

The Lymphoedema service has evolved from its beginnings in cancer care through the PCT and now CCGs. The Lymphoedema Service now treats those living with both Primary and Secondary Lymphoedema whether cancer related or not there have been huge improvements in the past few years but the service is over loaded with poor referrals leaving many long standing patients sometimes feeling their treatment plans are lacking. However as you heard at your last meeting the service is now moving forward to a tiered system of care

So what is it really like for people living with Lymphoedema?

As a group we talk about how life causes us many varied problems daily but that we always put on a brave face and live our lives to the best of our abilities usually putting others problems before our own ; after all its only a fat limb or two !

What people don't realise is for those surviving cancer this chronic and incurable condition is thrown at us to deal with on top of the after effects of life changing surgery. Most will tell you it's harder to deal with mentally and physically than the cancer diagnosis. Also many of those living with primary Lymphoedema are only diagnosed later in life having had to accept their condition throughout their younger life experiencing embarrassment and feelings of being alone and different from their peers.

All of us have episodes of grief, mourning a life lost and the often simple things that are gradually denied us as the condition progresses – I can't wear trousers or jeans, shoes are impossible and no high heels or fashionable choices. Both Kay and i cover our legs with long skirts or dresses. Lovely until you want or need to go out in the wind rain or snow or a walk for those able to do so. Going barefoot is a danger and Make no mistake Lymphoedema is painful often severely so. Aches, numbness, stabbing pains,