



mecopp03/04

REPORT OF WORK

MECOPP REPORT OF WORK 2003-04

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acknowledges additional
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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

LORD YOUSAF INAIT

I am delighted to present the third annual report of work for MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project).

This year has been a particularly challenging one for MECOPP. On the one hand we have seen the organisation go from strength to strength. We have been able to provide support to many more carers, develop much needed services and contribute to the development of policy and practice in Edinburgh and in Scotland.

The success and value of our work has been demonstrated through a rigorous external evaluation which found that MECOPP made a significant contribution to improving the quality of life of our carers.

On the other hand, this success has been achieved in spite of the worry caused by funding pressures. Like many organisations, MECOPP has had to work in a state of uncertainty as one source of funding has ended and others have had to be found to replace it. It is good to report that as this year comes to an end, the achievements of the organisation have been recognised through a second major grant from the Community Fund (now known as the Big Lottery Fund). This will enable MECOPP to extend its work to those caring for an adult or adults aged 25+, a group previously unable to access our services due to the original eligibility criteria.

We are also pleased to announce that we have secured additional funding from the

City of Edinburgh Council, Lothian NHS Board, the Scottish Executive, the Ethnic Minority Grant Scheme and the Lloyds TSB Foundation for major service developments within MECOPP. These are exciting times for the organisation and I look forward to reporting on our progress in the coming months.

Central to the success of what we have achieved has been a particularly supportive policy and legislative framework. MECOPP will continue to make the most of the opportunities available in the current political climate to

work for change in both policy and practice.

All that MECOPP has achieved in the last year would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of our staff team. On behalf of the MECOPP Board, I would like to convey our sincere appreciation for their hard work. I would also like to express gratitude to my fellow Board members for their support and to our funders who, through their thoughts and actions, have demonstrated their ongoing commitment to our work.

As this report went to press MECOPP's Chairperson Lord Yousaf Inait died after a short illness.

Lord Inait was with MECOPP since its inception and his support, hard work and enthusiasm will be missed by MECOPP's staff and Management Board members.

MANAGER'S REPORT

SUZANNE MUNDAY

It has been an immensely challenging and rewarding year for MECOPP, one which has seen the organisation grow both in size and reputation. MECOPP is now fully established both as a respected community organisation and as part of the wider carer support infrastructure in Edinburgh and the Lothian's. At a Scottish wide level, MECOPP has continued to contribute to the development of community care policy and practice and, in partnership with other organisations, has achieved some notable successes.

The success of MECOPP's work is reflected in the year on year growth in the number of carers seeking support from the organisation. The period April 2003 - March 2004 saw a 140% increase in the number of beneficiaries the organisation was able to assist. More widely, requests for help in developing both policy and

services were received from four other local authority areas.

In 2003 - 2004 MECOPP has also seen considerable success in its fundraising efforts which has meant the development of much needed services. Highlights include: the development of a dedicated 'Care at Home' service funded by the City of Edinburgh Council; the Access Initiative funded by the Ethnic Minority Grant Scheme, the City of Edinburgh Council, Lothian NHS Board and the Lloyds TSB Foundation; and, the appointment of a National Training Officer funded by the Scottish Executive.

New services also means new staff and we are delighted to welcome Mrs Kaukab Munir as the Access Initiative Development Officer, Ms Arma Abdullah as the National Training Officer who will

take up her new post in April 2004 and Mr Julian Dawydiak as the Information Development Officer. Sadly, we have also had to say goodbye to some old faces. Ms Shampa Bhattacharya left the organisation in February 2003 and her replacement, Ms Ashiy Mohammed joined MECOPP as the Asian Carers Development Officer in June 2004. All at MECOPP would like to wish Shampa the very best in the future and to recognise the invaluable work she has done.

As to the future, the year ended on a high note with a major grant from the Community Fund. This funding will enable MECOPP to extend its services to those caring for an adult or adults aged 25+ and overall, provide a more equitable and accessible service.

In closing, I would like to extend my personal thanks to the staff, volunteers and Management Board who have continued to work with tireless energy and enthusiasm. Their support has been invaluable in sustaining the organisation. I would also like to recognise the support and goodwill shown by all our funders and partners. Your commitment to securing the longer term future of MECOPP has been very much appreciated. Our biggest thanks must, however, go to the carers who continue to support and use the organisation. They have played the most important role in ensuring the continued success of MECOPP.

POLICY & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

In 2003-04 MECOPP continued to play a significant role in the development of policy and practice both at a local and a national level.

Nationally, MECOPP was instrumental in ensuring that draft guidance issued by the Scottish Executive to support the implementation of the Community Care and Health (Scotland) Act (2000) recognised the needs of Minority Ethnic carers.

At a local level, MECOPP continues to be represented on a number of joint planning groups. Its work has been recognised in the City of Edinburgh Community Care Plan and Race Equality Scheme.

2003-04 also saw significant growth in the range of services provided by the organisation.

Funding was secured from the City of Edinburgh Council Social Work Department to develop a dedicated 'Care at Home' service for Minority Ethnic older people and their carers. The service will employ a Co-ordinating Officer and two care assistants who will, between them, deliver 60 care hours per week. All staff will be bi-lingual. The service is expected to be available in the coming year.

Funding was again secured from the City of Edinburgh Council in partnership with Lothian NHS Board and the Lloyds TSB Foundation to develop the 'Access Initiative'. This project aims to increase access to mainstream daycare, short breaks services and longer term residential care for Minority Ethnic communities. One worker is currently in post and a second will be recruited in 2004-05. The project has enjoyed great

success in its first year of operation with three groups of South Asian older people attending mainstream daycare centres.

The Carers Wellbeing Service has also operated successfully throughout 2003-04 providing 30 carers with a weekly break from their caring situation. A range of health orientated activities was provided together with complementary therapies and a hot lunch.

Funding has also been secured from the Scottish Executive to employ a National Training Officer to 'roll out' training on cultural competency. This builds on the success of the 'Raising Standards for All' training pack developed by MECOPP and published in February 2003.

This is in addition to the more general training currently provided by MECOPP. In 2003-2004 MECOPP worked in partnership with Carers Scotland, Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland, Stevenson College Edinburgh, and Health Education Scotland to deliver training on working effectively with Minority Ethnic carers and service users, working with interpreters, coping with loss and bereavement and supporting carers of people with mental

health problems to representatives from 55 different agencies.

Further, a partnership between MECOPP, McMillan Cancer Relief and the National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health will create a dedicated post aimed at supporting those affected by cancer within the Chinese community.

In the coming year, MECOPP will concentrate on expanding its service to those caring for an adult or adults aged 25+ to ensure they receive the support and assistance required in their caring role. This will be matched by a commitment to our current users - those caring for an older person - so that they continue to receive a quality service.

CARERS DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS' REPORT

CARRIE HO & ASHIAY MOHAMMED

This year has seen a significant expansion both in the nature and volume of our work. Not only have we seen a substantial increase in the number of carers coming forward for support but we have also seen a growing demand for practical services and activities or events which enable carers to come together for primarily social or recreational reasons.

ADVOCACY AND CASEWORK SUPPORT

We are pleased to report that between April 2003 - March 2004 MECOPP identified and supported a further 72 Minority Ethnic carers, exceeding our annual target by 140%. In addition to providing intensive levels of advocacy and casework support for this new group

of beneficiaries, work with a large number of our existing users also continued throughout the year. Older people in receipt of care also benefited from MECOPP's support with either new or increased levels of service being provided.

Income maximisation for carers continues to be a major part of our work with over £200,000 being generated as additional income in the last twelve months. Our records show that MECOPP has an 80% success rate in securing benefit entitlements for its users.

DEVELOPMENT WORK

MECOPP has successfully worked with a range of partners to develop new services and opportunities for Minority Ethnic carers. Highlights include the

Mr and Mrs Chan, both over 60, have been receiving support from MECOPP for 7 years. Initially Mrs Chan sought help for her husband's mobility problems, which made getting in and out of bed or a bathtub difficult. MECOPP requested a Community Care assessment on behalf of the family. This resulted in household adaptations being installed, helping Mr Chan to maintain independence and requiring minimal assistance from his wife.

In 2003 Mr Chan's condition worsened and Mrs Chan provided additional help, which now included personal care. Following a reassessment of the family's needs personal care equipment was provided to Mr Chan: an electric bath hoist; a stair lift; an electric recline chair.

MECOPP has also helped Mr and Mrs Chan access a number of welfare benefits, including Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance respectively.

development of a short breaks service for Chinese older people and their carers in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council Social Work Department Adult Resource Team; a programme of health education and health orientated activities aimed at South Asian carers in partnership with Khush Dil; and the active involvement of Chinese carers in the South Central Carers Forum, known as the Multi-Ethnic Carers Forum, in recognition of the diversity of their membership.

CARERS SUPPORT GROUP

The Chinese carers support group continues to meet once a month. There has been a wide spectrum of activities and events that have included presentations on different aspects of health, benefits entitlement and service provision, as well as outings to other organisations and celebrations to mark different festivals. The Christmas party attracted 90 'revellers' with similar numbers attending the Chinese New Year and Mid Autumn Festival celebrations held by MECOPP. Pride of place for the group is the trophy awarded for their entry into the North East Edinburgh

Sufia Ahmed, a 40 year old Bangladeshi woman, has been a client of MECOPP for over one year. She is a single mother with 5 children. As she was caring for her elderly mother fulltime, Sufia was struggling to secure permanent employment.

MECOPP assisted Sufia to access a home help from the Social Work Department for her mother's needs. A Community Care Assessment was carried out, with a Social Worker and Occupational Therapist assessing Sufia's mother.

Appropriate adaptations were made to the house, a home help was assigned to visit Sufia's mother twice a week for 2 hours, and referrals were made to daycare centres.

As a result of MECOPP's involvement, Sufia was able to actively seek employment and is now working fulltime.

Local Healthcare Co-operative 'Bra decorating' competition to raise awareness of breast cancer.

The Chinese carers group has also contributed significantly to a range of consultation exercises held by statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MECOPP has also provided a range of flexible learning opportunities for its users. The popularity of these courses, ranging from one day workshops to six week programmes, demonstrates the value placed by carers on being able to participate in a range of educational and recreational activities. Language support is provided in all courses and financial support is available to meet transport, sitter and childcare costs.

Examples of our work in 2003-2004 include:

15 Chinese carers received training in Emergency Life Support skills from Heartstart

A total of 21 carers (9 Asian and 12 Chinese carers) participated in two 'Coping and Caring' courses run by MECOPP

12 Asian and Chinese carers each received 12 hours of individual computer tuition from bi-lingual tutors

Two 6 week 'Arts and Crafts' courses run by MECOPP attracted 15 Chinese carers and 9 Asian carers.

MECOPP assisted 6 Chinese carers to access English as a second language home tuition in partnership with Stevenson College Edinburgh. In addition MECOPP supported 2 carers to attend English classes.

INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

JULIAN DAWYDIAK

Much of the past twelve months has been devoted to researching a national directory of health and social care resources available in community languages. This work, to be published by NHS Health Scotland, expands upon MECOPP's successful previous directory of 2000 that served Edinburgh and the Lothians. The new directory, however, will serve all of Scotland.

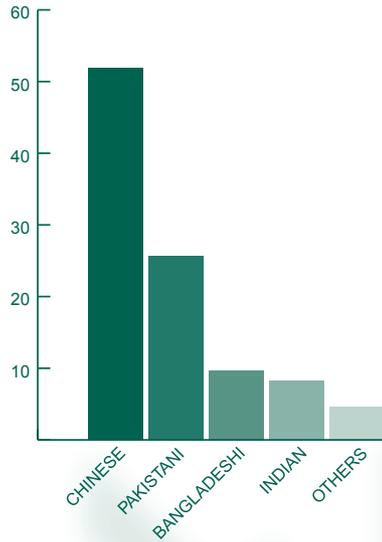
In addition, all carers' records have been transferred to a database constructed by Richard Kent, Information Support Worker. This will enable MECOPP to extract a variety of information on the demographics of our clients, including

their health status and needs. This data will prove invaluable for the development of our services and many others that work with the Black and Minority Ethnic communities of Edinburgh.

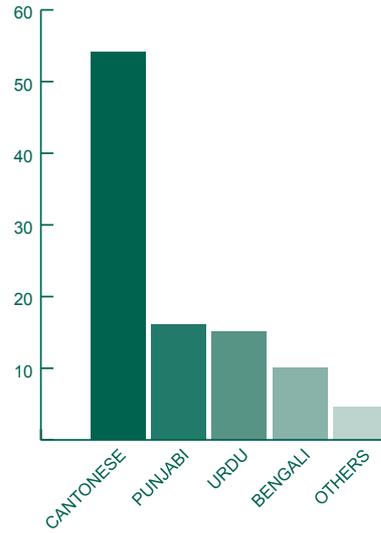
A small sample of this data is included overleaf.

Upcoming projects for MECOPP in the coming months include the construction of our first website and the development of resource facilities at MECOPP's Carers Centre for use by carers and professionals. We hope to have both available at the beginning of 2005.

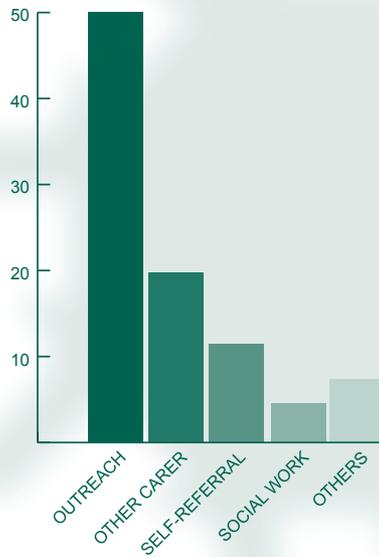
CARER ETHNICITY



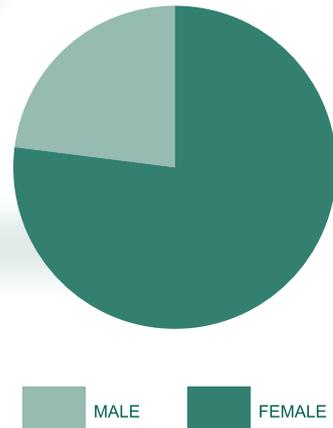
CARER LANGUAGE



REFERRAL SOURCE



CARER GENDER



CARERS' VIEWS

“My life has been improved by MECOPP; the language barrier has been overcome.”

“MECOPP helped us apply for benefits, before MECOPP we didn't know what we were entitled to.”

“It helps to know MECOPP is there. I feel less stressed.”

“I get to meet other carers at the MECOPP monthly meetings. I wouldn't miss them!”

“She [MECOPP worker] gave me a lot of emotional support. She was someone to talk to. I see her as a member of my family now.”

“Since I joined MECOPP I have got to know more carers in the same situation. I feel more relaxed to know that I'm not the only one.”

“I have made many friends since I joined MECOPP, before I was isolated as I don't have friends and relatives in the UK. I keep in contact now with other carers by phone regularly and it makes such a difference to me.”

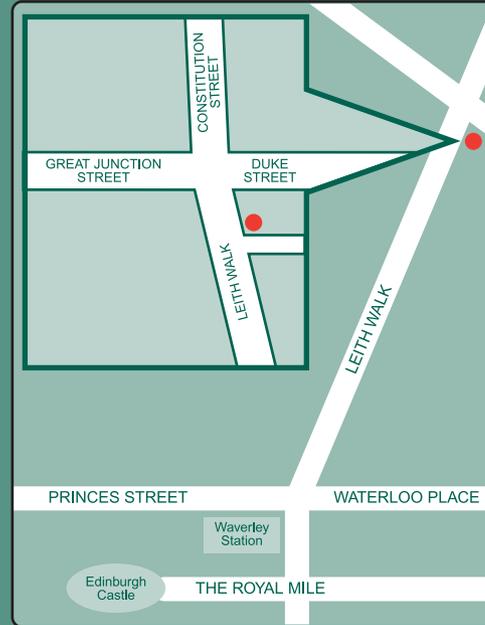
The above comments are from: Report on the Evaluation of the Impact of MECOPP on Minority Ethnic Carers, Clarity May 2003.



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