

# Thanet And North Kent

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## Lymphoedema Support Group

**Treasurer:** Mrs. Avice Winfield, 25 Langdale Avenue Ramsgate Kent CT11 6RS Tel: 01843 587962

**Coordinator:** Mrs. Sarah Haydon, 5 Galley View Brook Lane Herne Bay Kent CT6 6EZ Tel: 01227 861121

Email: sj.haydon04@gmail.com

### 12<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**Dear friends,** Thank you to all who attended the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September, with a lot of members away on holiday or outings it was still really good to have 14 members attending. Hoping that everyone else had good holidays and that Anne you are recovering well after your fall

#### **A few updates from the meeting:**

- **Speakers:** We unfortunately did not have a speaker at the meeting as Jan Stewart could not attend as planned and although I tried 3 other people none was available for September which is obviously a busy month for holidays. However we all agreed with the number of apologies it was maybe not such a problem and it is good to have a speaker free meeting and catch up with one another's news
- **Contacts and telephone calls:** Nothing really this time excepting an answer message left regarding a hosiery fitting appointment at Ashford
- **LSN- Lymphoedema Awareness wrist bands:** Avice purchased more lymphoedema alert wrist bands and distributed to those who had requested these, others will receive theirs in November and more can be purchased. The LSN newsletter arrived after the meeting and I noticed that there are more updated leaflets so we can purchase copies of any relevant ones for the group
- **East Kent Cancer Action Group meeting** CAG 27<sup>th</sup> September – I attended this meeting and there was some good discussion around Lymphoedema following cancer. The MacMillan team are raising awareness with the Nurse Training programme and the MacMillan GP has been reminded that he asked if I would talk to

a group of GPs (although he may have changed roles!) I met Anton the new Kent and Medway Macmillan Engagement Lead, who is keen to link with Support Groups and will be in contact with us. We can ask him along to a meeting next year hopefully. There was a very interesting presentation on the Pre-Habilitation programme for Cancer patients being piloted in Medway at the hospital .Basically it aims to increase the health and wellbeing of patients who have been diagnosed with cancers so that they are fitter, healthier and more prepared prior to treatment starting which will help with their recovery post treatment .Results are very encouraging. There was some discussion on car park charges in particular for patients undergoing oncology treatment, usually there is a concession to reduce the charge but Maidstone hospital is now offering free parking. It would be helpful to have a list of parking charges and concessions across sites in Kent and Medway as patients may attend various locations

- **Service update:** I have had no official information but it seems a new clinic has opened at the Medway Maritime Hospital. One member was offered an appointment at this setting but declined as it would have meant a longer more difficult journey. I do not know if this clinic replaces the one at Rainham or of it is an additional clinic. There was concern regarding parking as this is not easy at MMH and is an important aspect for those living with Lymphoedema especially of the lower limbs. Whilst I struggled to get a Follow Up appointment despite contacting the service 8 weeks before my appointment due date I was given one 10 weeks ahead, however others have managed much better time frames . Possibly available days and staff holidays have an effect
- **Cellulitis:** Following a second episode of Cellulitis and not wanting another long hospital stay one member found a new way of having intravenous antibiotics ( oral prescriptions had not worked) The Home Hospital is available via the In-ambulatory Care Service. The nurses visit daily in this case in the morning, to give the antibiotics via a previously inserted pic-line. Regular blood tests are taken with results the next day to monitor infection level. The patient must rest and keep the limb raised but it is a far less stressful form of treatment in your own home meaning recovery is likely to be quicker. Certainly worth other enquiring about this service if unlucky enough to get cellulitis .The need for GP awareness of the correct type and strength of prescribed oral antibiotics remains high. At present it is generally Flucloxacillin 500mg tablets but those allergic to penicillin will need an alternative Do remember the LSN

awareness cards and alert bands which are helpful to inform hospital and home care professionals dealing with your treatment

- **Lymphoedema DVDs:** Both returned and re lent to others
- **Advertising:** I will get the 2020 poster and flyers updated and printed hopefully before the November meeting
- Speakers for 2020 meeting to be arranged but ideas include: Anton – MacMillan Engagement Lead ; Julia ( a members daughter) a qualified Lymphoedema Therapist ; Jan Stewart – Lymphoedema therapist ; Denise Wilkes KCHT Lymphoedema Lead ; Ron Hilton - Mindfulness therapist ;

The raffle raised £18.00, thank you to you all for the prizes you continue to donate

**Meeting Dates:** Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.30pm in the Function Room QVMH  
**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019** - Speakers Nicola and Amanda from Medway Public Health Team will talk about Osteoporosis prevention and also show us some meditation techniques. We will have our usual celebration buffet lunch following the meeting for those wishing to stay until 1.00pm

**Dates for 2020:** Function Room confirmed with QVMH Properties:

January 25 <sup>th</sup>	March 28 <sup>th</sup>	May 30 <sup>th</sup>
July 25 <sup>th</sup>	September 26 <sup>th</sup>	November 28 <sup>th</sup>

All are the fourth Saturday of the month excepting May to avoid the Bank Holiday weekend

Take care everyone, please keep smiling 😊 and I look forward to catching up with you all again on 23<sup>rd</sup> November

With very best wishes

Sarah x