



WRSG Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No. 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

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This is our newsletter team,

Front left – Joyce Knibbs

Back left – Kath Sankey

Back right – June Osborne

Front right – Tony Sankey

It is a real help to have this team. I prepare the newsletter on the computer and print it off. I photocopy the 200 copies and put the labels and stamps on the envelopes.

I can no longer do the stapling and this is where the team comes in. They staple, fold and put the newsletters with any enclosures in the envelopes and that is all done in one day ready for Tony to post for us.

Thanks Team!

Information Session

We are having an information session on Tuesday 14th October at the Holly Bush, Penn Road Wolverhampton, from 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.

The talk will be by members of the Fire Brigade from 2.00 to 3.00 p.m followed by afternoon tea, coffee and cakes. There will be no charge for this event.

Booking forms are included with this newsletter. Please reply by 25th September

Reminder

Birmingham Symphony Hall Carol Concert

Sunday 21st December 7.30 p.m

The cost of the concert and coach is £24 per person. We will leave Falkland Street Coach Station at 6.00 p.m.

Cheques payable to the WRSG must be received by 1st October.

To book places please ring Sheila Fardoe between 4.00 and 6.00 p.m. only please



Congratulations

Congratulations to Sheila Fardoe's daughter Nicky who has gained a place at Keele University to study music.

The following is a "Right to Reply" from Mrs. June Osborne in response to the article written by Mr. David Loughton, Chief Executive RWHT in the WRSG August newsletter.

I was more than disappointed in Mr. David Loughton's comments in which he has taken Pat Jones' article "quite personally" thus not really answering any of the issues put forward concerning Dorothy Darby's three weeks spent in New Cross Hospital. I agree with Pat in that Dorothy's experience is not isolated.

Most Trust Staff are hard working. Professional and kind but a few are not and these individuals can make life very difficult for their colleagues and for patients when they are a vulnerable point in their lives and dare not question the system.

Many barriers still exist to patients making a complaint for fear of a come back if they express their concerns. This can also apply to Trust Staff.

Is there a central system in place to ensure ALL Trust Staff learn from mistakes and change practice as a result?

I believe to improve patient care patients need reassurance that systems are in place to ensure that situations do not happen again and that they are treated with respect and dignity and they are assured that the Trust is open and honest at all times and no fear of a come back. Saying Sorry is not always enough.

Communication is not effective within the Trust. There is a lack of sharing from strategic to operational level, for example between Senior Managers and those providing services between Doctors and Nurses.

Matrons It has long been said bring back these formidable women who wore distinctive uniforms. Their wards were run to a rigid routine of nursing care. They were constantly on the prowl for bed sores, infections, dirt etc. Unkindness or concerns from Staff to patients would have been noticed immediately.

Patients would not have left hospital hungry and dirty. They gave and took responsibility for their actions. This is sadly missing in the Trust. Concerns would have been "nipped in the bud" thus avoiding complaints.

Since my time spent on the Shadow Patients Forum at New Cross there were many obstacles you encountered when you dared to question the system. I see little or no change. Do we not all want the same goals simply to help make it work not only for patients who are dependant on it but also Staff?

It is most important that the "Powers that be" visit wards and departments within the Trust to see what is going on and stop "Passing the Buck!"

*June Osborne
Community Care worker for fifteen years
Vice Chair Shadow Patients Forum,
New Cross Hospital (2000/2003)
Wolverhampton Rheumatology Support
Group Committee Member
Voluntary Worker raising funds for
New Cross for various projects
Lymphoma Support Group member*

I Know.

A poem from Brenda

I know the sun will come out again,
And chase the grey clouds away,
Then the dark days will disappear,
I wish I knew that peace would come one day.

The poet's write "love conquers all",
So if only men would cease to fight,
Then no more shattered broken dreams,
Could haunt you through the long night

I know if we could live in peace,
There would be no hunger, fear or pain,
If only one day the wars would end,
I know our world in peace would reign.

Condolences

I would like to use the newsletter to convey my condolences to our member Mrs. Ann Griffiths and her family. Ann's husband Nort passed away this month on their 69th wedding anniversary. I have known Ann since I was a teenager.

Dorothy

The following article is from the Healthcare Commission News.

Good News!

Do you agree with the findings?

Patients praise the care they get in GP practices and health centres. More patients are saying they are “completely satisfied” with care in GP practices and health centres, with high proportions saying they are treated with dignity and listened to carefully. These are the findings of our recently published survey of primary care services.

Between January and April this year, more than 69,000 people in England were asked about their experiences of GP practices and health centres and about access to dentists. The survey covered topics such as access to appointments, waiting times and patients’ relationships with NHS staff. Alongside the results, we have also published, for the first time, a national overview with comparative scores for all 152 primary care trusts in England, the organisations that buy services from GPs and dentists. These results will help trusts to understand the views of their patients and respond to any concerns.

I recently asked for an appointment with my new GP practice at 8.45 a.m and got one for 10.00 a.m. I didn’t ask for a specific Doctor though which may have made it easier.
Dorothy

Eastbourne

When the AGM is over I will be looking forward to my five day holiday at Eastbourne. When your husband, wife or partner dies there are many milestones to overcome such as birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas and holidays. Don and I went to Eastbourne seven years running, three times a year with our friends Audrey and John from Newmarket. Our holiday was booked the year Don died but I couldn’t face going and it is the only milestone I haven’t coped with to date. It is seventeen years now and I have been on other holidays just not to Eastbourne.

I am now looking forward to going and I am sure I will cope but wish me luck.

The Official opening of the Gem Centre



Pauline and Tony Callaghan with me at the official opening of the Gem Centre

Pauline and Tony were kind enough to give me a lift to this event.

The Gem Centre was opened by the Right Honorable Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Health on Wednesday 30th July 2008. The Gem Centre is a dedicated Children and Young People’s Centre that provides coordinated services to the community through the partnership working of the major health and social care agencies in Wolverhampton.

Barry Picken, Chairman of the PCT and Alan Johnson made short speeches and Alan unveiled the plaque. We were provided with refreshments and tours of the facility.

While I was at the Gem Centre I took the opportunity to speak with Maxine Bygrave, PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) coordinator for the PCT regarding my concern about the lack of patient transport as services are moved out into the community.

Maxine has spoken to the commissioning team and they are investigating the issue maybe using volunteers to help.

Dorothy

Is the credit crunch make us ill?

Emma Wilkinson

Health reporter, BBC News

After living through a period of relative prosperity, the recent downturn in the economy may have come as a bit of a shock to most of us. But can falling house prices and rises in the cost of living harm more than our bank balance.

Is our health also at risk?

There is evidence that in times of "recession" life expectancy falls.

Professor Martin McKee, an expert in European public health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine says much of the research on the issue was done in the former Soviet Union where there was a dramatic deterioration in financial security.

Stress affects the cardiovascular system and the immune system and in the long term it leads to a sort of 'rapid ageing' making you vulnerable to all sorts of different things
Professor Richard Wilkinson

"And there are lots of other historical parallels, for example as shown in Charles Dickens' novel, *Hard Times*," he says.

In wealthy countries there is not a fantastically strong relationship between economic success and a long life.

For example, the fact the US is around twice as rich as say Spain or Greece is not reflected in life expectancy.

The social environment may be more important.

And countries with more even distribution of wealth, such as those in Scandinavia, can also boast better life expectancy.

Uncertainty

But, says Professor Richard Wilkinson a social epidemiologist at the University of Nottingham, instability in the job market can have an impact on our health.

"Unemployment is always quite damaging to the unemployed themselves but also to those left in jobs who feel increasingly insecure.

Look at post-war Britain - everyone was living a pretty deprived existence but mental health and well-being was fairly good

Professor Alan Maryon Davis

"When people started looking at unemployment and health they looked at factory closures where everyone was laid off together but they found that health actually worsened before when there was a threat of closure."

He says it ultimately comes down to stress and we know a lot more these days about stress-related illness than we did in previous times of hardship.

In fact a recently published study shows psychological distress such as anxiety, insomnia, depression, apathy and fatigue can more than double the risk of developing type 2 diabetes in men.

Professor Danny Dorling, an expert in human geography at the University of Sheffield carried out a study in the 1990s to ask what benefits would there be if British society was more "equal".

He found some 2500 deaths per year in the under 65s would be prevented in a scenario where there was full employment.

"People are twice as likely to die when they are not employed," he says.

"It's not because people are poorer, it's the risk of being made redundant which affects a person's chances of dying."

He adds that some places in Britain, such as Glasgow East, had never really come out of recession and the poorer health and life expectancy suffered by those who never found work again are a good indicator of what can happen.

"The really bad thing about a recession is people internalise their feelings of fear and the effects you can measure are really just the tip of the iceberg.

"Also the effects are cumulative - it's rather like smoking, the collected insults prematurely age you.

"Rates of depression are likely to rise and we're already taking a record amount of antidepressants," he says.

"Something like one in ten people in Glasgow are on Prozac."

Fertility may be another casualty in lean times as people marry later in life and hold back from having children, he adds.

Mental health

So far, the biggest, or at least most noticeable, impact of the credit crunch has been on the housing market.

A study published last year by a team of researchers in Essex found that struggling to meet the mortgage payments can have a detrimental effect on mental health.

It may seem obvious but these psychological effects, measured after the crash in house prices in the early 1990s, were over and above those associated with financial hardship in general and similar in magnitude to losing a job.

Professor Alan Maryon Davis, president of the Faculty of Public Health said whether or not the credit crunch will make people "unhealthy" is a difficult one to answer.

"I expect you will see an effect on mental well-being because people will feel very pressured."

But people do not always behave as you would expect, he adds.

"Look at post-war Britain - everyone was living a pretty deprived existence but mental health and well-being was fairly good."

Professor McKee agrees the picture is not black and white.

"The key issue is change - there's also evidence that rapid increases in the economy are bad for people so it can work both ways."

Story from BBC NEWS:

It isn't good when every bill which arrives has increased is it? When the money going out exceeds the money coming in how can people not get anxious?

Dorothy

I received the following E-mail on one of the days I had Jack with me and I would have had one nail in the fence!!!

NAILS IN THE FENCE

Make sure you read all the way down to the last sentence.

(Most importantly the last sentence)

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down.

He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all.

He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence.

He said, 'You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence.

The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one.

You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. But it won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound will still be there.

A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. Remember that friends are very rare jewels, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share words of praise and they always want to open their hearts to us.'

How old is Grandad?

Stay with this -- the answer is at the end. It will blow you away.

One evening a grandson was talking to his grandfather about current events.

The grandson asked his grandfather what he thought about the shootings at schools, the computer age, and just things in general.

The Grandfather replied, 'Well, let me think a minute, I was born before

□□television □□penicillin □□polio shots
□□frozen foods □□Xerox □□contact lenses □□Frisbees and □□the pill

There were no □□credit cards □□laser beams or □□ball-point pens

Man had not invented □□pantyhose □□air conditioners □□dishwashers □□clothes dryers □and the clothes were hung out to dry in the fresh air and □□man hadn't yet walked on the moon

Your Grandmother and I got married first, and then lived together.

Every family had a father and a mother. Until I was 25, I called every man older than me, 'Sir'.

And after I turned 25, I still called policemen and every man with a title, 'Sir.' We were before gay-rights, computer-dating, dual careers, daycare centers, and group therapy.

Our lives were governed by the Ten Commandments, good judgment, and common sense.

We were taught to know the difference between right and wrong and to stand up and take responsibility for our actions. Serving your country was a privilege; living in this country was a bigger privilege.

We thought fast food was what people ate during Lent.

Having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins.

Time-sharing meant time the family spent together in the evenings and weekends-not purchasing condominiums.

We never heard of FM radios, tape decks, CDs, electric typewriters, yoghurt, or guys wearing earrings.

We listened to the Big Bands, Jack Benny, and the President's speeches on our radios. And I don't ever remember any kid blowing

his brains out listening to Tommy Dorsey.

If you saw anything with 'Made in Japan' on it, it was junk
the term 'making out' referred to how you did on your school exam.

Pizza Hut, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of.

In my day 'grass' was mowed □□'coke' was a cold drink □□'pot' was something your mother cooked in and □□'rock music' was your grandmother's lullaby.

'Chip' meant a piece of wood

□□'hardware' was found in a hardware store and □□'software' wasn't even a word.

And we were the last generation to actually believe that a lady needed a husband to have a baby.

No wonder people call us 'old and confused' and say there is a generation gap... And how old do you think I am? I bet you have this old man in mind...you are in for a shock!

Read on to see -- pretty scary if you think about it - and pretty sad at the same time. Are you ready????? This man would be only 55 years old!!

Help from the Fire Service

My life seems to be just a bit problematic at the moment. Kath, Tony, June and Joyce were helping do the newsletters when Joyce noticed water in the kitchen. It turned out to be a faulty seal and washer on my central heating system. After a few days of trauma every thing was fixed again with the help of my Insurance Company. I did have to organise my own electrician and sort one or two things out myself. Tony, Kath and Caroline came to my rescue once again.

The reason for writing this is that on the second day I came down to water in the kitchen and smoke coming from a bank of plugs. Ashley said why didn't my smoke alarm go off? I said the smoke hadn't come out of the kitchen into the hall to set it off but it did concern me.

After a week when I was straight again I rang the fire brigade and within a quarter of an hour they came and fitted an alarm in the hall which sends a signal upstairs to the one which is fitted for me to be able to hear.

It certainly pays to ask for help and advice because I feel more contented again now.

Dorothy

High Quality Care For All: NSR final report launched

Posted: 30 June 2008

Lord Darzi has launched the Next Stage Review final report. High Quality Care for All sets a new foundation for a health service that empowers staff and gives patients choice. It ensures that health care will be personalised and fair, include the most effective treatments within a safe system, and help patients to stay healthy.

The report will give patients more say through initiatives such as care plans for those with long term conditions, a guarantee that the most effective drugs will be available to all, and provide the right to choose care providers, including GPs. Personal budgets will be piloted for 5000 patients with complex conditions.

People will be helped to stay healthy through the investment of record amounts in wellbeing and prevention services. The new "Reduce Your Risk" campaign to raise awareness of free vascular checks for 40-74 year-olds

Front line staff will be enabled to initiate and lead change that improves quality of care for patients. There will be no new targets from the centre, with service providers accountable to patients and the public. There will be a clinical voice at every level of the service, and investment in new programmes of clinical leadership. A new workforce strategy will fully support NHS staff. The new independent body NHS Medical Education England will scrutinise workforce planning proposals for doctors and dentists. The investment in foundation periods for nurses will triple and a new tariff-based system for education funding will see funding follow the student, improving transparency and rewarding quality.

Lord Darzi's report is interesting but very long. I am most impressed by the sentence

"There will be no new targets from the centre, with service providers accountable to patients and the public."

Another poem from WRSG Poet, Brenda

Betty

If only Betty would visit today,
Then I would not be sitting alone,
In this cold and friendless place,
How I miss my lovely home.

Perhaps my son might come today,
Although he is busy working hard you see,
And he doesn't have much time to spare,
To come and visit me

My daughter has her hands full,
What with the twins and a job too,
She would visit if she had the time,
Like most other daughters do.

If Betty came it would be nice,
To sit and talk of times gone by,
About old friends we knew and things we did,
How the years flew quickly by.

Betty was my dearest friend,
We used to go dancing and holidays by the sea,
Then Betty got married and moved away,
And promised to write to me

It's boring here most of the time,
Nothing much to do each day,
Sometimes I read a book or watch T.V.
Perhaps a game of cards to play

Well now it's almost time for tea,
I do hope it's not fish today,
Tonight I will read my book again,
To pass the evening away

Maybe tomorrow someone will visit,
So I will look forward to this,
But for now it's time for bed,
And no more to reminisce



PON & ZI

Section One - First Day of School



Meet Pon →  ← & Zi Aren't They Cute!

Umbra Station Primary School Was The One Pon And Zi Were Going To! They Didn't Know Each Other Then But They Were About To. Let Me Tell You The Story Of What Happened To The Both Of Them.

Pon Was Walking to School with His Mother They Both Looked Alike but Pon's Mother Was A Lot Taller, No Wonder Pon Couldn't Reach To Hold His Mother's Hand Meanwhile Zi Was In The Car Driving To School With Her Father, Zi Lived Further Away From The School Than Pon So Pon Could Walk To School But Zi Had To Get A Lift. After A Few Minute's They Both Got To School, Kissed Their Parents' Good Bye And That's When It All Started!

"Hello, I'm An Emo" Whispered Zi

"Hi" Replied Pon

"What's Your Name?" Asked Pon

"Zi, How About You?" Replied Zi

"Pon" He Answered

Zi Saw Something In Pon That She Liked But Her Only Problem Was That Pon Saw An Emo Face That He Wasn't Too Keen On In Zi. Their First Day Was Fun! They Did All Sorts Of Stuff, Can You Remember What You Did On Your First Day? Pon Played With The Modelling Clay But Made A Mess Of It So The Teacher Sent Him To Play With The Jigsaw's. Zi Was Also Playing With The Jigsaw's So They Played Together, Time Went Flying By Then And Before They Knew It It Was Time To Go Home. Pon Met His Mother At The Gate Of The School But Zi Couldn't See Her Father...

Find out What Happened to Zi in Next Month's Newsletter!



By Jessica Darby

Orthotics

Last year I mentioned that many patients were having the same experience as me regarding the shoes supplied on the NHS. They couldn't wear them.

I contacted Mr. Jon Crockett, Chief Executive of the Primary Care Trust and Mr. David Loughton, Chief Executive of the Royal Wolverhampton Hospital Trust. Mr. Crockett and Mr. Loughton each appointed one of their Directors to work with me to try to improve the service. We had some meetings to see if Biomechanics at Landport Road and Orthotics at New Cross can work together for the benefit of patients.

The following is an update on the situation.

A proposal is currently being considered for an integrated orthotic service accessed by a single point of access that is a community-based service.

The perceived benefits are felt to be:

quicker service access

triage to ensure appropriate treatment by clinician

less appointments across different systems

greater opportunity for "off the shelf" products that are felt to be appropriate by whole multi-disciplinary team.

The aims to be agreed in September

Proposed Developments 2008-09

Orthotic Services

Olympic Games

I didn't mind being housebound during the Olympic Games.

Team G.B. did us proud didn't they?

Brenda and I were discussing the opening ceremony and Brenda said she hoped we could do as well in 2012. I said we should have a pageant of our history because we have a wonderful heritage. Lord Coe says it will not be flamboyant but will help with regeneration for

the future. I hope so because it will cost an awful amount of money. I am sure they will come up with something weird and wonderful!!

The views expressed in this newsletter are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or the WRSG. The use of a product name does not constitute an endorsement or a recommendation by the WRSG