

HSCNEWS

*NEWS for HEALTH and
SOCIAL CAMPAIGNERS*

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Health and Social Campaigners' Network *News*

Issue 6
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Global News

This issue of *HSCNews* focuses on:

**Fundraising by health campaigners
and the growth of industry involvement**

and

The Taproot Foundation



The Taproot Foundation

Instead of *focusing on the work of a health and social campaigner*, the 'In Focus' section of this issue of HSCNews looks at a foundation created to help non-profitmaking groups of all types (including those in the field of healthcare). Based in San Francisco and New York, the Taproot Foundation is a body that provides charities with the professional business tools needed to build robust ongoing concerns.

A simple—but inspired—idea

In 2001, Aaron Hurst founded the Taproot Foundation with a lofty goal: "To harness human capital, to improve the human condition". This vision translates into a simple, practical, yet inspired idea—the notion of volunteering linked to the unfulfilled needs of non-profitmaking groups in the US.

The Taproot Foundation has recruited hundreds of volunteers—700 at last count—from local business communities. The volunteers stem from all walks of life: accountancy, advertising, management, management consultancy, marketing, public relations. Many of the recruits hold senior positions in some of America's bigger corporations, including: McKinsey, J. Walter Thompson, and eBay. Charities apply to the Taproot Foundation for a grant that is linked to a defined project. Whatever the scheme, it should aspire to build the applicant group's internal capacity, and stimulate the expansion of their activities. Projects could, for instance, be aimed at increasing a group's fundraising capabilities; or creating greater public awareness of a group's work; or improving a group's outreach to clients. The Taproot Foundation acts as a professional services bureau, assembling a team of the most suitable volunteers, and putting them in touch with a charity to fulfill a Taproot-approved project.

According to James W. Shepard, who was recently recruited to the Taproot Foundation as national director of programmes, the nonprofits in the US currently face a crisis in capacity building. Charities frequently lack the ability to expand their endeavours. A shortage of dollars and an absence of business tradition has obliged most charities to restrict their attentions to core tasks of service delivery. These groups are unable to enlarge organisational infrastructure, or—ultimately—bring about systematic change.

Mr Shepard explained the background to the problem. In the past, charities would originate socially-useful programmes, which (if successful) could count on being copied and expanded by federal or state authorities. President Johnson's 'Nationwide War on the Sources of Poverty', launched in 1964, spent billions of dollars of

**The Taproot
Foundation
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to harness
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capital**

**The
Foundation
marries
volunteers to
applicant
charities**

**US charities
are
handicapped
by a lack of
business skills**

Government today spends less on supporting the projects of charities

Fortunately, the US has a tradition of 'pro bono' work

Business approves of the Taproot Foundation, and has already awarded it

The inspiration behind the Taproot Foundation originated 40 years ago

Taproot is funded by the Draper Richards Foundation

federal funds replicating training programmes for poor uneducated Americans. Programmes bestowed much-needed resources on impoverished workers and farmers (as well as on entire local communities), to help these people organise and plan their own battle against poverty. Most of the programme elements were based on projects developed and piloted in local non-profitmaking groups. Today, however, notes Mr Shepard, cash-strapped government administrations are more focused in their sponsorship of good works, and prefer to outsource service delivery to non-profit or for-profit organisations. Nonprofits are therefore forced to scale their efforts and become more business-like—even while funds are becoming harder to come by.

The imagination behind Mr Hurst's idea

Until the appearance of the Taproot Foundation, the only entity that could truly claim a tradition of donating its skills on the scale now envisaged by the Foundation was the legal profession. The US is home to a substantial number of 'pro bono' lawyers—individuals who serve the public good by expanding and enhancing access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged.

The concept of the Taproot Foundation has been applauded by the US business community. Quoted in one of the Taproot Foundation's press releases, Mr Tom Nicholson, founder and managing director of IconNicolson, a leading technology firm, stated: "*Business professionals want to give back to, and make an impact in, their community. The Taproot Foundation has created a model that makes it work. The structure of their Service Grant model makes it a lot easier for people to engage in 'pro bono' work, and greatly increases the odds that projects in the nonprofit sector will be successful.*" And, on May 4th 2004, the Taproot Foundation was awarded the 2004 'Excellence in Nonprofit Marketing Award' by the San Francisco Chapter of the American Marketing Association (SFAMA). The award was in recognition of the leadership that the Foundation brought to volunteering in the marketing profession.

That Aaron Hurst should have thought up the idea of the Taproot Foundation is not a complete coincidence. Mr Hurst's grandfather, Joseph E. Slater, who died in November 2002, was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Cultural Affairs under president John F. Kennedy. While in his position at the State Department, Joseph E. Slater drafted a plan for a volunteer programme that would send Americans abroad to serve their country. The blueprint was adopted and became the basis of the Peace Corps. The Taproot Foundation has established a memorial fund, to honour the inspiration that Mr Slater and his legacy gave to the Foundation.

The Taproot Foundation plans for growth

The Taproot Foundation was launched with a three-year grant from the Draper Richards Foundation. Draper Richards [for more information: www.draper-richards.org] has a reputation of providing selected social entrepreneurs with funding of US\$ 100,000 per year for three years. According to the Draper Richards website: "*The funds are specifically and solely for entrepreneurs starting new non-profit organisations.*"

The Taproot Foundation has made \$4 million of grants since 2001

The Foundation asks applicants for grants to fulfil a number of criteria

Some charities have reported big fundraising increases after Taproot help

Since 2001, the Foundation has overseen the award of US\$ 4-million worth of services to nonprofits based in the New York and Bay areas (where Taproot Foundation offices are located). The Taproot Foundation has also managed to attract more revenue beyond that provided by the Draper Richards Foundation. Taproot's latest funders are mainly community foundations—bodies that donate money to causes that fulfill the needs of local constituents. Boosted by more revenue, the Taproot Foundation has increased its sphere of influence. A new Taproot Foundation office is planned for Chicago in 2005.

James W. Shepard believes that no other organisation has capitalised on the potential behind professional giving to the same degree as the Taproot Foundation.

For interested applicants, the Taproot Foundation has laid down strict criteria about the types of nonprofits and projects that the Foundation will fund. To qualify for a Taproot Foundation Service Grant, nonprofits must:

- Serve the needs of their local community in areas such as education, environment, or health.
- Usually have an annual income of more than US\$ 350,000 and employ at least one dedicated full-time person.
- Be a properly-fledged charity, with an appropriate tax-exempt status.
- Hold a track record and a well-articulated mission, vision and values that guide the organisation.
- Possess a management and board that is committed to the proposed scheme.
- And bring a defined project that will take an average of six months to complete.

Applicants, on the other hand, should not:

- Be involved in advocacy or research.
- Maintain political or religious affiliations.
- Or operate under a fiscal sponsor.

Despite the strict qualifying criteria behind Taproot Foundation Service Grants, groups that receive such an award should be well-positioned for the future. The Taproot Foundation has just begun to track the impact its grants have on recipients. Some nonprofits have reported 50% improvements to their fundraising campaigns after an infusion of business support supplied by the Taproot Foundation. One of the latest beneficiaries, in fact, is **Stamp out Stigma** [an organisation profiled in *HSCNews*, issue 4, February 2004].



[For more information on the Taproot Foundation:
<http://www.taprootfoundation.org>]

The next issue of *Health and Social Campaigners' News*

Issue 7 of *HSCNews* (May 2004) is a six-monthly update on the latest news on subjects covered in parts issues

Back issues of *Health and Social Campaigners' News*

Back issues are available to subscribers at pro rata rates

The cost of each back issue is one twelfth of a year's subscription (same licensing terms apply)

Issue 1, *HSCNews* (November 2003)

Global news: Legal rights for people with a disability

Disability groups worldwide are campaigning for human rights for people with a disability.
26 pages; approx 75 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Global news: Stem cell research

Stem cell research is splitting the world of patient advocacy.
13 pages; approx 42 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Global news: Direct-to-consumer medicines advertising

Campaigners on either side of the DTC issue in the US, Canada and New Zealand.
8 pages; approx 21 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

European news: New European umbrella organisations

The creation of new overarching patient umbrella groups: the European Patients' Forum (EPF); the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC); and Europa Uomo.
8 pages; approx 33 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Campaigning Groups' Original Research

A survey by the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA) [UK].

News from Members of the Health and Social Campaigners' Network

- ▶ The Bloedlink Foundation [Netherlands].
- ▶ Hepatitis Foreningen [Denmark].
- ▶ Mamazone [Germany].

Campaigning Groups' New publications

Exploring Advocacy, published by the National Disability Authority, Dublin, Ireland.

Issue 2, *HSCNews* (December 2003)

Global News: Making medicines affordable to all

Campaigners for affordable medicines scored huge successes against governments and pharmaceutical companies worldwide in 2003. Some groups wield budgets of billions of dollars. New targets seem likely in 2004.

41 pages; over 100 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Global News: Men's health and the new campaigners

The men's health movement has diversified beyond issues of sexual health, and is growing in importance worldwide.

12 pages; 19 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Interview Article: The Men's Health Forum—a model for campaigning groups?

Interview with Dr Ian Banks, Chief Executive of the UK group, the Men's Health Forum. The group is expanding, widening its range of funding, and helping brother organisations overseas.

7 pages; 11 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups [some weblinks repeated in previous article].

News from Members of the Health and Social Campaigners' Network

- ▶ No Panic [UK].
- ▶ The Cystic Fibrosis Trust [UK].
- ▶ The Quebec Association for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities [Canada].

Campaigning Groups' New Websites

- ▶ The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations [UK/Netherlands/international].
- ▶ The European Federation of Neurological Associations [Italy/international].
- ▶ Tourette Scotland [UK].

Issue 3, *HSCNews* (January 2004)

European News: Publicly-available information on prescription medicines—the prognosis for 2004

In 2004, European health campaigners are set for further wrangling on the issue of publicly-available prescription medicines information. Arguments will centre on who should supply the information, and the levels of policing required. In the meantime, some organisations are taking matters into their own hands by developing new methods of providing patients with the information they desire about their treatments.

29 pages; approx 45 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

Interview Article: Active Citizenship Network's European Charter of Patients' Rights

Interview with senior executives of the Italian group. ACN is running perhaps the largest and most ambitious healthcare project undertaken by an advocacy group—an attempt to get a 14-point charter of patients' rights incorporated in all European countries during 2004.

13 pages; approx 12 weblinks to patient, disability and related groups.

News from Members of the Health and Social Campaigners' Network

Alzheimer's Australia calls for new treatments for dementia (set to become Australia's number-one cause of disability by 2040).

Campaigning Groups' New Websites

Africa Action spent three months designing their new website, which contains a number of helpful facilities—including a toolkit to help activists mobilise a community, a newsroom, and analysis.

Campaigning Groups' Original Research

In a project funded by the European Commission, Alzheimer Europe completes new research, classifying the various types of rare dementias. The result is a document that is valuable to patients and professionals.

Issue 4, *HSCNews* (February 2004)

Global News: Campaigners fight to improve mental healthcare services—the social and policy battles

Worldwide standards of provision for mental healthcare are poor in comparison with many more high-profile diseases. Yet new medicines and psychotherapies are available to treat even the severest mental health conditions. Campaigners across the world are lobbying policymakers for reforms to outdated mental health services. This article details the activities of campaigners in the UK and the US.

59 pages; weblinks to approx 108 campaigning groups.

Interview Article: The battle against stigma—the experience of US group, Stamp Out Stigma

Interview with Carmen Lee, founder and director of Stamp Out Stigma. This experienced Californian organisation uses speaker bureaus, presentations, toolkits, and lobbying to publicise the damaging effects that stigma can have on people with a mental health problem.

6 pages; approx 4 weblinks to patient, disability and related organisations.

Campaigning Groups' New Websites

- ▶ The website of UK group Maca (the Mental After Care Association) was launched in 2003 after years of planning.
- ▶ The Mental Health Care website concentrates on three areas of mental health disorder, and is aimed at carers, family and friends.
- ▶ The Rethink Carers' website is also intended for carers, and has a strong element of online 'community'.

Issue 5, *HSCNews* (March 2004)

European News: Health campaigners fight the EU Clinical Trials Directive

European Union Member States implement the EU Clinical Trials Directive on May 1st 2004. The Directive has the laudable aim of protecting patients who participate in the testing of medicines. However, a number of campaigning groups are joining forces with academic researchers to vehemently lobby against the Directive, which they say favours pharmaceutical industry research over non-industry research. The Directive's critics insist that it will increase bureaucracy, hike costs, and may well snuff out Europe's non-industry clinical trials—thus ultimately depriving patients of important new medicines.

24 pages; weblinks to approx 27 campaigning groups.

Issue 5 (continued)

Interview Article: The James Lind Alliance—confronting uncertainties about the effects of treatments

On April 8th 2004, three disparate UK bodies (the Royal Society of Medicine, INVOLVE, and the James Lind Library) met to found the James Lind Alliance, a campaigning organisation dedicated to encouraging discussions on variations in clinical practice. The new alliance will use patient-clinician partnerships to confront important treatment uncertainties. *HSCNews* interviews Sir Iain Chalmers, one of the alliance's founders, and a leading advocate on behalf of non-industry clinical trials. 8 pages; weblinks to approx 3 campaigning groups.

Global News: Medicines and mental healthcare—what campaigners are saying

(Part II of a two-part series on campaigners' activities in the area of mental healthcare)

Campaigners in the field of mental health are asking governments to give patients with a mental health problem access to new, more effective medicines and a greater range of non-medical care. This article looks at the campaigns underway in three mental health conditions—dementia, depression, and bipolar disorder. Also analysed is the controversy over SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors). In addition, the article examines government-appointed agencies charged with developing clinical protocols in Scotland, the US, England and Wales, and Europe, and considers the actions that these bodies are taking in mental healthcare and their links with campaigning groups. Particular focus is placed on NICE of England and Wales.

31 pages; weblinks to approx 161 campaigning groups.

Campaigning Groups' New Websites

The Headstrong website is part of a multimedia resource from UK group, the Brain and Spine Foundation.

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