



## WRSO Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

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### **TWENTY ONE YEARS FOR THE WRSO**

**1994 - 2015**



It is twenty one years since the WRSO was first commissioned by Carol Boneham (Chairperson) and Diane Evans (Vice Chairperson) with Doctor Paul Newton as our President. We have a lot to thank Carol and Diane for. As you are aware after twenty one years the WRSO is still running as a very successful support group with over 150 members all of whom have Arthritis.

Over the years the group has evolved and continues to successfully achieve the initial objectives of our forerunners which is to support our members who have Arthritis. So that we can celebrate our twenty one years we are holding a garden party (strawberry tea) for our members and invited guests

Pat Jones has kindly agreed for us to hold the party at her home the grounds of which are spacious and able to accommodate our members. We will be providing strawberries cream teas and cakes with no charge to our members and I sincerely hope that the weather will be kind to us.

The date has been arranged for July 16<sup>th</sup> 2015 and will be held at Gunstone Hall Codsall WV8 1QQ

## Dates for your Diary

As you know I usually send out invitations enclosed with the Newsletter for our coffee mornings.

To avoid extra costs for the WRSG with printing we have decided not to carry on with this practice, therefore notification of coffee mornings will only be advertised in the main Newsletter

Our coffee mornings are very successful with usually 50 members attending and we sincerely hope that this will continue. Please make a note in your diaries of forthcoming coffee mornings which are not always held on the first Monday of the month due to bank holidays etc.

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### **Coffee Mornings**

**Monday 2<sup>ND</sup> March 2015**

10 30am – 12 30pm

(Doors open at 10 20am)

Linden House  
211 Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.  
WV6 0DD

### **(Bake a Cake Competition)**

**If you have any queries regarding the coffee morning please ring Joyce Knibbs**

**Mobile: 07539949723 (Monday –Friday)**

**Or email: [jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk)**

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## **Bake a Cake Competition**



We would like to invite you to bake a cake for the 2<sup>nd</sup> March coffee morning and enter our cake competition. First, second and third prizes will be awarded and all cakes with your permission auctioned to raise funds for the WRSG.

My thanks to you all in anticipation of a yummy coffee morning.

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### **Coffee Morning**

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

10 30am – 12 30pm

(Doors open at 10 20am)

Linden House  
211 Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton.  
WV6 0DD

### **(Hearing Awareness)**

**If you have any queries regarding this coffee morning please ring Joyce Knibbs**

**Mobile: 07539949723 (Monday-Friday)**

**Or**

**E mail: [jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jansimpson03@yahoo.co.uk)**

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## OUTINGS

**Mary Allen has organised 4 outings for our members**

### **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Cossford Air Museum £15 A day out at the Museum a must for history and aeronautical fans.

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

Spring Saunter, including Trentham Gardens, Lunch and a browse around the quaint Market Town of Uttoxeter. £15

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

A seaside trip to Llandudno details to be confirmed

### **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

WRSg 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Strawberry tea at Gunstone Hall, Whitehouse Lane, Codsall. WV8 1QQ

Any queries for any of these outings please contact

**Mary Allen Tel: 01902 354369**

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## HOLIDAYS

**5 DAYS IN PAIGNTON PRESTON SANDS HOTEL**

**5<sup>th</sup> October to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

Joyce Knibbs has negotiated with the Travel Firm for the holiday that was

Originally booked for March 2015 and was subsequently cancelled can now go ahead for October 2015.

For those members who have already paid a deposit of £20 this will be honoured and the cost of the holiday will be £159.

For any members applying for the first time the cost will be £179. There will be no more booking taken after the April Coffee morning.

If you would like details of this holiday please contact:

**Joyce Knibbs 07539949723**

Following 14 years of organising holidays for the WRSg Joyce has now decided to resign from this position. The October holiday to Paignton will be the last one that Joyce organises.

**On behalf of all those members who have enjoyed so many successful holidays that Joyce has organised I would like to thank Joyce for all of her hard work over the years.**

It is hoped that the committee can continue to organise holidays for members, we will keep you informed of any decisions we make.

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## NEWS ROUND UP

### **Rheumatology Department Nurse Telephone Help Line New Cross Hospital**

I have received information from Barbara Douglas (Clinical Nurse Manager Rheumatology) that changes have been made to the above telephone nurse help line.

The new service is now called **Advice Line** and is manned by Nurses on a rota system. This new answering machine telephone advice line will be operated between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

Patients will need to leave their name, hospital number, telephone number and the reason for calling using the 5 options below.

- 1) Appointments
  - 2) Flare up/depo request
  - 3) Biologics
  - 4) Medication query
  - 5) Other
- 

### **Barbara Douglas (Clinical Nurse Manager) Rheumatology**

I am delighted to introduce our members to a new member of staff for (Rheumatology) New Cross and Cannock Hospitals. **Barbara Douglas**

### **Clinical Nurse Manager (Rheumatology)**

Barbara will be coming to one of our coffee mornings to meet with members and to share her vision for Rheumatology Services. In the meantime she has forwarded a profile for your interest.



**Barbara Douglas**

### **Clinical Nurse Manager Rheumatology**

My Rheumatology experience spans around 25 years. Initially working at the newly developed Rheumatology unit at Cannock Chase Hospital known as Hollybank Ward. The 28 bedded ward catered for patients with a variety of Rheumatological conditions. Most of the patients attended for respite care and the initiation of hydro therapy with combined Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy.

At the time we had one Rheumatologist one Senior Sister two Junior Sisters and two Staff Nurses with Health Care

Support. During these early days patients received joint injections and oral steroid therapy and gold injections. The staff numbers increased and three Rheumatology Consultants with the addition of Dr Newton and Dr Ali requesting their patients to be admitted for respite care and assessment purposes. Rheumatology was starting to be recognised and the school of health requested students attend for education and placement. This was ideal as our nurses of the future would strive as a result of this process.

I was promoted to Junior Sister in 1994 and developed the newly formed day unit after completing my 40 Master level credits in clinical nursing at Staffordshire University I was one of the first nurses to complete a Degree level qualification in joint injection technique and undertook my Rheumatology Degree. This was useful as it gave me the way to educate Junior Doctors and Nurses willing to undertake this very advanced course at the time. The day unit was Nurse led in the days when this was a new concept for Nurses.

I decided to leave the Rheumatology unit in 2000 to work as a Practice Nurse by utilising my skills in Rheumatology where I set up a joint injection service for patients within the practice.

I missed my Rheumatology and an opportunity occurred to develop Rheumatology services for the patients at Lichfield and Tamworth, Consultant support had been present for the last 20 years but no Nurse support, consequently the patients were

constantly admitted to Hospital. The challenge was to reduce Hospital admission and review the patients at home if a flare occurred and to deliver care within the community using a community model.

This was received well by patients, General Practitioners and the Consultants alike. Because the Consultants only attended the Community Hospital on a weekly basis as the Nurse Specialist I decided to undertake my Nurse Prescribing qualification to enhance my practice this was useful when I had to undertake urgent reviews at home. Patients contacted a dedicated advice line number which was managed by my full time secretarial support that triaged the calls accordingly. Urgent reviews were conducted at the Hospital and joint reviews with Consultant and Therapists were key to our success.

Day unit care continued at Cannock Chase Hospital but Rheumatology care remained at the two Community Hospitals. During this time I undertook some succession planning by educating and developing two Registered Nurses keen to develop their knowledge and skills in Rheumatology.

I am pleased to report that as a result my Registered Nurse blossomed and has been promoted Community Rheumatology Sister as a result. Overall my Rheumatology and Nursing background has helped me to develop personally and professionally for this

major role ahead as the new Clinical Nurse Manager, exciting times all round and potentially we will be a one of the biggest Rheumatology centres in the West Midlands providing evidence based Rheumatological care entwined with research- I am immensely proud to be part of this new venture and as a patient a wonderful place to receive first class Rheumatological care.

**Regards Sister Barbara Douglas**

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### **Dementia Awareness**

**Jane James (Information Worker)  
Alzheimer's Society**

**At our last coffee morning in February we were fortunate to introduce Jane James to our members. Jane is an information worker employed by the Alzheimer's Society to raise awareness in Wolverhampton of Dementia. Jane has very kindly submitted her article for your interest.**

Dementia isn't something that many of us want to think about. It's a scary thought, and the first images that come to mind are usually negative ones. My job as Information Worker for the Alzheimer's Society is to talk to everyone who lives and works in Wolverhampton about dementia- so if people don't want to listen that could be quite a challenge! Wolverhampton City Council would like us to be

designated a 'Dementia Friendly City' and a good starting point is to realise that everyone has a part to play. Why? Because the number one message is that it is possible to live well with dementia, but sometimes its other people who make this difficult. We could all choose to be the kind of people who are a bit more aware of what dementia is- and what it isn't- and who are a bit more patient and tolerant when we come across people who are holding up a queue, dithering, a little bit slow or confused, and maybe offer a helping hand if we think it's the right thing to do. A good way to get started is to think about becoming a 'Dementia Friend', someone who understands a little bit more about the illness, who can help others to understand simple facts and dispel myths, and who wears the 'Dementia Friends' badge to get people talking about dementia instead of brushing it under the carpet. If you're interested and you use the internet, go to [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk) to find out more- it's really easy. You could also contact me and I can deliver dementia awareness session to any groups or organisations, big or small. Here are some of the key facts that the Alzheimer's Society are keen to share with as many people as possible:

- **Dementia is not a natural part of ageing.** Some people live to a ripe old age with no signs of dementia, and on the other hand there are about 42,000 people under the age of 65 in Britain who have dementia.

- **Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain.**

The word 'dementia' is an umbrella term which refers to the symptoms- what happens to the person. The cause of these symptoms is physical changes damaging the brain, and these changes are always caused by disease. There are over 100 of these diseases, the most common being Alzheimer's (caused by a build-up of certain proteins). The second most common, vascular dementia, is caused by changes in the blood supply to the brain.

- **Dementia is not just about losing your memory.**

There are many symptoms, some depend on what type of disease is causing the dementia. They can include communication problems, mood swings, misunderstanding the world around us, irritation and behavioural changes. Everyone is different and will experience dementia in different ways.

- **There is more to the person than the dementia.**

We are all individual, unique human beings and people with dementia shouldn't be defined or judged by their illness. Always look past the dementia and try to connect

with the person.

Although dementia is progressive and there is no cure, if you think that you or someone you know might have dementia it's really important to talk to your GP. The most important reason is that it could be something else causing the symptoms, such as a thyroid or vitamin deficiency, or even an infection. These are treatable and should be investigated. Some people will be told they have Mild Cognitive Impairment, a condition which is more than normal 'forgetting things' but not dementia, and can receive appropriate support, advice and monitoring. If dementia is diagnosed there are possible drug treatments which could slow its progression and there are also support services and information available, particularly from the Alzheimer's Society (despite our name, we deal with all types of dementia). We have specialist support workers, activity groups like our monthly cafes in six venues in the Wolverhampton area, and in-depth information and support sessions for carers.

I hope you'll agree that even if we're not affected directly through family and friends, we all have a part to play in helping to make life better for people with dementia. For more information please contact me: Jane James, (Alzheimer's Society Information Worker)

Email [jane.james@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:jane.james@alzheimers.org.uk) call 07714 139406 or get in touch with our Black Country office on 0121 521 3020.

If you have an urgent need for help or advice regarding dementia the Black

Country duty desk is staffed Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm on 0121 521 3028  
The National Dementia Helpline is open 9am-8pm Monday to Wednesday, 9am-5pm Thursday and Friday and 10am-4pm Saturday and Sunday, call 0300 222 1122.

**My thanks to Jane for attending our coffee morning and for her very interesting article.**

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### **Bus Route to Cannock Hospital**

Following the meeting (7<sup>th</sup> November 2014) with David Loughton (Chief Executive RWHT) regarding Cannock Hospital, the outcome of which was reported in the last Newsletter. There have been changes to the bus schedule from our original meeting which were published in the Express and Star.

Jan Simpson WRSG secretary wrote to Mr Loughton on behalf of our members to establish exactly what the schedule will be and to articulate some of our concerns.

David Loughton's response to us indicated that the route for the bus to Cannock was developed in partnership with Arriva the service provider for the new X68 route.

Whilst the route was being planned consideration was given to the demographic makeup of the service area and to ensure that the residents of Wedges Mills and Featherstone have good public transport to both Hospitals. David Loughton stated that it is his belief that the route caters for the requirements of all its intended users.

The X68 service is free of charge for NHS patients with an appointment letter from the RWT, trust staff with an ID badge, children up to five and people over 60yrs who are carrying an ID card.

Relatives of patients and the general public can also use the single deck buses, but will be charged a standard fare between the two Hospitals.

Services start at 6.45am in Wolverhampton and 7.30am in Cannock with stops at Wolverhampton Bus Station, Deans Road, New cross Hospital, Featherstone, Red White and Blue public house, Wedges Mills and Cannock Chase Hospital.

There is an additional bus at lunchtime with the last service of the day leaving Cannock Chase Hospital at 9.40pm arriving in Wolverhampton Bus Station at 10.15pm.

The service started on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2015

The x68 service will not operate on public holidays.

**We would welcome feedback from any of our members using this service as to whether the service meets their needs.**

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### **Liz Walker (Chairperson WRSG)**

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