

Avondalecare Newsletter

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January Newsletter

Hello and Welcome to Avondalecare's brand new Newsletter.

We hope to use this newsletter to help those of you who use our service to keep up to date with all the future activities, days out and social events we have planned. We also hope to include encouraging examples (see Life Story) that will show just how much can be improved and accomplished despite coping with the challenge of mental health problems.

Why not join in at the Social Inclusion Centre?

We want the SIC to be a place that makes it easier for you, our service users, to enjoy positive socialising and maybe develop a few new hobbies and interests. We believe positive social contacts and enjoyable activities can be a great help along the road to recovery. We always aim for the SIC to be a relaxing, pleasant meeting place and for it to be somewhere you can choose when and how you meet up with others. We also really want to help you get out and enjoy your wider community; for example after enjoying cinema trips arranged by Avondale some service users have started going by themselves as well, something they didn't have the confidence to do in the past.

Service User Life Story

I am 39 and a recovering drug addict, I have been through many ups and downs, many problems and bad memories. I first started having trouble when I was born having a **foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS)**. I had a mixed up childhood because there were always arguments due to alcohol abuse in the family, and my father had to return home to look after us when my family moved from London to Birchington. I went to Birchington primary school where I had special teaching, due to dyslexia. I used to visit my uncle and auntie's, they were quite well off and we weren't allowed to touch anything, but they did take us to Wimbledon one year, but just as I was getting to know my auntie she started to complain about a pain behind her eyes, which turned out to be terminal cancer which shook me, as it was the first person I saw dying and my first experience of suffering.

It all went wrong when I tried some poppers in a car park in Birchington, I liked the buzz it gave me, and then certain people started to befriend me, they made drugs a lot easier to get hold of, and this led to a friendships and clubbing. While I was working on the golf courses as a green keeper I tried some speed at night clubs and mushrooms, as I was enjoying myself I didn't see the harm it was causing to myself and those around me, eventually this led to me getting hooked on acid. I participated in underground and house party's which was good fun was and brimming with drugs, the drugs started to create voices in my head, this usually happened when I was reading a book or drawing, and distressed me a lot. I met a man who seemed to be wise and knowledgeable, he took me in and eventually he started to sexually abuse me, when my dad found out he was very angry but this man turned me against my dad and convinced me to confront him. This led to a physical and verbal fight with my father and I was sectioned and sedated, wrapped up in a boiler suit in the police station.



We had more than 30 service users at our end of year meal.



St Augustine's - Canterbury

SIC – Westgate



Open Daily 12pm-3pm

- Monday 12-3pm Craft workshop
- Tuesday 12-3pm & Ten pin bowling at 3pm
- Wednesday 12-3pm
- Thursday 12-3pm quiz
- Friday 12-3pm bingo and film
- Football Wednesday 11th January
- Paintball 11th January 16:00 ~ 18:00 please confirm with support

'Have a Voice' Video Project

Would you like to be part of the project and tell us about your life experience and views of mental health services?



The police turned me over to St. Augustine's where I was forcefully given more pills to sedate me to restraint my violent actions, because these tablets weren't having the required effect I partook in ECT, this did reduce my violent tendencies, and I was on a series of injections called modicate. I started getting better with these treatments, and was relieved as I was actually allowed outside the ward on close observation. Finally I got introduced into occupational therapy which was a disappointment as the hospital was shut down two weeks later. I then went to wellington house where I was treated terribly, the staff were rude and apathetic, and after a year at wellington house they discharged me, deciding I was better. I was able with my mother and fathers help to move into a flat, I was excited about having my own place and hoped I could make a home for myself. Unfortunately I was still addicted to drugs which put me into another hospital, and then shortly after I left hospital again having thought I cracked it, I moved into another flat although still mixing with drug users.

Soon I met a girl at a party and fell in love, we started dating regardless of the fact she was felt very strongly about drug abuse. While with her, her brother who was also a drug user he showed me how to use speed exasperating my condition. Shortly after he died of an OD, but even though this scared me I was still unable to stop doing speed. After 8 years I got married, and was happy for a time even though I was still a user. My mother and father died shortly after I got married leaving me a large inheritance, I spent this money mostly on the four children I had with my wife, and my home. Not long after this I found out my wife was having an affair, when I found out we separated and she took a large chunk of my inheritance



money, this degraded my relationship with my family who now don't want anything to do with me, and due to the heavy stress I was suffering led me to taking too many tablets, I was found walking around Margate topless and woke up in hospital confused and scared, for a short period of time I was approached by Avondalecare who offered me a lot of help and he explained what Avondalecare was about and how they could help people with mental health, I was really excited and a little scared due to the seven foot tall man talking to me, he offered me a way out, and with some hard work and some help from Avondale care staff, I am currently clean of drugs for nearly 3 months and now get my buzz from painting and drawing.

Would you like to tell us your story? Please speak to your support worker about it

Food for thought

Do we need to eat healthily? What damage can the wrong food do to us? Well the excess calories we have in our system can reduce the flexibility of synapses and increase the vulnerability of brain cells to damage. This is caused by the formation of free radicals; this means an increase in voices, depression and memory loss.

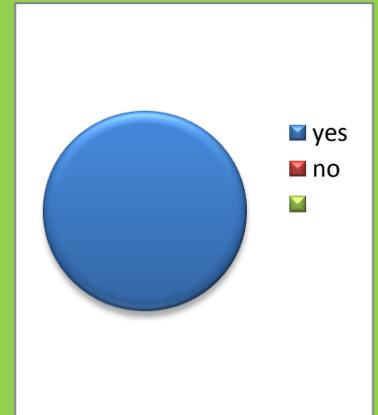


Moderating the calories could protect the brain by reducing oxidative damage to the brains cellular proteins, lipids and nucleic acids. Blueberries have been shown to have a strong antioxidant capacity, along with cranberries, prunes, raspberries, strawberries, apples, plums, these things the majority of us enjoy eating so a good diet isn't always salads and vegetables.

We also enjoy eating fast food but why is this harmful? Junk food and fast food negatively affect the brain's synapses; brain synapses and several molecules related to learning and memory are adversely affected by unhealthy diets. In Okinawa, an island in Japan where people frequently eat fish and exercise, the lifespan is one of the world's longest, and the population has a very low rate of mental disorders.

Question and answer response. QA Dec 2011

Do you know who your care worker is and how to contact them?



How well do you get on with your support worker? Poor 0 ~ 10 excellent



How would you rate the service that you receive? Poor 0 ~ 10 excellent

