



## The Self Management Fund for Scotland

### Edmesh Therapies for ME Project

#### Background

The 'Therapies for ME' Project was borne from a desire to improve the quality of life for people with ME-CFS. We believe a long term condition should not be endured but managed positively. There is no ready 'cure' for those who suffer from ME-CFS - it is a matter of learning how to live with and manage the condition in the most positive way possible. The 'Therapies for ME' Project aims to empower people with ME-CFS to do this.

Many members of **edmesh** have found alternative and complementary therapies extremely helpful in alleviating their physical condition, and experience has also shown that regular contact with a therapist can be of significant benefit to social and emotional well-being. However, complementary therapies are an expensive option and are therefore outwith the resources of most members, many of whom depend on benefits because they are unable to work.

The 'Therapies for ME' Project is funded jointly by the Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS) and the Scottish Government. The project will run over two years.

#### What We Want to Do

The project that we have developed will contribute to members' self management of ME-CFS by:

- Alleviating members' physical and mental condition.
- Helping to overcome members' social isolation.
- Providing training opportunities for members.
- Providing volunteering opportunities for members.
- Restoring self confidence and self esteem.

#### The Edmesh 'Therapies for ME' Project

**Edmesh** will implement and manage a training programme for members in a range of complementary therapies that will then be made available to the membership. The therapies will include those known to offer improvement of symptoms in people with ME-CFS. In addition, if applicants have experience of a complementary therapy which they found beneficial, it will also be considered.

An innovative aspect of the project is that it aims first to train members in the therapies and it is these people who, on a voluntary basis, will then provide the therapies free to other **edmesh** members. The project thus enables **edmesh** members to manage their own condition in a constructive and empowering way.

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The first step will be the recruitment of trainee therapists from the **edmesh** membership. A selection procedure will follow to select at least 5 to 6 trainee volunteers. The **edmesh** 'Therapies for ME' Selection Panel will be responsible for carrying out the interviews. Successful volunteer trainee therapists will then start the agreed therapy training.

The training for the volunteers will be arranged through courses provided by qualified complementary practitioners and examination bodies.

The therapies will be provided as an on-going free service for **edmesh** members over a period of two years. The therapies will be provided both at community-based venues, such as the Salisbury Centre and in people's own homes.

The **edmesh** Committee will be responsible for the overall management of the project. The day-to-day running of the project, and supervision of trainees and the training process will be carried out by the **edmesh** 'Therapies for ME' Working Group which will report directly to the **edmesh** Management Committee on a regular basis.

Trainees will be supervised monthly by the **edmesh** 'Therapies for ME' Working Group. Volunteer therapists will be required to keep records for each client's treatment which must be kept confidential. Volunteers will be expected to manage their time so that pacing is kept in mind.