast pulses help lift your mood up, while slow pulses help calm and relax you.

One treatment is good, but a course of treatment is more beneficial.

Acu-Stim can reduce the severity and length of withdrawal symptoms from drug / substances such as: COCAINE, AMPHETAMINE, ECSTASY, HEROIN, METHADONE, ALCOHOL, NICOTINE, Including PRESCRIPTION DRUGS. Such as Benzodiazepines and Antidepressants.

Cumbria Alcohol and Drug Advisory Service

CADAS would like to promote that from 2008, we are now in the position to offer **Black Box therapy** free of charge and countywide to anyone wishing to access our services.

This type of therapy has proven to be effective in the reduction of cravings and withdrawal symptoms and has been provided due to the number of people requesting this type of service.

**If you require any further information or would like access to this service please contact : Emma at CADAS on:
01229 811111**

Cumbria Users Project Newsletter issue 11

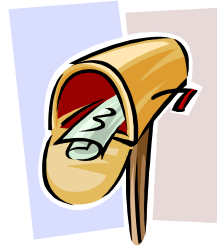
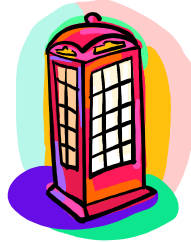
Drug users have rights too...
February - April 2008

Edited by Jon Hemelryk

Hello and welcome to the Cumbria Users Project quarterly newsletter. We hope everyone had a very happy Christmas and we send out our best wishes for 2008 to all our readers. At the time of writing we are just about to head off for the first ever national service users conference which takes place in Birmingham and has been organised by The Alliance. We expect to have five people representing the Project from around the county, news on how we got on in our next issue. For now though we have a very inspiring letter from a friend in the north of Cumbria (see middle pages). There’s information and links to The Alliance courtesy of Bri, feedback from November’s advocacy training by Jon, plus news from Barrow on the brand new Harm Minimisation Service and CADAS’s expansion of Black box treatment . Not to mention all the usual bits and pieces. Cheers!



GETTING IN TOUCH



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BITS & BOBS

“My playtime was often fuelled by the sherbet of shame.
What a strange thing to do to suck powder up into your nose.
A bit like tapping yourself lightly on the head with a parsnip, only sillier.

Stephen Fry

“That is not a drug (cannabis). It’s a leaf.
My drug was pumping iron.”

Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger

“I want to upgrade cannabis and make it more a drug
that people worry about”

Gordon Brown MP/PM

“Since I discovered the use of lizard dung,
I have found peace.”

Bala Abu on the latest drug craze in Nigeria

HOT HOUSE HORROR:

Returning to England’s bleak mid-winter from the warmth of north Africa is a grey enough prospect in itself. For Richard Shackleton, that will be the very least of his worries...

He will return to find his house at Westhoughton near Bolton burnt out from top to bottom.

As fire fighters picked and sifted their way through the debris, they came across the remains of cannabis plants plus heating and lighting equipment.

It transpires (according to Detective Sergeant David Kehoe) that “the first floor and the attic were dedicated to growing drugs.”

One neighbour said of Shackleton “You couldn’t wish to meet a nicer bloke. He’d gutted that house and made it really lovely.”

Mrs Shackleton’s mother, has decided to let her son enjoy the rest of his holiday and will not break the news to him until the day he flies back...

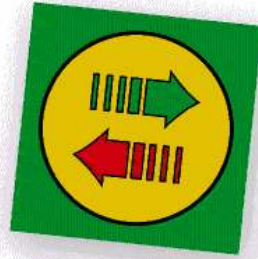
The newsletter is printed by **WORKBASE** in Kendal
WHO HAVE JUST MOVED! to Kendal Business Park,
Appleby Road, Kendal, LA9 6ES.

TEL 01539 736786 email info@kendal.co.uk

Good luck to Workbase and thanks from all at C.U.P
The Cumbria Users’ Project and its newsletter are sponsored by
The Cumbria Drug and Alcohol Action Team

Free and Confidential Harm Minimisation Service

The above service is now running at the Barrow Centre (92-96 Duke Street) and is available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Opening times are 10am to 12.30pm and 1.30- 4pm on each of these days.



The service provides:

- Needles, syringes, vitamin C, swabs and sharps bins
- Information and advice on injecting techniques
- Assessment of need on first contact
- Safe disposal of used sets of injecting equipment
- Access to a range of free condoms
- Access to Hepatitis A & B immunisation
- Advice and information on “safer” injecting practices
- Advice and information on stabilising/changing drug use
- Advice and practical support on alternatives to injecting

To us here at the Project in the south this development in service provision feels like a very positive step forward. We feel that the importance of a harm minimisation service such as this cannot be over-emphasised.

We urge anyone in the area needing anything from the above listed points to call in at Duke Street or ring 01229 615651

We will be having a closer look at Harm Minimisation issues next time and we will have a round up of opening times and contact details for all such services across the whole county.

STAY SAFE!

WHAT WE'RE ABOUT

The Cumbria Users' Project encourages and supports drug users to speak up and have a say about the delivery of drug services.

The project is confidential, independent, free and is based at the following Citizens Advice Bureaux

Penrith

Ulverston

Workington

(see contact details on opposite page)

The knowledge and skills of service users and their families can help influence and improve the way services are planned and provided in the future.

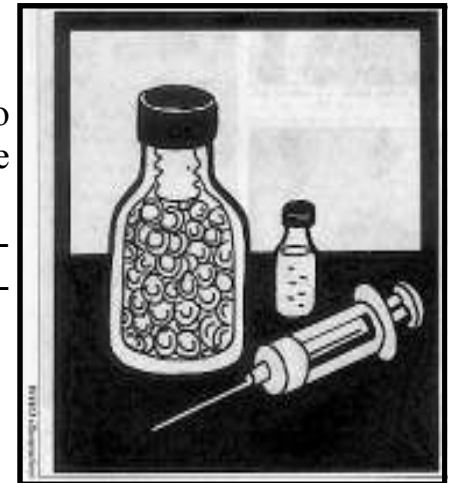
PLEASE GET IN TOUCH AND GET INVOLVED!

We have meetings every six weeks in Penrith, plus local mini-forum meetings every month.

Lunch is provided and service users attending these meetings will each receive a High Street voucher for their time.

We arrange for service users to attend conferences around the country.

We also attend, and, where necessary, bring training for service users to the county.



OVERDOSE/RESUSCITATION TRAINING IN CUMBRIA

At the time of going to press we are inviting service users to the above training as follows:

North (Carlisle, Botchergate Centre) February 21st

South (Barrow, Duke Street Centre) March 13th

West (Market Hall or Senhouse Centre) March 20th

VENUES ARE YET TO BE FINALISED

**PLEASE CONTACT YOUR DEVELOPMENT WORKER
to book a place: approx 14 available in each area.**

THE METHADONE ALLIANCE by Bri Edwards

I wanted to draw people's attention to The Methadone Alliance, better known as The Alliance. This is a charity run daily by addicts for addicts. This works wonderfully and pays testament to how things can and do change when we are all like minded.

What started in a kitchen in a small London house has grown into an organisation that plays advocate for a great many people throughout the UK and beyond.

They do training courses in advocating for service users and they will represent someone who needs a spokesperson in many different scenarios, including visits to clinics and doctor's surgeries. They will speak up for you on all sorts of issues, so please do feel that you can contact them and ask for help.

The telephone number is **020 7299 4304**

E mail address is **info@m-alliance.org.uk**
(this e mail requires Javascript enabled to view it.)

There is an excellent forum on the Methadone Alliance website you can enter direct through the site or by entering "methadone alliance" into google. It is easy to find and there are many different subjects on the forum. I feel that people may find this a great encouragement. The forum is there to ask, give views or just browse. Many issues are discussed and there is also advice given through the forum, so give it a go.

CUSH

Harry Price, Kerrie Penrice,
Paul Dodd, Adam Slade.

Dear readers,

Our names are Harry and Kerrie. Alongside us are Paul and Adam and between us we have started up a self help group called CUSH which stands for Carlisle Users Self Help.

We are aiming to help people with drug & alcohol problems. The group has been going for a few months now and we are hoping to introduce Black box & Acupuncture to our group soon after our training, as well as helping with Benefit & Housing matters.

We are based down at Addaction on Botchergate from 1pm through to 3pm every Thursday, either just as an ear or to offer help & advice. All we ask of you is that you don't come "off your face".

We can also offer you help & advice on a full range of courses at Carlisle College whether it's a First Aid course or Health & Safety to help you get back to work or some Self Management or Violence & Aggression to fill your days in, plus many more.

Also two of our team sit on the board of Supporting People, which in short is a voice for users to access hostels or homeless matters in and around Cumbria. We have done a Homeless Awareness week back in July 07, to promote & support homelessness to other service providers. Our aim there is to make a "One Stop Shop" for homeless people to access the information they need to help them find accommodation.

There was also an open day held up at Carlisle Race course on January 11th for all service users & providers as well as anyone who was interested. There was something for everyone as there was a full range of activities from hairdressing to henna tattoos and many more.

So why not call in and see us, we all have a history of drugs, so we really do know what you are going through as we have all been there.
Look forward to seeing you
Harry & Kerrie.

Advocacy Training With The Alliance - by Jon Hemelryk

I know the importance of advocacy from my own personal experience.

Ironically, having done this type of work for others, at my last review I really needed an advocate myself.

Having done some "amateur advocacy" in the past, I was very keen to learn more useful methods and techniques.

The first two days of the course were run by Peter McDermott whose speciality is advocacy for The Alliance. Through the course of some lively discussions we began to learn the basics of how to present a client's case. We learned about the importance of confidentiality and of how to gather the relevant data and how to access advice from The Alliance.

The third day was run by Dave, the Alliance advocate for Yorkshire. He developed the first two day's work whilst adding some of his own experiences. I felt that the course was very informative and well worth attending and would like to thank the speakers from The Alliance.

We can only hope that one day advocates will be available whenever they are needed, and that clients will request the presence of an advocate to help them put all these points across in any review or meeting with members of the DAAT.

As always I would like to thank Maggie, Seth and Martin from the Project, Martin driving me there and Seth bringing me back, both saving me the dubious pleasures of the west coast railway line.

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Now and again with the newsletter we get a space such as this one which can be a bit awkward to fill. Luckily this time around we received a short poem from Bri. Not sure who wrote it, we think it could be Spike Milligan

Hope you enjoy it:

I eat my peas with honey
I've done so all my life
It makes the peas taste funny
But keeps them on the knife

USER INVOLVEMENT—THE DOORS ARE OPENING

From Bri in West Cumbria

As some of you may know, we are getting and going places with our service user involvement. This is a body of users and non-users, who for one reason or another have come together to help each other in our ongoing lives, or what I call "the RACE." During my time I must admit at long last the established organisations set up to deal with addiction, clinics and doctors etc, etc, have opened their doors. We now have a very large say in our treatment, this is as it should be. At long last the veil that surrounded the treatment of addiction has been lowered. I use the word lowered deliberately. There are stumbling blocks that we need to address and only by addressing these issues practises will change decisions, that I have personally sought for many, many years... We now have what basically is the treatment providers Bible. The book is called "DRUG MISUSE AND DEPENDENCE" - UK guidelines on clinical management and I would strongly advise anyone with interest to download a copy. Go to DH Publications and type in the name of the book, there is a PDF copy free.

I am going to the users conference in Birmingham at the end of January. This is held and hosted by the Methadone Alliance, I will report the proceedings in the next issue.

There is also a major drugs conference in Glasgow in March, it is the crème de la crème conference of the year I feel, where all the agencies and people who are into addiction and the caring side of this get to meet and discuss the future, and what that holds for us, the users and non-users.

As I said earlier, these conferences are opportunities for us to get involved with our local DAAT and the other agencies involved in addiction. So watch this space: I will report from the conferences in due course.

We have a great deal to offer from Cumbria.



HELP IN RECOVERY

We have received a very inspiring letter from a service user in the North who would like to be known by his nom de plume of "Fonzie" Bowman. Here's the letter in its entirety:

Hello Folks. Well, how do I start this? I've never written an article before, so I suppose you could say I'm a virgin (ha! ha!). Right, this is me popping my cherry as it were (ha!ha!)

Anyway, back to the point of this article. Err, this is how it is. I live in Eden. For the last 12 months I've been I suppose on the "rocky road to recovery" and its been hard to say the least.

I've had the added help, yes, help of a DTTO, which gives me access to the services offering the best help and education surrounding addictions and addictive behaviour. My DTTO gave me access to the ASRO course, run by probation, which involves group work, role-play, relapse prevention and challenges you to recognise triggers for yourself.

This made me realise that these are essential tools and made me aware there's a lot more to recovery than giving up the drugs, you must practice the tools and education all the time as complacency usually leads to a lapse.

Now, I go to the self-help groups still, I keep a journal. I recognise that I am allowed craving and that sometimes it's ok to feel pissed off - you don't have to beat yourself up, go and use, just for feeling low. Now when I have a craving, I write it down, so I can go back and look at what I did to prevent using. Cravings don't always last that long and if you can look back and see progress, it reinforces what you're doing.

Recovery is all about change. Change is about the way you think, talk, your attitude, friends, behaviour and lifestyle. It takes time, but don't give up.

I'm now hoping to complete a course on Substance Misuse Management, through e-learning with The Royal College of General Practitioners.

If anyone has any tools to offer which may be helpful to me, please e mail Martin Roberts (martin.roberts.1@hotmail.co.uk) And he will forward it on to me.

Thanks for reading this article, feedback is welcome

Best wishes, "Fonzie" Bowman.

Thanks for this "Fonzie" and the very best of luck to you from everyone at Cumbria Users Project.

