

BREATHE EASY North Staffordshire Newsletter: November 2023

Summary of our Get-Together, 3rd November

Welcome

We had 16 attendees, including our Kelly and John from MPFT, and Terence the guest speaker.
Unfortunately, we had quite a few apologies this month due to illness/appointments/holidays, from Hamish, Glynis, Rose, Mick, Joyce, John I & Helen H. We wish you all a speedy recovery (or great sunshine if you're abroad!)
Many thanks, as always, to Bried & Lynn for the lovely cakes!

Pharmacy Services

Terence Muyamah



Terence kindly sacrificed his lunch break to give us a very informative talk about the very wide and varied services that the Pharmacy can offer us. Pharmacists are extremely well qualified and they work as part of the integrated NHS system of patient care. There is very good communication between the pharmacy, GPs and nurses which allows for a sharing of the care of patients.

A key message is that we should think to go speak with a pharmacist as a **first option** when our ailments are not critical. The chemist will typically have more availability and be able to spend more time with you.

Services available include:

- Consultations on UTI (for women), infected insect bites, infected eczema, impetigo, minor conjunctivitis and ENT (for children).
- Blood pressure measurement and monitoring with GP referral if necessary
- Provision of Flu jabs, Sildenafil (for ED), travel health (eg malaria), oral contraceptives (continuation), Pencycle (for insulin pens)
- Electronic prescriptions and texting
- Hospital referrals for smoking cessation
- Disposal of old medicines, insulin pens and inhalers for safe, environmental treatment (but not sharps -> GP)

Pharmacies are particularly good at demonstrating the correct techniques for inhaler use. For asthma sufferers they can supply Peak Flow booklets.

The pharmacy is also well trained on skin conditions and should be a first stop for any concerns.

Overall, a very wide range of services!

Many Thanks Terence!

Inhaler Technique

Kelly

Kelly gave us a demonstration on the correct techniques for inhaling our medicines with

- Pressurized spray (typical Ventolin type)
- Spray with Air Chamber
- Dry Powder inhaler



In all cases, we need to empty our lungs away from the device before inhaling. We need to hold our breath for 10 seconds (if possible!) once we've inhaled.

We also want to rinse our mouths afterwards to clear any residue that might be there (especially with Corticosteroids – the brown inhaler, for example).

An air chamber is important to use when you use a pressurized spray. Without it you only get some 20% of the medicine in your lungs! With it, you get 80%. That's a significant difference!

Cleaning the Air Chamber is important – air dry only to leave a film of the washing detergent behind. Regularly replacing the Air Chamber is also highly recommended (every 6 months).

Instructions on how to use, and to clean, an Air Chamber are attached.

Many Thanks Kelly!

NOTE: Pulmonary Rehabilitation Leaflet

The Respiratory team are creating a leaflet to distribute about their services – a draft is attached. They would really appreciate any feedback on the leaflet that they could take into account before publishing it. Please let Kelly know if you have any comments! (Send them to me and I'll pass them on) Thanks!

Updates



Christmas Meal

Brewers Fayre, Etruria Rd, Hanley ST1 5NH

We've got 20 people signed up so far!

If you want to come but haven't contacted me yet, please do so by **12th November** so that I can reserve your place and meal choice.

Please remember, you will need to pay for your meal and any drinks directly with the restaurant on the day.

Awareness Events

Three in November!!

- **Moorlands Rural event, 8th November 2pm to 4pm**

Blythe Bridge Library, Uttoxeter Rd, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent ST11 9JR

Our own Sam Abbots MPFT will be presenting Asthma & COPD care to the patients at Blythe Bridge. Victor will be manning the Breathe Easy stall.

★ Unfortunately the other Breathe Easy volunteers are unlikely to make it (due to illness) so if any of you are local and would like to pop in to support the event, please do!!

- **WORLD COPD Day, 15th November All day!!**

9am to 1pm, Royal Stoke Hospital, Main Entrance Newcastle Rd, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6QG

With competitions between Wards & Nurses!

12 noon to 3pm, Tesco, Clough St, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 4LS

With Village Voices choir singing at around 2pm!

This is our main awareness event for the year! We want everyone who can to support it!

We will have a Breathe Easy stand at BOTH the Hospital and at Tesco.

★ **So please come along for as long as you like to either venue.** Have fun with the public!

There will be a tombola to raise donations for the Respiratory Dept – **we need prizes!**

We've got 4 bottles of wine so far (2 from Victor, 2 from Mary) to add to the prizes.

★ **Please let me know if you could donate anything as a prize?**

We want to have out pieces of cake and ask for donations – **we need cakes!**

Bried has volunteered to make a cake, but we need more!

★ **Please let me know if you could bring some cake (homemade or not!) for us to hand out?**

- **Moorlands Rural Event, 27th to 30th November**

Painsley College, Station Rd, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1LH

We're invited to have a stand at this 4 day event, for as long as we like (1/2 day to 4 days!)

It could be a great way to meet people who are a bit further away from us as well as to network with other health support groups. I'm happy to do perhaps 2 half days?

Would anyone be willing to join me in supporting this event?

★ If so, what days might you be available? Please let me know so that I can confirm with the organisers.

Research Projects

- **Kate Binnie** – PhD Study on Body-Mind Intervention (Yoga, Tai Chi, etc)
We've agreed that we're open to have a group discussion with Kate for her study.
Date and time to be confirmed. *Victor will liaise with Kate.*
- **Intelligentfieldwork.com**
Market Research company looking to recruit COPD and Asthma sufferers for a paid session to answer questions and talk about our experiences with Inhalers.
Their flyer is attached in case anyone is interested. *I will probably give them a try.*

2024: 20th Anniversary Event

- Please reserve the afternoon of **1st March 2024** for a celebratory buffet lunch at Carlton Club, Newcastle under Lyme!
- We would like to produce a booklet to mark the occasion of our Anniversary and to tell the story of Breathe Easy North Staffs.
We want to hear your views!
We want to include your testimonials about the group in the booklet to help people understand the benefits of a support group like ours.

REQUEST: Please send me (or call with) your thoughts:
"What Breathe Easy has meant to me"

Many thanks in advance!!

Next Get-Together: Friday 1st December, Brewers Fayre Hanley

Contact: Victor CHOLIJ Tel: 07789 713782 or **Hamish Kirkpatrick** Tel: 07962 400182
Email: breatheeasy.ns@gmail.com



PAID MARKET RESEARCH FOR ASTHMA & COPD

- IF you have ASTHMA or COPD
- IF you would like to receive £80 for a 60-minute chat about your condition
- IF you would like to help make medical devices safer and easier for people to use
- IF you would like to earn a charitable donation for your Breathe Easy group

We recruit people to take part in paid healthcare market research. These are NOT clinical trials - you will NEVER be asked to take any medication; **we simply pay you for your opinion!**

Sign up today! Scan the QR code opposite or use this link :

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Email: hello@intelligentfieldwork.com with any questions or concerns



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