

GUTSY Newsletter

Issue 8 – North Wales and West Cheshire

Spring 2011

GUTSY News

Welcome to the latest edition of the GUTSY newsletter. Previous issues have proved popular with GUTSY members; they are also circulated to patients who want to be kept informed but who can't always attend meetings. You can find more information about GUTSY on their website

www.gutsy-group.org.uk

This issue contains a range of articles which we hope you will find informative and helpful. GUTSY is jointly organised by healthcare professionals and a small steering group of GUTSY members. At meetings you can recognise the steering group members by their red name-badges, please approach them if there is anything you would like to discuss at the meetings. If you have any ideas for the newsletter, website, fund raising or would like to write an article, let us know, telephone or email Janet Robinson or Diane Henderson on: 01978 727164 / 727125

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GUTSY Telephone Support Scheme

When things happen in life people often find it comforting to talk to someone who has been through a similar experience. This sharing and mutual support happens naturally when people attend GUTSY. However, not everyone can get to the meetings.

Therefore, GUTSY are developing a structured 'Telephone Support Scheme'. This is an excellent way of making contact with people who have been in a similar situation and who can offer understanding, practical tips, and empathy to people who are newly diagnosed or undergoing treatment. GUTSY's scheme has been developed in-line with good practice recommended by Macmillan.

To operate the scheme a number of volunteers are soon to be recruited, and will undertake training in listening and responding skills.

Brian Lewin one of the GUTSY members is the Lead Volunteer for the scheme. He can be contacted on his mobile number 07834320401 or at brian@gutsy-group.org.uk

Just Ask

Mr Pye, Consultant Surgeon, regularly attends GUTSY meetings with members of the surgical centre clinical team: Ann, Michelle and Lizzy (Nurse Specialists), Rachel and Beth (physiotherapists), Vicky (occupational therapist) and Jane, Kate and Sarah (dieticians) are amongst the team who are available to help. During the question and answer session they respond to questions and concerns that people may have about their condition or treatment.

Unfortunately Mr Pye could not attend the meeting in November, but Lizzy and Stella kindly stepped in to answer questions asked by members.

Q: Whilst on a cruise I used the equipment in the gym, does this do any damage (now 11 months post op)?

A: After 11 months should be fine, but don't overdo it. It is good to keep healthy with diet and exercise.

Q: Had pain in my back which radiated to the front and was in hospital for five days. Had CAT scan and everything was clear; it is four years since surgery. Only felt comfortable with knees folded to chest.

A: This is probably an unrelated event.

Q: I feel cold all the time, even with many layers on.

A: This probably won't change and is due to the weight loss. Less body fat means you tend to feel the cold more.

Q: My weight went to 8 stone, even in summer my feet are cold. Now put on 2-stone and not cold any more. However problems with reflux, so has small portions and doesn't eat after 6pm. Took Ranitidine but came out in a rash and short of breath.

A: There alternatives, ask GP for Fast Tabs or Lansoprasole (can be taken either morning or evening).

Q: Can I take it at 8am if I taken something else about 4am?

A: It is best to take them on an empty stomach as this helps control the acid.

Q: I had a leaflet (from the Oesophageal Association) recommending a S.O.S talisman. This is a piece of jewellery similar to a locket which allows you to detail information about your medical condition. The Oesophageal Association were saying that in an Emergency situation people may not want to be laid flat.

A: If you are comfortable lying down to sleep this is fine. However, lying down may increase reflux symptoms. Patients often find that propping themselves up with pillows or elevating the head of the bed helps.

Baby Megan:



Members welcomed Stella Davies, Nurse Practitioner, and daughter Megan to the November meeting.

Christmas Hampers:



Diane Henderson and Linda Vallance showing the hampers for the raffle held at the November meeting.

The lucky winners were David Vallance and Brian Lewin. Monies raised for the GUTSY fund from sale of raffle tickets,

Linda's home-made mince pies, and refreshments was £100.

Relate have only just started a new project, the first of its kind in Wales and only the second such project in the UK:

Relate is at the beginning of a three-year partnership with Macmillan who are funding two consellers, Christine Pool and Sheila Cunnington, to provide counselling and confidential support to couples and families affected by cancer. We know for those with a diagnosis or supporting a loved one, it is often hard to talk to those closest to you, your partner, your children, parents or close relatives. A cancer diagnosis can have a huge physical and emotional impact and our counsellors can help explore the feelings of loss, anxieties, life changes and fears for the future.

Christine and Sheila will see people at Relate offices in Wrexham and Colwyn Bay; there are plans to hold outreach sessions across North Wales and home visits where appropriate.

People can be referred to Relate through social workers, Macmillan professionals, nurses, GPs or they can refer themselves through the dedicated Relate Macmillan phone number on 01492-535140.

What do you think?

Ann Camps, Clinical Nurse Specialist, is the nominated lead at the Surgical Centre for patient and carer issues. Please contact Ann direct with any concerns, ideas or suggested improvements.

Contact Details:

Ann Camps, Macmillan Nurse Specialist, Maelor Hospital: Tel: 01978 727161, email: ann.camps@wales.nhs.uk

Michelle Curtis, (covering for Stella's maternity leave), Maelor Hospital: Tel: 01978 727858, email: Michelle.Curtis@wales.nhs.uk

Lizzy Pearce, Upper GI CNS, Countess of Chester: Tel: 012440680444, ext 3210, email: Elizabeth.pearce@coch.nhs.uk

Welfare Rights enquiries:
Tel: 01978-298258

Pam Wedley, Information & Resource Facilitator, Wrexham
Tel: 01978-726188 or email: Macmillan.shootingstar@wales.nhs.uk

Lizzy Taylor, Information Facilitator, Countess of Chester: Tel: 01244-364948 or email: Elizabeth.Taylor@coch.nhs.uk

Oesophageal Patient Association

<http://www.opa.org.uk/>

Helpline No: 0121-704-9860, Monday to Friday: 9am - 5pm

Dates for your diary for 2011:

Meeting dates have been arranged for 2011. All meetings are on a Wednesday afternoon and are held at Rossett Hall, from 2pm to 4pm.

27th April
27th July
23rd November

Help with DIY or Gardening?



Airbus UK workforce at Broughton has a team of volunteers to help with: simple DIY, gardening, shopping. For further information contact Phil Jones, Charity-Challenge on: 07710 339173

