

Herewith *HSCNews Bulletin*, number 5, November 2006.

Each *Bulletin* provides details about the latest activities of the 3,000-plus members of the Health and Social Campaigners' Network International, and gives information about health campaigners' new appointments, campaigns, events, funding, publications, research, and websites. The items in this *Bulletin* cover the period end-October to end-November 2006. All items are selected on the basis that they should be of interest to health campaigners worldwide.

We are now also sending out the *Bulletin* to a select number of journalists worldwide who have requested to receive a copy.

[The latest issue of HSCNews International—issue 33, November 2006—will be despatched to you in a few days time.]

Kind regards,
Louise Oatham
Manager
HSCNews Bulletins

Below, you will find a set of key subject matter mentioned in this Bulletin. If you search for any of these words in the email, you will find the item(s) of news related to that subject matter. Also listed are the countries and regions covered in the Bulletin, which can also be found by searching in the same way.

KEY WORDS

ADVERTISEMENTS; ALZHEIMER; ANTICOAGULATION; BREAST CANCER; CARER; CHILDREN; CHRONIC DISEASE; CYSTIC FIBROSIS; DEMENTIA; DIABETES; DISABILITY; DRUG REGULATOR; FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION; GENETIC; HIV/AIDS; JUNK FOOD; LUNG; MALNUTRITION; MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY; MEDIA; MRSA; ORGAN SHORTAGE; MENTAL HEALTH; MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE; MIGRAINE; MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS; MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS; MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS; OBESITY; OSTEOPOROSIS; OVARIAN CANCER; NATIONAL ELECTRONIC DATABASE; PHARMAC; PRIMARY IMMUNODEFICIENCIES; REIMBURSEMENT OF ANTI-DEMENTIA DRUGS; SCLERODERMA; TOBACCO; TUBERCULOSIS; UNITED NATIONS; WOMEN.

COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

AUSTRALIA; BANGLADESH; BELGIUM; CAMEROON; CANADA; CZECH REPUBLIC; DENMARK; ESTONIA; EUROPE; FRANCE; GLOBAL; INDIA; IRELAND; ITALY; LATVIA; LUXEMBOURG; NETHERLANDS; NEW ZEALAND; PORTUGAL; SCOTLAND; SLOVAKIA; SLOVENIA; SOUTH AFRICA; SPAIN; SWEDEN; SWITZERLAND; TURKEY; UK; USA.

MEMBERS' NEWS

NOVEMBER 22 2006, BELGIUM

A conference in Brussels, entitled 'From Malnutrition to Wellnutrition', was organised by the London-based **EUROPEAN NUTRITION FOR HEALTH ALLIANCE (ENHA)**. The participants, who included representatives from Luxembourg-based **ALZHEIMER'S EUROPE**, the Brussels-based **EUROPEAN PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE (EPHA)** and the Brussels-based **EUROPEAN OLDER PEOPLE'S PLATFORM (AGE)**, identified actions that could help build awareness of the problem of malnutrition in nursing homes and hospitals. The **ENHA** stated: "In the current era of the obesity epidemic, most attention from policymakers and from health-promotion campaigns is directed at reducing caloric intake and improving nutritional habits ... Yet studies have shown that up to 40% of patients are malnourished upon admission to hospital. Malnutrition is unrecognised in hospitals, nursing homes and the community."
[\[http://www.european-nutrition.org/contact.cfm\]](http://www.european-nutrition.org/contact.cfm)

<http://www.stopmalnutrition.com/home>
<http://www.alzheimer-europe.org>
<http://www.epha.org>
<http://www.age-platform.org>]

NOVEMBER 21 2006, BELGIUM

The Brussels-based **CYSTIC FIBROSIS EUROPE (CF EUROPE)** hosted the 1st European Cystic Fibrosis (CF) Awareness Day at the European Parliament. Attending were representatives from European CF patient and professional organisations. Stressing the necessity for a CF Day, **CF EUROPE** said that 30,000 European patients and their families “fight every day against this fatal disease. Often, such people feel alone in their daily struggle for life.” Patients who have access to appropriate care can live to 40 years or more, noted the group. Nonetheless, children with CF still die at a very young age, and the condition is now the most common life-threatening genetic disease in Europe.

[<http://www.cfww.org/cfe.index.asp>
[http://www.cfww.org/CFE/awareness/1st European CF Day-programme Brussels 21-22 NOV 2006.pdf](http://www.cfww.org/CFE/awareness/1st_European_CF_Day-programme_Brussels_21-22_NOV_2006.pdf)]

NOVEMBER 14-17 2006, TURKEY

In Istanbul, eleven health and consumer NGOs [see weblinks below] welcomed the signing by 48 European Ministers of a World Health Organization (WHO) Charter to counteract obesity. Emphasising the needs of the young, the Charter supports the notion of national regulatory bans on the advertising of unhealthy junk foods, and backs the introduction of improved, consistent nutritional information on food packaging and labeling throughout Europe. Sue Davies of **CONSUMER INTERNATIONAL (CI)** said: “The Charter marks a fundamental turning point. Government health ministers across Europe have committed to a powerful agenda of essential actions needed to counteract obesity. These should now be implemented urgently by national governments and also by the European Union—which should adopt the spirit of the Charter.” Patty Rundall of the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) added: “Governments have a responsibility to protect breastfeeding from commercial promotion, and parents have a right to truly independent and objective nutritional information. Interactions with the private sector must also be transparent and appropriate to protect health policy settings from undue commercial influence.”

[The Charter can be found at http://www.who.dk/mediacentre/PR/2006/20061116_1

The eleven attending NGOs were:

- London-based Consumer International (CI): <http://www.consint.org>
- London-based European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO): <http://www.easoobesity.org/>
- Brussels-based European Consumers Organisation (BEUC): <http://www.beuc.org>
- Brussels-based European Heart Network (EHN): <http://www.ehnheart.org>
- Brussels-based European Public Health Alliance (EPHA): <http://www.epha.org>
- London-based International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO): <http://www.iaso.org>
- Cambridge, UK-based International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN): <http://www.ibfan.org>
- Brussels-based International Diabetes Federation (IDF), European Region:
<http://www.idf.org/home/index.cfm?unode=3B96FA5A-C026-2FD3-872815EAD5BCE726>
- London-based International Obesity Task Force (IOTF): <http://www.iotf.org>]

NOVEMBER 14 2006, BELGIUM, GLOBAL

November 14 was World Diabetes Day; its 2006 theme ‘Diabetes Care for Everyone’. The Brussels-based **INTERNATIONAL DIABETES FEDERATION (IDF)** estimates that, of the huge total of 230 million people worldwide with diabetes, many lack access to the training, medicines, and medical supplies required to manage diabetes, and which can prevent the disease’s serious and fatal complications. Diabetes groups across the world escalated their lobbying efforts during the Day, using the ‘Unite for Diabetes Campaign’ to focus attention on the actions needed to halt the growing epidemic of diabetes. By November 14, 10,000 people had signed the campaign’s global petition calling for a UN Resolution to combat diabetes.

[<http://www.idf.org>
<http://www.worlddiabetesday.org>
<http://www.unitefordiabetes.org>]

NOVEMBER 13 2006, BELGIUM

The Brussels-based **EUROPEAN CONSUMERS ORGANISATION (BEUC)** denounced the failure of the Council of Ministers and the Culture Committee of the European Parliament to authorise Amendment 522 to the ‘Television Without Frontiers’ Directive, proposed by the Finnish presidency of the European Union. Amendment 522 aimed to ban advertisements

for unhealthy foods from children's television programmes across the EU. "This was a bad day for parents, for culture, and for democracy," declared Jim Murray, BEUC Director. [<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st14/st14616.en06.pdf> <http://docshare.beuc.org/docs/1/MKDAJFLDBFKLLHEFGJFGDDNPDBN9DBWAN9DW3571KM/BEUC/docs/DLS/2006-00836-01-E.pdf>]

NOVEMBER 7 2006, NEW ZEALAND

Andy Tookey, spokesperson for the Christchurch-based **GIVELIFE NZ**, criticised the government's new Human Tissue Bill, which was put forward by the health minister on November 7, as being no more than "status quo". The Bill allows families to overturn the wishes of people who want to donate their organs. According to Mr Tookey, an audit of organ donations in New Zealand shows that nearly half of families involved in organ donation choose to annul their relatives' decision to donate organs. **GIVELIFE NZ** aims to generate awareness of the shortage of donated organs in New Zealand. [<http://www.givelife.org.nz>]

NOVEMBER 6-NOVEMBER 7 2006, BELGIUM, FRANCE, NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN

The Brussels-based **EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM (EDF)** held a European conference, 'Achieving Disability Rights at Regional and Local Level'. Present at the meeting were representatives from local and regional governments from the EU's 25 Member Nations, as well as leaders of the European disability movement. The conference debated how Europe's 50 million people living with a disability could participate in EU policy-making. Participants were also presented with the results of a two-year project, 'Mainstreaming Disability', conducted in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Latvia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Funded by the European Commission, the study was managed by the **EDF** and three partners—Sundbybergs-based **HANDIKAPPFÖRBUNDENS (HSO)** [the Swedish Disability Federation]; Utrecht-based **VERENIGING GEHANDICAPTEN PLATFORM NEDERLAND (VGPN)** [the National Disability Council of the Netherlands]; and the Paris-based Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). The methodology used by 'Mainstreaming Disability' drew heavily on so-called Agenda 22 guidelines developed by the **HSO** for municipalities and disabled peoples' organisations to implement through concrete actions (in accordance with the 1993 UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities). During the project's opening phase in 2005, each of the eight participating countries selected three pilot areas in which a disability policy plan was created and implemented. National seminars were organised in each participating country between March-June 2006, to present the results of the actions taken in the pilot municipalities.

[<http://www.edf-fehp.org>

<http://www.hso.se>

<http://www.gehandicaptentraad.nl/vqpn/vqpn.htm>

<http://www.hso.se/start.asp?sida=7052>

<http://www.hso.se/start.asp?sida=7054>

<http://www.programmavcp.nl/default.asp?pagId=5>

http://www.ccre.org/news_detail_en.htm?ID=840].

NOVEMBER 1 2006, IRELAND

The Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin-based **ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND (ASI)** began building a new Euros 5.3m [US\$7m] National Centre of Excellence for Dementia Care, at Temple Hill, Blackrock, County Dublin—Ireland's first such facility. The **ASI** raised Euros 1m [US\$1.3m] of public funding for the Centre. Other donors to the project included the Catholic Daughters of Charity (which supplied the land at Blackrock), the Royal City of Dublin Hospital Trust [Euros 2m; US\$2.6m], as well as government funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund [Euros 2.2m; US\$2.9m] and from the Health Service Executive (HSE). The **ASI** still needs to find the cost of maintaining the centre on a day-to-day basis (which it hopes will be forthcoming from the HSE). The National Centre of Excellence for Dementia Care will provide day and respite care, training and information for people engaged in dementia care, and office space for **ASI** staff. At full capacity, the Centre will offer up to 6,800 day-care places and 3,600 respite stays a year. The **ASI** believes that the number of people with dementia in Ireland—currently standing at 18,000—will rise to 70,000 by 2026.

[<http://www.daughtersofcharity.ie>

<http://www.alzheimer.ie>]

OCTOBER 31 AND NOVEMBER 6 2006, AUSTRALIA

Melbourne-based **SANE AUSTRALIA** launched the SANE Media Centre. The Centre, which is funded under the government's National MindFrame Media initiative, will be a hub of information, statistics and interviews. Barbara Hocking, Executive Director of **SANE AUSTRALIA**, described the Media Centre as "An Australian 'first'—a specialist service working directly with the media, with the mental-health sector, and with people affected by mental illness. The Centre will provide advice on best practice for reporting or talking about mental illness and suicide. The media are important allies in improving community understanding of mental illness and suicide, so we're supporting both sides of the equation—those who speak to the media about mental illness and suicide, and media professionals who report or portray these issues in newspaper, TV, or film. By working together we can reduce the harmful stereotyping that causes so much distress." Separately, on November 6, **SANE AUSTRALIA** condemned the 2006 White Ribbon Campaign, developed by the UK advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi for the **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM) AUSTRALIA**. **SANE AUSTRALIA** insisted that the campaign graphically exploits suicide and self harm in its efforts to stop violence against women. Ms Hocking elaborated: "Depicting suicide and self harm in this way is completely irresponsible, and contravenes guidelines for media professionals, regardless of the message behind the images. Research shows that images such as those shown in this campaign can have a huge impact on people in despair—often leading these people to emulate the acts they see. This is a significant ethical issue for **UNIFEM** and for Saatchi & Saatchi. It is not just a case of being 'politically correct'".

[\[http://www.sane.org\]](http://www.sane.org)

http://www.sane.org/Media/Media/SANE_Media_Centre.html

<http://www.womankind.org.uk/white-ribbon-campaign.html>

CAMPAIGNS

NOVEMBER 23 2006, UK

A UK-based campaign entitled **EVERY DISABLED CHILD MATTERS (EDCM)**, launched on September 10 2006, moved a stage closer to seeing its proposed Disabled Children's Short Breaks Bill become reality. Gary Sheeter, Member of Parliament, won a parliamentary ballot for Private Members' Bills, guaranteeing parliamentary time for the successful Parliamentarian to put forward a Bill to be debated in the House of Commons in January 2007. This proposed Bill seeks to provide families with a disabled child the right to take short breaks from caring for their children. The arguments in favour of such a Bill were strengthened by the findings of a September 2006 survey by the London-based mental health group **MENCAP**, entitled 'Breaking Point'. The survey discovered that eight out of 10 carers of disabled children have felt close to, or have reached, what they regard as breaking point due to lack of support. **EDCM** is lobbying an ongoing government review of services for disabled children, asking government to spend £150m [Euros 221m; US\$290m] a year for the next three years as a starting point to help set up short-break services. The funding, if it arrives, would also provide value-for-money preventative support to supersede some existing crisis-management services. Aside from **MENCAP**, the other NGOs behind **EDCM** are: London-based **CONTACT A FAMILY (CAF)**, and the London-based **COUNCIL FOR DISABLED CHILDREN (NCB)**, along with the latter's **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL CONSORTIUM (SEC)**.

[\[http://www.edcm.org.uk\]](http://www.edcm.org.uk)

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk>

<http://www.mencap.org.uk>

http://www.mencap.org.uk/download/campaigns/breakingpoint/national_report.pdf

http://www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?originx7030bq_93336659988153c49p226984356

http://www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?originx2916qk_8632255324993d22t5059903689

NOVEMBER 23 2006, UK

A Birmingham-based local charity, **BIRMINGHAM FOCUS ON BLINDNESS**, hosted a type of event that still remains relatively uncommon in the world of patient advocacy—a user-testing meeting. The gathering run by **FOCUS** permitted the public to try out equipment which supports people with vision impairment. On display were electronic magnifiers, voice diaries, screen magnification software, palm-sized talking computers, and talking house alarms.

[\[http://www.birminghamfocus.org.uk\]](http://www.birminghamfocus.org.uk)

NOVEMBER 12 2006, NEW ZEALAND

The Auckland-based **BREAST CANCER AOTEAROA COALITION (BCAC)** expressed disappointment at the news that the national drug regulator, the Pharmaceutical Management Agency of New Zealand (PHARMAC), had under spent its 2006 budget by NZ\$19.4m [Euros 10m; US\$13m]. Libby Curgess, chair of the **BCAC**, commented: "Almost NZ\$20 million of taxpayers' money is sitting in the bank while women are dying for lack of drugs. What does that say about PHARMAC? PHARMAC has said that if they spend money on Herceptin, other people will miss out. In light of this under spending, the overused 'not enough money' argument ceases to hold water—as does the 'if we give you this drug, others will suffer' line. This surplus could go a long way towards funding Herceptin for women with early-stage, HER2-positive breast cancer."

[<http://www.breastcancer.org.nz>

[<http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/pdf/101106.pdf>]

NOVEMBER 10 2006, IRELAND

The recently-formed Donegal branch of the pressure group **MRSA AND FAMILIES** presented local politicians with a document calling for the threat of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) to be tackled, and the extent of the infection to be made public. The initiative is one of several launched by members of the national group under the banner of the group's campaign, 'Breaking the Wall of Silence'. **MRSA AND FAMILIES** would like to see data being brought into the public domain about the extent of hospital-acquired infections in Ireland's tertiary-care institutions.

[<http://www.wallofsilence.ie>]

NOVEMBER 8 2006, AUSTRALIA

SCLERODERMA AUSTRALIA was launched in Perth at the May 20-24th 2006 annual meeting of the Australian Rheumatology Association. As an umbrella body newly representing state scleroderma associations throughout Australia, **SCLERODERMA AUSTRALIA** aims to support research, education, and knowledge about the condition, as well as provide support to people with scleroderma. The organisation's website: <http://www.sclerodermaaustralia.com.au>.

NOVEMBER 2 2006, PORTUGAL

EUROPA DONNA PORTUGAL is running a nationwide campaign about the incidence of breast cancer. The campaign was launched by the President of the National Parliament. Members of the organisation are now travelling the country to build public support for greater accessibility to early-screening programmes for the condition.

[http://www.cancerworld.org/CancerWorld/moduleStaticPage.aspx?id_stato=1&id_sito=5&id=810]

NOVEMBER 2006, INDIA

The New Delhi-based **DISABILITY INDIA NETWORK (DIN)**, an online web resource hosted by the Delhi-based **SOCIETY FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SFCD)**, is organising a petition that calls for "the missing D to be restored to the Millennium Development Agenda". The petition urges that several of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MRGs), which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, should specify a deliberate inclusion of people with a disability. **DIN** believes that 600 million people worldwide have a disability—and over two thirds of them live in developing countries. The petition argues that disability, like poverty, can act as a powerful barrier to economic participation, that disability is also the most significant factor determining access to school education, and that people with a disability experience at least the same exposure as non-disabled people to all-known risk factors for HIV infection.

[<http://www.disabilityindia.org/millenniumD.cfm>]

PUBLICATIONS

NOVEMBER 1 2006, UK

In an article published in *The Guardian* newspaper, 'Warning over privacy of 50m patient files', Ross Anderson, Professor of Security Engineering at Cambridge University and chair of the Sandy, Bedfordshire-based **FOUNDATION FOR INFORMATION POLICY RESEARCH**, an independent body that studies the interaction between information technology and society, called for patients to insist to their doctors that their personal medical records are not placed on the new national electronic database.

[<http://www.fipr.org>

[<http://society.guardian.co.uk/health/news/0,,1936192,00.html>]

NOVEMBER 2006, FRANCE

Clinical Pearls from Prescrire is an online, English-language publication that contains excerpts from *Prescrire*, the independent, therapeutic, French-language bulletin published by the Paris-based **ASSOCIATION MIEUX PRESCRIRE (AMP)** [Association for Better Prescribing]. The extracts in *Clinical Pearls* are critical of certain drugs used in the treatment of osteoporosis and migraine. The AMP is also the co-ordinator of the Paris-based 'Medicines in Europe' campaign, which advocates to ensure that European pharmaceutical policy serves the public interest.

[<http://www.prescrire.org/signature/qui/amp.php>

[<http://www.ti.ubc.ca/pages/letter60.htm>

[<http://www.ti.ubc.ca/PDF/60.pdf>]

NOVEMBER 2006, CANADA

Time to Deliver on Gender and HIV/AIDS, a Centres of Excellence in Women's Health Research Bulletin (number 2, volume 5, Fall 2006), is a publication of the Winnipeg-based **CANADIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH NETWORK (CWHN)**. The document insists that the needs of women and girls (and gender considerations in general) continue to be overlooked in HIV/AIDS research, advocacy, and political agendas. *Time to Deliver* aspires to rectify the relative inattention received by issues of gender and HIV. Starting with a background section on the fact that sex and gender combine to increase women's vulnerability to HIV, the research bulletin strives to help readers understand more about the HIV epidemic.

[<http://www.cwhn.ca/hot/resources/default.html>]

OCTOBER 30 2006, SWITZERLAND

Development of New Drugs for TB Chemotherapy: Analysis of the Current Pipeline is a 48-page PDF published by the Geneva-based **CAMPAIGN FOR ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL MEDICINES**, an initiative of the Geneva-based **MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES (MSF)**. *Development of New Drugs* looks at the past five years of TB drug development—much of which has been paid for by the **BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION**, and by the **FOUNDATION-FUNDED GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR TB DRUG DEVELOPMENT (TB ALLIANCE)**, which is funded by the **GATES FOUNDATION**. In addition, the report examines parallel developments within pharmaceutical companies (also largely bolstered by the work of the **TB ALLIANCE**). *Development of New Drugs* is unimpressed by recent endeavours, concluding: "Without a thriving background of discovery-oriented translational research, which is largely dependent on public funding, drug development is destined to fail in terms of long-term goals for effective TB management. Existing modern technologies need to be urgently and more comprehensively applied to TB if the pipeline for drug R&D is to be filled."

[<http://www.accessmed-msf.org/documents/TBPipeline.pdf>

[<http://new.tballiance.org/home/home-live.php>

[<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/default.htm>]

FUNDING

NOVEMBER 2 2006, USA

The Washington-based **CAMPAIGN FOR TOBACCO-FREE KIDS** and the New York-based **WORLD LUNG FOUNDATION (WLF)** announced that they and three other organisations had been jointly awarded US\$125m [Euros 95m] in a two-year global initiative, 'Freedom From Smoking', established by New York City mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. The scheme intends to accelerate public reforms that can help curb tobacco consumption, particularly in high-usage, third-world countries. Mayor Bloomberg maintains: "We have the proven means to reduce tobacco use, but policymakers are not yet applying the interventions". The other members of the Bloomberg initiative are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Foundation (CDC Foundation), the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the World Health Organization. Charles Stoke, CEO of the CDC Foundation said: "This is the first time that a coalition of public- and private-sector organisations has been empowered to implement a unified strategy to address the global tobacco epidemic."

[<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/pressoffice/BloombergRelease.pdf>

[<http://www.worldlungfoundation.org/bloomberg.html>]

RESEARCH

NOVEMBER 2006, SPAIN

The proceedings of the conference 'Research in MS: From Basic Science to Quality of Life', which was held in Madrid on September 26 2006, are now available on video and can be downloaded from the website of the London-based **MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION (MSIF)**. The conference was organised by the **MSIF**, and by the Madrid-based **FEDERACIÓN ESPAÑOLA PARA LA LUCHA CONTRA LA ESCLEROSIS MÚLTIPLE (FELEM)**, the Brussels-based **EUROPEAN MS PLATFORM (EMSP)**, and the Madrid-based **ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE ESCLEROSIS MÚLTIPLE (AEDEM)**.

[<http://www.msif.org>

<http://www.esclerosismultiple.com>

<http://www.aedem.org>

http://www.madrid06.net/Videos_en.html]

NEW WEBSITES AND WEBPAGES

The London-based **OXFORD HEALTH ALLIANCE (OXHA)**, a network of stakeholders that includes health advocates, is dedicated to reversing the rising incidence of chronic disease worldwide. On November 20th 2006, the **OXHA** unveiled its new website, <http://www.3four50.com>, at its annual summit, held this year in Cape Town, South Africa. The website is intended to build an online health community that focuses on diet, physical activity, and tobacco consumption. All content on the website is user-generated, and takes the form of stories, photo albums, tips for staying healthy, interviews, blogs, and video blogs.

[<http://www.oxha.org>]

On November 7th 2006, Luxembourg-based **ALZHEIMER EUROPE**, the umbrella organisation of national Alzheimer associations in Europe, launched <http://www.dementia-in-europe.eu>, which is dedicated to raising awareness about the public health-impact of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia in Europe. The site provides detailed information on the numbers of people with dementia in 31 European countries, as well as an overview of the reimbursement of anti-dementia drugs and the provision of home care in these countries. Maurice O'Connell, Chairperson of **ALZHEIMER EUROPE** commented: "Our website will be a useful tool, allowing policymakers and associations to compare their situation to that of other countries, and to lobby for the necessary improvements". On the same day (which was also the centenary of Alois Alzheimer's discovery of the disease that bears his name), **ALZHEIMER EUROPE** launched the 'Paris Declaration on the Political Priorities of the Alzheimer Movement', together with a report entitled *Dementia in Europe*, both at a meeting in the European Parliament. The Paris Declaration calls on European and national policy makers to make Alzheimer's disease a public-health priority, and to improve the lives of patients living with dementia, and that of their carers.

London-based **MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION (MHF)** has made available online a self-help, computerised, cognitive-behavioural therapy (CCBT) for depression, supplied by software developers Ultrasis. The program, known as *Depression Relief*, is available for a free, 4-week trial, ending January 3rd 2007, at <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/depression-relief>. Andrew McCulloch, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Foundation, stated: "CBT is widely recognised as one of the most-effective methods for treating depression. Yet there is a major shortage of therapists. Most people who want to try CBT have to join long NHS waiting lists, or pay to see a therapist privately".

<http://www.thekristaocloocampaign.com/index.php> is the new personal website of London-based Josephine Ocloo. The site publicises the campaigning that Ms Ocloo has been conducting following the death of her 17-year old daughter, Krista, in December 1996. Ms Ocloo believes that her daughter's death was the result of medical negligence at a London hospital. Ms Ocloo is calling for an independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death. Her cause has won the support of Croydon, Surrey-based **ACTION AGAINST MEDICAL ACCIDENTS**, and of Sarah Teather, a Member of Parliament. A detailed account of Ms Ocloo's campaigning, originally published in issue 27, March 2006, of *Health and Social Campaigners' News International*, pages 13-25, is now available on Ms Ocloo's website.

Working on a voluntary basis, Blackpool, UK-based Steve and Julie Garril have compiled an online A-Z resource of UK self-help and support groups, <http://www.ukselfhelp.info>.

The Effretikon, Switzerland-based **ALKOHOLPOLITIK** has launched an English-language version of its website at <http://www.alkoholpolitik.ch/english/startsei.htm>. The website provides data, news, research documents, and international links to major institutions, all on the subject of the harmful impact of alcohol on society. Founded in 1999, <http://www.alkoholpolitik.ch> refers to itself as a "private and militant website on alcohol politics".

EVENTS

MAY, 2007

MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS (M.E.) AWARENESS MONTH, SCOTLAND

The Perth, Scotland-based **M.E. RESEARCH UK**, and the Waterlooville, Hampshire-based **INVEST IN M.E. (IIME)**, two UK charities involved with funding and conducting biomedical research into ME, are combining some of their fundraising efforts. The groups plan to raise awareness of the neurological condition by jointly running events up and down the country. At least 250,000 UK citizens (many of them children) are estimated to have ME, costing the country's economy £3.5bn [US\$6.8bn, Euros 5.1bn] per year [according to Parliamentary Early-Day Motion 260, June 6th 2005]. Biomedical ME research is not publicly funded in the UK; projects are paid for solely by ME support groups and by individuals. ME Awareness Month 2007 will open on May 2nd-3rd, when **INVEST IN ME** will be hosting the 2nd International **IIME ME/CFS Conference** in London. **ME RESEARCH UK** will be holding its own ME conference on May 25th 2007 in Edinburgh, Scotland. Worldwide, other activities are scheduled for ME Awareness Day on May 12th 2007.

[<http://www.investinme.org>

[<http://www.meresearch.org.uk>

[<http://www.investinme.org/IIME%20International%20ME%20Conference%202007%20Home.htm>]

SUNDAY APRIL 29 2007

WORLD IMMUNOLOGY DAY

Immunology Day is expected to give health campaigners an opportunity to promote public awareness of primary immunodeficiencies. David Watters, Executive Director of the Donderry, Cornwall-based **INTERNATIONAL PATIENT ORGANISATION FOR PRIMARY IMMUNODEFICIENCIES (IPOP)**, would like national groups with an interest in the subject to tell him of their plans for the day, or inform him if they need help. Mr Watters is contactable at: david@ipop.org.

[<http://www.ipopi.org>]

THURSDAY APRIL 26—FRIDAY APRIL 27 2007

ANTICOAGULATION IN PRACTICE, UK

Bromley, Kent-based **ANTICOAGULATION EUROPE** is holding a conference at Birmingham University entitled 'Anticoagulation in Practice'. The event, which is open to health professionals and patients alike, will include a debate on the following topic: "This house believes that anticoagulation clinics are just a monitoring service". **ANTICOAGULATION EUROPE** provides information and advice to people on oral anticoagulation therapy. The April conference is being held in conjunction with the Primary-Care Cardiovascular Society's AntiCoagulation Working Party (a body representing the interests of primary-care health professionals who work in this field), and the Anticoagulation Specialist Association (serving as an advocate for specialists in the field).

[<http://www.anticoagulationeurope.org/conference.html>

[http://www.pccs.org.uk/About_PCCS/aims_and_activities.asp

[<http://www.the-asa.org.uk>]

MONDAY DECEMBER 4—FRIDAY DECEMBER 15 2006

ABLE VOICES EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY DISABLED PEOPLE IN THE UK, BANGLADESH, AND CAMEROON, UK

Commissioned by the London-based specialist health and development agency **HEALTHLINK WORLDWIDE**, the Able Voices project is part of a wider four-year initiative funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The project aims to help disabled people in Africa and Asia build more influence over social policies, practices, and public attitudes. The Able Voices exhibition will feature work from Bangladesh and Cameroon, alongside photographs taken by disabled people in the UK. The exhibition commences the day after the International Day of Disabled Persons, on December 3rd 2006. The venue for the exhibition is London-based Hoopers Gallery.

[\http://www.healthlink.org.uk
[http://www.hoopersgallery.co.uk\]](http://www.hoopersgallery.co.uk)

APPOINTMENTS

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL OVARIAN CANCER ASSOCIATION (NOCA), CANADA
As new Director of Development, Tammy O' Dwyer heads the Toronto-based organisation's national fundraising department. She has 14 years of experience in the field, having worked with three other Toronto-based organisations: **MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY CANADA (MDAC)**, the **CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND (CNIB)**, and social-service agency St. Stephen's Community House. Ms O' Dwyer says that she looks forward to creating a stable base for **NOCA's** nationwide organisational growth and development.
[\[http://www.ovariancanada.org\]](http://www.ovariancanada.org)

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