Bipolar UK launches new fundraising campaign, I Am/I Have

Monday 21 August, 2017

Bipolar UK will challenges you to examine your preconceptions of individuals affected by bipolar with the launch of their new *I Am/I Have* campaign.

The I Am/I Have campaign asks the fundamental question of what makes a person who they are. The charity appeal will introduce you to a range of people affected by bipolar, highlighting the fact that bipolar affects a huge number of people in the UK but it doesn't have to define them.

Bipolar is a severe, life-long mental illness characterised by significant mood swings from manic highs to suicidal depression. It can have a devastating impact on individuals' lives and the lives of families, friends and carers. We believe that bipolar can be managed with the right support for each person.

Stigma and discrimination means people are often identified solely by their diagnosis, instead of the countless characteristics that make us who we are.

Everybody's experience of bipolar is unique so Bipolar UK offers a range of services to provide people with the support they need, when they need it. **Over one million of us in the UK have bipolar** with thousands loved ones and carers also impacted by the illness.

Bipolar UK is the only national charity dedicated to supporting individuals affected by bipolar but we're struggling to meet demand for our services. **Last year we supported 80,000 people and this number is rising. That's why we're calling on the public to get behind people affected by bipolar by making a donation to the *I Am/I H*ave campaign.**

You can donate by:

Texting **HAVE17 £10** to **70070**
Visiting Bipolar UK's website at https://www.bipolaruk.org/iam

Emily Maguire, singer-songwriter and Bipolar UK supporter, said:

"Sometimes when I'm not well it feels like my whole life is dominated by that diagnosis. But my friends and family know that when I am well I am just like any other person who is busy, motivated, and generally OK. I'm a singer, a songwriter, a musician, a friend. I have bipolar. I am not an illness, I am a human being."

Andrew Langdon, Chief Executive at Bipolar UK, said:

"As highlighted by Emily's comments, it is vital we recognise each person as who they are and not just their diagnosis. Bipolar is often unduly stigmatised and so to reduce the stigma and the discrimination that many people with bipolar face, we must regard bipolar as something they have but doesn't define them."

Davinia Batley, Fundraising Manager at Bipolar UK, said:

"We're inviting people to support the person behind the diagnosis by donating to Bipolar UK. When you choose to make a gift to Bipolar UK, you choose to join a growing number of people who believe that bipolar should no longer be an invisible illness."

[ENDS]

Notes for Editors

About Bipolar UK:

1. Bipolar UK is the national charity dedicated to supporting individuals and families affected by bipolar.

Media:









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2. Bipolar is a severe, long-term mental illness characterised by extreme mood swings from manic highs to suicidal depression.

3. More than one million people in the UK have bipolar.

4. It takes a shocking average of 10.5 years to receive a correct diagnosis of bipolar in the UK.

5. Bipolar UK's I Am/I Have campaign highlights that bipolar affects people from all walks of life and that bipolar doesn't have to define a person's life.

About the I Am/I Have campaign:

1. For social media and other digital assets, please contact **communications@bipolaruk.org**.

2. Information about the campaign and ways to donate can be found on Bipolar UK's website.

Media contact:

Rebekah Hayes - Communications & Engagement Officer
0333 323 4008
communications@bipolaruk.org

Company Contact:

Bipolar UK

E. communications@bipolaruk.org
W. https://www.bipolaruk.org

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