

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF LIFE IN A PSYCHIATRIC UNIT

Littlehampton, West Sussex, November 2010 – Author David Austin has written a novel inspired by his own childhood experience as a patient in a children’s psychiatric unit.

*Delivered Unto Lions* is set in the 1970s and tells the story of a 12-year old boy admitted to a mental institution suffering with depression. The book recounts the experience of becoming an adolescent while surrounded by other disturbed children and often unsympathetic nursing staff.

‘Most people don’t realise that such places existed,’ David Austin explains. ‘Places like Gwynfa in North Wales, Merrifield in Somerset, and the children’s unit at Lancaster Moor. People also probably don’t realise that children with mental health problems were treated in this kind of way. Very powerful drugs were used as a matter of routine, and while many of the nurses were caring, the way some kids were handled could be quite abusive.’

Although *Delivered Unto Lions* takes the form of a novel, David insists that it very much represents the truth.

‘I’ve changed personal details and situations to protect identities,’ he says, ‘but it is closely based on things I witnessed or personally experienced.’

While remembering this period in his life as very unhappy, David considers himself to be one of the lucky ones.

‘There were other kids I knew who suffered far more than I did,’ he says, ‘and thanks to some Internet forums, I know of people whose entire lives have been very badly affected by their memories of this type of institution.’

David hopes his novel will increase awareness of how children’s mental health problems were once treated, while also encouraging parents and professionals to consider the possible unintended consequences of treatments used today.

*Delivered Unto Lions* is David Austin’s first novel, and is published by CheckPoint Press. It is available from Amazon and most other online bookstores, and can also be ordered from local bookshops. For more information, visit <http://www.davidaustin.eu>