

KEEPING PACE

OCTOBER 2005

SOUTHAMPTON CHRONIC PAIN SUPPORT GROUP

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Action on Pain



Doc's Ramblings



Funding

Pain Management
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Welcome to our third newsletter

It's official Autumn is on its way. I'm not sure why I think of spiders at this time of year, but there seems to be an abundance of them in the garden, and they seem much bigger this year - I'll show you later in this issue what I mean, that's if I can get one of them to smile!!

We've had a brilliant quarter, as far as meetings go, with talks on Aromatherapy, Acupuncture and Active Options, all very interesting, and on page two we have "Docs Ramblings" i.e. a summary of all three meetings.

As most of you know, and for those who don't, we are part of Action On Pain a national charity established in 1998 which is dedicated to providing support and advice for people affected by chronic pain.

At the September meeting Ian Semmons, Chairman, Action on Pain, gave an update on the national picture. He stated that three new branches would be opening in Derby, Doncaster and Dewsbury and that a planning meeting would be held in November to see if opening a

branch in the New Forest was viable. Initial talks had taken place with regard to opening branches in Barnstaple and North Liverpool in 2006.

The website was showing a healthy increase in hits with a programme of redesigning the site in order to support the growth of the charity. Pain Line the telephone helpline was also proving more popular with calls coming from a wider range of sources.

With the year end almost upon us Ian was able to report that AOP was in sound financial state due to careful planning when expanding the organisation. He stressed that one of the major problems was "growing pains" caused by a lack of volunteers which the Trustees are seeking to address. This is a problem common to many voluntary organisations however it has given the charity a good opportunity to explore how it manages future growth.

Ian added that there were plans to recruit either a Devel-

opment Worker in the North Midland/North West area or a Branch Co-ordinator who would look after all the branches. There are a number of logistical issues as well as financial issues linked to both options, however these were currently being addressed.

In summing up Ian said that he was speaking at the National Pain Management Programme Conference in Nottingham later in September as well as going to Switzerland to take part in a sponsored Patient Link conference that brings together pain related organisations from across Europe. Both events provided a wonderful opportunity not only to spread the name of Action on Pain but to forge links and learn from other organisations.

Finally, Ian thanked all those within the branch who had done so much to make it a success

QUOTES:

Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting and autumn a mosaic of them all.
~ Stanley Horowitz

Youth is a wonderful thing. What a crime to waste it on children. ~ George Bernard Shaw

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night.
But ah, my foes, and ah, my friends,
It gives a lovely light.
~ Edna St Vincent Millay

For man, autumn is a time of harvest, of gathering together. For nature, it is a time of sowing, of scattering abroad. ~Edwin Way Teale

Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.
~ George Eliot

"DOC'S RAMBLINGS"

JULY SESSION



The meeting in July was lead by Phoebe, a very experienced aromatherapist who gave us a fascinating introduction to this complementary therapy. Her enthusiasm was infectious! She described it as a treatment which uses the essence or "soul" of the plant to heal. Aromatherapy creates harmony within and balances emotions. It can be used safely alongside all orthodox medicine (the only exception being Betnovate cream). She encouraged their use for chronic pain conditions and has left us copies of recommended oils to photocopy and distribute to our members. A notable example is Lavender. A study of its use was carried out at the Royal South Hants Hospital and it was demonstrated not only to help the patients sleep better but also to improve the wellbeing of the night staff! If you haven't picked up your photocopy

yet, do talk to Joan at the next Support Group. Phoebe went through the various ways in which the oils can be applied: in massage, in baths and showers, on flannels and handkerchiefs, on pillows or vapourised with burners. She advised that the oils should be pure, that it's best to obtain them through reputable companies and that only those supplied in brown bottles should be bought as they last better. We then had a "hands-on" session in which we paired up and massaged each others hands. It was very relaxing and a great way to get to know each other even better. Something you can definitely practice at home.

Ground Rules

We revisited the group's Ground Rules at the July meeting. There was a discussion about how to deal with a situation where someone talks too much and is insensitive to others or monopolises the discussion. A popular suggestion was that that person should be given a "Yellow Card" with a smiley face on it as a gentle hint to lighten up. We'll have to see how this goes.



AUGUST SESSION



The Five Elements

We didn't have quite such a good turn out as usual at the August meeting. We decided that this was most likely due to the summer holidays. Those of us who did make it, however, were rewarded by a stimulating talk on acupuncture by Amanda White. She told us that she started her career as a nurse but was inspired to specialise in acupuncture when she attended a training course in China. She has since expanded her practice and offers treatments in Neurolinguistic Programming, Kinesiology, Emotional Freedom Therapy, Reiki as well as Acupuncture. She went on to explain how some branches of Traditional Chinese Medicine relate illness to the 5 elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water and how this can be used both to diagnose and treat conditions. She described different ways in which acupuncture points can be stimulated and showed us press needles and magnets both of which can be put on acupuncture points to make the effects of treatments last longer. She also did a brief demonstration of the use of Kinesiology for diagnosis. She described how imagery can be used therapeutically. For example, it is quite a well known fact that the body has its own pain killing substances known as endorphins. She explained that you may experience some benefit if you could imagine that your "endorphins" were "dolphins" swimming around happily and freely in a bright, white circle and then expand these pleasant thoughts further by relating them to your pain relieving endorphins spreading freely through your body. I'm sure it would need some practice in order to work but it's an interesting concept!

SEPTEMBER SESSION



We all felt that we learned a lot this month from the speaker Paul Hedges of Active Options. What a superb service these people offer. Active Options is a collaboration between the Primary Care Trust (ie General Practice), the NHS and the Local Authority. It offers exercise on prescription to people suffering from health problems which would otherwise make access to exercise difficult. They consider taking regular exercise as being as important as taking your daily medication. It has lots of long-term health benefits such as lowering blood pressure, easing pain and stiffness, weight loss, and increased confidence and self esteem. You can be referred into the service through the GP, Physiotherapist or Hospital Specialist. We have kept a pad of the special referral forms so you could always take one along to them and ask for one to be filled in for you. Once the referral is received, Active Options send you an appointment for your level of fitness to be assessed and for a suitable exercise programme to be devised which takes into consideration your health needs. There are a variety of gym and water based activities to choose from. The programme is either free (if you are receiving certain benefits) or subsidised for 16 sessions. Your progress is monitored carefully during this time and a report of what you have achieved sent to your GP on completion. After this you can carry on attending the exercise classes that you enjoyed. The cost goes up a bit after the 16 sessions but there are ways of keeping this as low as possible by applying for a leisure card or taking out a gym membership. If you live in the Southampton area and want to know more you can contact Paul via his email Paul.hedges@southampton.gov.uk and he has also offered that you can come and observe one of the exercise classes to see if it's for you before you commit yourself.

Departing summer hath assumed

An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of spring;
That calls from yonder leafy shade

Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

William Wordsworth, [September](#)

Listen! the wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves,
We have had our summer evenings, now for October eves!

FUNDING & BITS AND PIECES

We are very grateful to Sharon Neale. She raised £64.10 by running a tombola at a fund raising event organised by N'Joys, a Special Needs gymnastic club run at The Deanery in Southampton. They kindly allowed her to donate the money to our Support Group. Our thanks also go to the various members who have donated all manner of helpful things such as biscuits, name badges, printing material, money for advertising, their valuable time, and so I could go on. It's this commitment by all our members that is so encouraging, supportive and fundamental in keeping this group going. NRW.

Remember the article from Jessie Horrocks in the July issue regarding the Pain Management Course? Well we have two observations from members who wish to remain anonymous.

Anonymous number one:

"Regarding the Pain Clinic, the main benefits I gained from attending were:

1. The deep breathing and relaxing exercises.
2. Pacing, not trying to fit everything in on the same day.
3. It also helped realizing others are suffering the same daily pain as you".

Anonymous number two:

Pain, and Pain Management.

"For many years I have been a great sufferer of upper and lower back pain. A Laminectomy of L4 and L5 worked for a while, but the need for a spinal fusion was carried out a few years later. Now I am condemned to a life with spinal spondylitis, and all the pain and suffering that goes with it.

Over the years I have worked tirelessly in trying to manage the pain, but the problem was that no one seemed to be aware of what I was enduring. This was my biggest setback. It always seemed that I was receiving the same treatment for my back, that I had received for many trauma type injuries.

I learned from the Pain Management Course at Moorgreen Hospital, that Chronic Long Term Pain is treated in a far different way than pain caused by trauma. This was my first big step in a new understanding on how to address and manage my painful condition. Another helpful point was that I spent 6 weeks in a concentrated course with fellow pain sufferers, under the instruction and guidance of a team of understanding professionals. I now began to realize that I was not alone in my situation. For once I did not feel silly because I had to keep getting up off the chair to ease the pain as my back tightened up from lack of movement.

There was in the course much support from my colleagues, and understanding by the staff at the clinic which made me feel really at ease. Due to the sensible length of the course, I did not have to try and learn too much too quickly, and therefore forget some information, or finish the course with only partial knowledge of the subject.

It was really good to have such a wide selection of Pain experts running the clinic, again showing me that chronic pain has to be addressed by more than one source. No wonder the family doctor was not able to fully treat my condition. I must thank my doctor for realizing that I needed the help of the Chronic Pain Unit, and for getting me a place on the course. I also thank all the staff at Moorgreen for their assistance and professionalism in a course that must be very difficult to run as pain affects all of us in so many different ways. One person's relief is not necessarily relief to another.

The pain course was a good selection of hands on approach to Pain Management, and plenty of theory, not only from the instructors but also from the patients. The instruction was well backed up with excellent documentation that is referred to even today. I never felt rushed, pushed or pressured for the duration of the course. Another important feature is that at no time did any one make me feel that my pain is "In My Head", how refreshing for a change.

The need for this type of course for genuine chronic pain sufferers is very important, and should be made available after assessment has shown that improvement in pain management would be achieved.

It is important to make sure attendees will understand that their pain will not disappear, but they will have some important knowledge in managing their pain and having a more enjoyable and productive lifestyle".

RECENT NEWS

Action on Pain are looking for volunteers from the Southampton Group to apply to become a Trustee of the Charity, you will need to look at the Charity Commission website www.charity-commission.gov.uk publication CC3 for details of responsibilities. There will be some copies of the Summary Leaflet CC3a available at the next meeting, see Joan.

HYDROTHERAPY

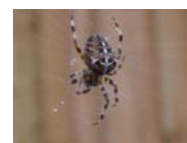
Hydrotherapy Classes which include Aquarobics, Back Class, Fitness for Health Class, Hip and Knee Class and Recreational Hydrotherapy are available at The Wessex Nuffield Hospital, the charges are £6.00 per class or session & £32.00 for six classes or sessions. For more information or to book an appointment please ring The Nuffield on 023 8025 8406.

SHARON HAS ALSO GIVEN US THE FOLLOWING:

Being a parent with chronic pain.

"Hi, if you are a parent of young children and suffer with chronic pain, you need to take lots of deep breaths and lots of counting.

Try finding a small group of friends that live close by and have children of their own and arrange trips to the park or picnics, where there are several adults to so many children and when you are having a bad day you won't have to worry too much about keeping the children occupied".



Well here he is, couldn't get him to smile but I took the picture anyway, I've named him Browser, that's because he's always on the web, Ha.

(well what do you expect, it's late)



We are on the Web

www.action-on-pain.co.uk

Action on
pain!



Date for the diary
Christmas Cheer on
December 15th 2005

NEWS FLASH !!!!!

Action on Pain - New Forest

Meeting on Wednesday
November 16th 2005 at
11am

Venue - The Leonard Cheshire
Resource Centre, New Milton
All Welcome

20 Necton Road

Little Dunham

Norfolk

PE32 2DN

Tel/Fax: 01760 725993

Date for Next Meeting

Thursday 20 October 2005

Time

1 - 3 pm

Venue

St. Andrews United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton SO17 1XQ

ACTION ON PAIN'S PHONE LINE

The dedicated telephone help-line, manned by people with chronic pain, provides expert advice and support based around their own experience.

Confidential and informal, **Pain Line** has gained a reputation for providing a quality service to their callers.

Call on: **0845 6031593**

(lo-call rate)

As the call staff are all volunteers there may be times when the line is not manned, Please leave a message and they will get back to you.

The **Pain Line** is open from 0900 hrs to 2100 hrs Monday to Friday

Answer phone out of hours.

N.B. The **Pain Line** staff are not qualified to give medical advice, however the advice given is based around their day-to-day living with chronic pain.

NEXT INFORMAL TALK ON 20th OCTOBER 2005



We are hoping that a member of the Hampshire Constabulary will be coming along to talk to us on "Medication and Driving" let's hope none of us are on double yellows!!

We are hoping to broaden the topic to discuss other issues of personal safety.



BACK PAGE LAUGHTER



Halloween

In the year 835 AD the Roman Catholic Church made **November 1st** a church holiday to honour all the saints. The day is called All Saints Day. It used to be also known as Halloween or All Hallows. Gradually, over the years, **October 31st** became known as All Hallow Even, eventually All Hallow's Eve and then Halloween as we know it today.



Why do witches use brooms to fly on?
Because vacuum cleaners are too heavy...

A ghoulish stood on the moonlit bank
His bones were all a quiver....
He gave a cough
His legs fell off
And floated down the river - *Whisper*

Lost in Translation

In a Rome Laundry:
Ladies, leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time.

Freudian Slip

'BACK PAIN can be relived with osteopathy'
South Durham times

The WI have cast off clothes which can be seen in the crypt every Friday
From Church Notice in Devon, thanks Shirley



Disclaimer

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