

Free event to highlight mental health awareness

✖ **Edinburgh College mental ill health event to dispel myths and stigma**

Edinburgh College is holding a free public event on Monday 4 November 2013 aiming to dispel some of the myths, misunderstandings and stigma around mental health. Five speakers have been invited to talk about their personal experiences of mental ill health and their recovery.

Mental Health Awareness: Stories of Recovery was set up to raise awareness of mental ill health through the unique understanding of people with personal experience. The event will take place in The Apprentice Restaurant at Granton Campus on 4 November between 11am and 2pm. It is free of charge as it is sponsored by 12S, a NHS Scotland project that provides grants to promote mental health in colleges and universities within Lothian. All are welcome to attend.

The speakers are all people who have lived with mental ill health themselves. They include Kirsty Barlow from mental health charity Penumbra, a counsellor from North East Edinburgh Counselling Service (NEECS), key workers from youth health and wellbeing centre The Junction and a couple of current Edinburgh College students.

The speakers will deliver talks and take questions to form a discussion. The Apprentice will be set up informally to create a safe space for people to talk about their experiences with

mental health.

For those who do not feel comfortable speaking in a public environment, there will be a confidential area where they can talk to one of the speakers or a member of the college's student support team about any issues in private.

Mental ill health is an umbrella term for a number of illnesses, all of which will be covered and discussed during the event. These illnesses include depression, self-harm, stress and anxiety, eating disorders and bipolar disorder.

As well as the open discussion, a number of mental health charities will have information stalls outside The Apprentice where they will answer any questions and give advice about the services they offer.

Following this initial event, there will be similar events taking place across Edinburgh College's other campuses in the near future.

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