

News Release

OCD-UK

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PO Box 8115, Nottingham, NG7 1YT.

Tel: 0870 126 9506

Email: admin@ocduk.org

'Funding vital' if charity is to build on anniversary success

Help for the estimated two to three per cent of the population who suffer from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is at risk unless more funding can be found, a charity has warned.

OCD-UK, which celebrates its first anniversary today (Thursday), says that it has already chalked up an impressive record of success.

But chief executive Ashley Fulwood said that the charity's long-term future and its ambitious programme of development now depended on an injection of cash. "We are run by sufferers, for sufferers," he said. "Our members and supporters are totally committed to our work, but we urgently need to secure more funding to ensure that the momentum built up over the last 12 months is sustained."

Mr Fulwood revealed that OCD-UK had become the first specialist charity to offer '24/7' on-line support through its bulletin board, with a team of volunteers working round the clock to respond to pleas for help and information. "We also provide a telephone information line seven days a week, and have sponsored several local support groups, two of which we got off the ground ourselves," he said.

"We have raised awareness nationally and locally in regular and sometimes innovative ways – webchats involving leading UK and world authorities on OCD, a newsletter, and a programme of conferences. "The first of these was in Scotland, and the next is in Bristol on April 30."

Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio and movie tycoon Harvey Weinstein gave OCD-UK a major boost by appearing at a London charity preview of *The Aviator*, in which DiCaprio plays OCD sufferer Howard Hughes, the night before the Oscar-nominated film was premiered in the UK.

But as well as rubbing shoulders with the stars, the charity has also provided direct, practical assistance to individual sufferers, including giving a year's internet access to an unemployed single mother.

"OCD is an often debilitating anxiety disorder which can sometimes rob people of their careers, their relationships and their self-esteem," Mr Fulwood said. "OCD sufferers are creative, intelligent people with a lot to offer – and our aim is to help them beat the illness and regain control over their lives."

Ends

Note to editors:

OCD-UK is a brand new, dynamic national charity for people affected by obsessive-compulsive disorder. It aims to bring the facts about OCD to the UK public, and to support those who suffer in silence from this often debilitating anxiety disorder. For further information about the charity's work and OCD, call 0870 126 9506 or go to <http://www.ocduk.org>