

## **ELPCSG Members Edinburgh Meeting February 14<sup>th</sup> – 7.00 pm at Maggie’s Centre**

Our main speaker will be Jane Herbstritt, Scottish Campaigns Assistant, Global Justice Now. Committee Member Iain More, who along with David Milner, arranges speakers for our Member Evenings, had just joined the Group when he heard a talk by Dr Mike Capaldi on the pharmaceutical industry. Iain found the talk interesting, but felt there was another, more questioning side to the way the industry worked. He found the Global Justice Now Report, *"Pills and Profits"* and made contact with one of the authors in London, Heidi Chow. She introduced Iain and David to Jane Herbstritt who is the Global Justice Campaigns Assistant in their Edinburgh Office. Jane has kindly agreed to talk, drawing from the Report’s research. It gives a revealing insight into the pharmaceutical industry.

### **The scandal of expensive medicines**

Jane writes: “The high price of medicines is denying patients access to the treatments they need to live healthy lives – or in some cases, simply to live. In the UK this is increasingly an issue, with cancer medicine in particular becoming more expensive and the NHS facing difficult decisions about which drugs they can afford to provide to patients. But this is a global problem. Around the world currently, two billion people do not have access to essential medicines. Driven by profit rather than public health, the pharmaceutical industry sets high prices in order to deliver short term return to shareholders. This model is problematic because it discourages innovation and ensures the price of medicines remain high. I’ll talk a bit about the problems of our current system, looking at some global and Scottish examples of the fight for the right to access medicine that is affordable for all. And I’ll also put forward a few short and long term solutions proposed by Global Justice Now and others – from greater transparency to the creation of a public pharmaceutical company.”

### **About Global Justice Now**

“Global Justice Now is a democratic social justice organisation with an international perspective. Our current campaigns focus on trade justice, migrant rights, re-imagining aid, and the pharmaceutical industry. As well as challenging the powerful, we also aim to mobilise people to fight for a more just and equal world. We have local groups across the country that we work with to campaign on our issues.”

### **About Jane Herbstritt**

“I have worked for Global Justice Now Scotland as a campaigner for ten years. Previous to that I’ve had other jobs in the voluntary sector, working for Scottish Environment LINK and the Scottish Civic Forum. I also currently work part-time for the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre. I live near Portobello with my husband and two primary school aged children.”