

OCD-UK Achievements 2007

- Part of our daily commitment to the OCD community is to provide mutual support and understanding through various means, including, email, telephone, postal letter and online discussion forum. We provide this basic, but extremely important work on a daily basis, 365 days per year.
- We continue to raise awareness of this misunderstood and very disabling condition by providing information, facts and case studies to the UK media. This year we have worked with the BBC and The Late, Late show in Ireland (world's longest running TV chat show) and a number of independent documentary companies, not to mention numerous magazines.
- Treatment for OCD is still very much hit and miss, with NHS waiting times up to 2 years in many areas of the country, primarily due to the lack of trained therapists. OCD-UK work to this end to educate and assist health professionals, by educating them about OCD and the NICE recommended treatment for OCD. We do this through literature and presentations to health professionals.
- For both health professionals and sufferers we provide educational and accurate information about OCD and the most appropriate treatments, through various written literature including leaflets and booklets *
- We continue to lobby MPs and the Department of Health for improved access to psychological talking therapies.
- Creation of a young children's OCD educational booklet and website, aimed at helping parents explain to children what OCD is using cartoon images and simplistic wording *
- Design of an OCD awareness (pop culture style) magazine aimed specifically at teens and young adults with OCD *
- Provided advocacy support to several individual cases where the person had severe cases of OCD and needed practical help.
- Acted as independent advisors during OCD assessment at the request of the patient.
- Support and advise independent OCD support groups, including visiting and offering support and advice and providing literature and funding. Members of our management committee have also run support groups in Derby, Nottingham and Tunbridge Wells in the last year.
- Hosted two events in London designed at bringing sufferers closer to OCD experts, including lecture and Q+A session, and also giving members the opportunity to mix with each other and meet other sufferers.
- Encouraged our users to volunteer to plan and arrange social events in their regions, the idea being to bring sufferers together in a social relaxing environment. Our users and members have planned events from Perth in Scotland to Norwich to London.
- Provided informative and light hearted high quality newsletter magazines to our members 4 times a year, these include medical features, news, sufferers stories and news about the work of OCD-UK *
- Hosted telephone support group conference calls, giving those sufferers housebound without internet access the opportunity to take part in facilitated support groups via telephone.
- Worked closely with the private sector to jointly host OCD lectures for the health profession.
- Continued to provide a fully moderated online discussion forum for both sufferers and family members or anyone affected by OCD. Our forums are fully moderated, and we work hard to ensure our forums do not become a place where sufferers engage in reassurance seeking, our forums are proactive and we always try and get users moving forward and looking at ways they can challenge themselves to get better. Our forum is used by sufferers from all over the world, with over 250,000 visits per month. The health profession also view our forums to help them understand how sufferers feel.
- Maintain and update a very informative and medically accurate OCD information portal website, our website contains over 100 pages and continues to be widely acclaimed.

- We have developed a volunteer recruitment process, which ensures all our volunteers are thoroughly vetted, and CRB checked if working with the public. We want to ensure that we have confidence in our volunteers, they have confidence in us and that they know what to expect from us in terms of support and training, we also want to ensure and that our users have confidence in knowing all our volunteers are correctly vetted and trained. We also actively encourage people with OCD who are unable to work to volunteer, by doing so we hope to improve their confidence and self-esteem with the long term aim of them returning to work.

- Following complaints from the OCD community, took up the case of UK online retailer 'I want one of those' to remove toy action figures which mimics OCD sufferers, which they agreed to remove from sale.

- Regularly we assist the Sun Problem Page team with replies to OCD sufferers and assisted them to provide treatment information to record an information line.

The following are ongoing projects we are working towards in 2008 and 2009

- Creating short video features about OCD to raise awareness on websites like you tube and google
- Creating a set of OCD still photographs depicting various forms of the condition for use in OCD publications, this will assist us to raise more funding by selling the images to magazines.
- Development of a national OCD awareness day which is also aimed to encourage sufferers to 'just say no to OCD' for the day, a therapeutic exercise and awareness campaign rolled into one.
- Developing a service for family, friends and carers

If anyone with experience of creating video's or photographs would be willing to volunteer their time and expertise to any of these projects we would love to hear from you.

OCD-UK Improving Lives

"When I cast my mind back to Christmas 2005, I was in a mess I felt alone and very very anxious, I had been diagnosed with obsession thoughts and was in a crisis. I found OCD-UK, and all I can say is WOW I wasn't alone anymore, people gave me advice and support and finally although my families Christmas was not so good I came round from my crisis and didn't feel alone anymore." - Will

"I had a sort of breakdown a year ago and I wouldn't be here now if it wasn't for OCD-UK. I mean that in all honesty, through OCD-UK I received the support that I needed." - Liza

"OCD-UK Has quite literally been a life saver for me. I was suicidal and my husband daughter and I had all had to move in with my parents because I wasn't coping at all. My life has changed so much since then. We are living in our own home. My OCD is under control with meds and I have another child." - Nicola

"It helped me to understand my husbands OCD, I would say without OCD-UK I would never have been able to cope with Marc's OCD and Depression, and now he's back at work part time and things are looking a lot better." - Paula

"I felt so helpless and ignorant whereas now I feel empowered and knowledgeable thanks to learning about my condition via OCD-UK." – Catherine M

"In 30 minutes you have changed my life and I am so unbelievably grateful! I am not alone." – Catherine R (July 2007)

"OCD UK has been such a lifeline for me and I can never thank you enough!!!" – Michelle (July 2007)

"It's really good reading about other people also suffering from OCD. It makes me feel like I am not alone. For the first time ever I went to the Doctor, she was great she has referred me for cognitive behavioural therapy. I feel so better in the last week alone, I really feel I am going to control the OCD, not the ocd controlling me. Thanks again for your great website" - Tracey (July 2007)

"Thanks Ashley, Take care and thank you so much for this website. It literally saved my life and I am in no way being dramatic." – Nat (July 2007)

"I looked forward to reading the issues of OCD UK Newsletters which came with my membership and realised that it seemed that more sufferers improved with CBT than with counselling. If I had not joined OCD UK, then I might have been having counselling for a very long time?!" - Denise (August 2007)

"The charity and site has helped me so much Ashley, its really made me feel supported and lifts my mood whenever I am down. I rarely feel isolated now despite not really having any family supporting me." – Ruth (July 2008)

"I just wanted to say also that I am so glad I joined OCD-UK as I have made lots of new friends and can get lots of advice when im down. Invaluable for us sufferers." – Julie (August 2008)