

One Voice

NMC Physio Client Newsletter
Winter 2005 - Edition 2

A FOND FAREWELL TO SARAH KELLY

In December, the NMC will be saying farewell to Sarah Kelly, our Executive Director and co-founder of The NMC. Some fifteen years ago, Sarah and Kate Fox set up the Centre. The idea came about from Hebden Green High School. It appeared that once students with muscular dystrophy left school, opportunities were very limited. The Charity was first set up in 1989. On 1st April 1990, with two members of staff and 6 users, the NMC first opened its doors. After receiving a grant from Comic Relief, two care assistants were employed.

The NMC has since grown and gone from strength to strength. The Centre remains the only such facility in Europe/the world. Sarah explained to me that her greatest achievement in the last fifteen years has been setting up the Centre. She has most enjoyed meeting people that come to The NMC and also one of the biggest events in our calendar - the Spirit of Christmas. I know you would all like to thank Sarah for her enthusiasm, commitment and dedication to the The NMC and join me in wishing her a very long and happy retirement. Sarah is most looking forward to spending time with her family. She will continue to support The NMC with The Spirit of Christmas event.

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NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On 21st September, The NMC welcomed Matthew Lanham, as Executive Director. Matthew has been getting to know employees, clients and supporters of the Centre. After an initial handover period with Sarah, he took over the day to day running of the NMC on 17th October. Matthew has spent the majority of his working life in the Post Office. He joined as Personnel Manager and went on to run major Automated sorting offices in Chester, Shrewsbury and Manchester. He then became Area Manager, running all aspects of collection, sorting and delivering mail. After some twenty years in the industry Matthew took voluntary redundancy.

**NMC
Christmas Cards!
For Sale**



£3.50 per pack of 8 cards 2x4 designs
See fundraising department to place your order or Tel : 01606 861733

EATING OUT

Venues that offer good accessibility to those with a disability include:

- The Olive Tree - Kelsall
- Rowton Hall Hotel, Chester
- The De Vere Daresbury Park Hotel - Warrington
- Panama Hattys - Tarporley (there is a step in to the building, so you'd need to take a ramp with you) but there's a level eating area once inside. It would be worth specifying your requirements at the time of booking.

M6 Toll Road Pass -

Do you receive higher rate Mobility Allowance?

The Mobility Exemption Pass is for the sole use on the M6 Toll and allows free passage of the nominated vehicle only. It is not transferable to another vehicle, even a temporary replacement. If you think you may be eligible for a Mobility Exemption Pass, you need to apply to Midland Expressway Limited as no other evidence of disability (eg Blue Badge) can be accepted. The cost is £5 and the pass lasts for 3 years (from date of issue). At £3.50 one-way now for paying users that's a serious saving if you travel on this road on a regular or even occasional basis! For full terms and conditions of the Exemption pass and an application form please visit www.m6toll.co.uk/pricing/exemptions.asp

STAMP COLLECTING

Gill Jackson Gill would like to say a huge "Thank you" to everybody who sent in postcards, stamps and paper ephemera (old programmes and leaflets) which have been sold in various ways to raise funds for The NMC. Most of the stamps have been sold at auction and the local postcards at the local postcard clubs. The stamps have been sorted and bagged and raise £6 - £8 per bag net. Most of the Ephemera items have been sold on E.Bay. Over £300 has been raised for The NMC. Please keep sending them in and where possible please leave the stamps on the postcards. You can check the e bay listings by searching for the seller - nmc wins. Thank you for your continued support.

NMC 100 CLUB

The NMC 100 Club is a weekly lottery event. For just £1 a week you can win one of 4 weekly prizes of £10, a monthly prize of at least £50 and a quarterly prize of £250. Half the money raised from the club is awarded as prize money and the remainder donated to the NMC. All winners will be notified by post. Do tell your friends and family.

CARERS EMERGENCY CARD

Are you a Carer? Do you live in the Cheshire area? You are entitled to a FREE Carers Emergency Card. Please contact the Carers Helpline number 0800 085 0307 (open Tuesday-Friday 10am- 4pm) to register. This handy card is to alert people that you have caring responsibilities should you be involved in an accident.

NMC - 15th BIRTHDAY

NEWS UPDATE

Over £10,000 has already been made from the wonderful birthday celebrations that have been held throughout the year. The NMC are very grateful to all those who have held events or given donations. If you would like to hold an event it's not too late. You could have a festive theme. Why not join forces with a few friends. The aim is to have fun. If you are interested in holding an event please call Lyndsey on 01606 861733.

PHYSIO TEAM UPDATE

Nick Emery, a physiotherapist became a full-time member of the physio team in September. Nick is not a new face at The NMC. During the summers of 2004 and 2005 he provided holiday cover for the team. He has just completed a Degree course in Physiotherapy from Keele University. The physio team are now operating at full capacity, so you've been warned!

With recent funding the physio team have been able to build up a library of small items that clients might use whilst receiving physiotherapy at the Centre. Clients can borrow the items and take them home to try before they might buy.

During September there were 85 physiotherapy appointments which were missed for a variety of reasons including, illness, holidays and problems with transport.

In most cases these are unavoidable, but wherever possible it would help the planning of treatments, if advance warning was given. That way people could be offered an alternative appointment for physiotherapy.

To help achieve this, everybody attending physio. is being offered an appointment card, which has the contact details of physiotherapy to act as a reminder.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

What disability means to me

by Sanjay Vaja.

Disability. You can take it two ways: either be bound by it, or be freed by it.

What on earth am I on about?! The 'bound by it' bit is easy. We just think 'poor me, look what life has dealt me, look at what I can't do, where I can't go. I'm sure we've all been there, done that, and got the T-shirt. I know I have!

We always have a choice in life. We choose whether to get up in the morning or to have a lie in. Whether to have salad for lunch or a portion of chips. Even down to whether it's going to be a good day or a bad day depending on if the sun is shining. By the way, the sun is always shining - just on some days the clouds hide it from our vision.

We have a choice whether to think 'poor me' or whether we smile and just get on with our lives and live them to the fullest and best we can, doing whatever we want without any limitations. The only thing that stops us doing what we want, getting what we want, is ourselves. The rest is just excuses. If we are not careful, the world around us traps us with our own disabilities and then it just becomes a normal way of life. For me and my health, it's been about breaking down the self imposed walls and barriers in my mind to free myself of limitations. OK... so I can't climb Everest alone, but with help, I know I can do it. With help, I know I can do anything I want to do.

I believe that 'disability' is a blessing and not a negative thing at all. For me, it's made me realise what is important in life: family, friends, and following my heart. Perhaps most important of all, learning to love myself for who I am and what I am.

I see disability as a tool for self discovery and finding the inner calm and peace that is always there if we allow ourselves to see it.

We often forget the impact we have on others around us. Just by being who we are and by getting on with life, by doing what we want to do, by allowing others to help us, we really touch and inspire people. It's a gift that we all have. We have that extra inner strength to just keep on going and we also teach others not to take things like walking or their mobility for granted. We are most definitely very special people, and at the core of this is who we are, how we see ourselves, and the vibes we send out to those around us.

Sanjay

Your body responds to massage in two ways. Firstly there's a physical effect on your body - for example by helping reduce muscle stiffness or by helping to increase joint mobility. Secondly, there are psychological benefits too - such as improving self-esteem. A full body massage lasts approximately one hour. To find a qualified massage therapist in your area, visit the Federation of Holistic therapists (FHT) website www.fht.org.uk

BEFORE any of the treatments are undertaken it is important that you have a consultation with your therapist. You will be asked to give personal and medical history details. This will help determine that the chosen therapy is right for you. An individual confidential record card will be kept with any relevant notes for future treatments.

For all of the treatments most therapists would offer a taster session. Home visits can be arranged. Also be aware that treatment costs can vary. It's worth checking out local colleges in your area to see if they have a beauty school. It will be much cheaper than a high street therapist and trainee therapists are always looking for clients to practice on. They are of course supervised. You would need to check out venue accessibility.

Most of the therapies are suitable for children. Please remember to check with your chosen therapist.

In summary, each of the treatments has its own benefits and you must choose what is right for you. So go on treat yourself! Vouchers make an ideal Christmas present.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Kidz Up North, Reebok Stadium, Bolton

Thursday 24th November 2005

If you have a child with a disability then this is an event not to be missed. It's an exhibition dedicated to products, aids and services aimed at disabled children, organised by Disabled Living, Manchester. Includes; seating, beds, mobility, toys, transport, education, sports and leisure, wellbeing and sensory. Free parking with easy access to the stadium. For free tickets please call 0870 777 4714 or e.mail

kidzupnorth@disabledliving.co.uk

Spirit of Christmas, Chester Cathedral

Friday 2nd December 2005

Join Matthew Kelly and his celebrity friends for the 10th Spirit of Christmas carol concert to be held at Chester Cathedral. Sponsored by MBNA, this Christmas celebration really starts the festive season.

Tickets still available - please call Lyndsey at The NMC on 01606 861733.

Gorgeous Grub at The Grosvenor, Chester

Saturday 4th March 2006

An evening of culinary delights await you, as our mystery celebrity chef for the evening creates another mouth watering menu for us all to indulge ourselves in. For tickets please call Lyndsey at The NMC on 01606 861733 or e.mail lyndsey@nmcentre.com

ALTERNATIVE & COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES

The use of alternative and complimentary therapies have been seen to help clients with long term conditions. It shifts the emphasis from the patient as a recipient of care to a person who is better informed and therefore more able to manage their condition and improve their quality of life. The following therapies can help alleviate some of the symptoms that we incur on a daily basis.

REFLEXOLOGY

Reflexology is a deeply relaxing healing therapy using pressure and massage techniques on the feet. Reflexology has been shown to bring relief from a wide range of acute and chronic conditions. A Reflexologist uses his or her hands to apply gentle pressure to the feet. For each person the application and the effect of the therapy is unique. It is a safe and enjoyable treatment, suitable for people of all ages and walks of life. It does not claim to cure, diagnose or prescribe. A treatment usually lasts for about one hour.

To find a qualified reflexologist contact The Association of Reflexologists Tel : 0990 673320.

Tried and Tested

Client suffers from lower back pain, tension in the neck and shoulders (due to overuse of one side of the body) and a "heavy" feeling in the legs. Through a monthly maintenance programme of reflexology the symptoms have diminished. When they begin to return the client knows her appointment must be due!

ACUPUNCTURE

The principal aim of acupuncture is to improve the overall well being of the patient, rather than the isolated treatment of specific symptoms. It can be used alongside conventional medicine in the treatment of both acute and chronic disease. As with any therapy, the response to acupuncture can vary from one person to another.

Acupuncture is a safe treatment. Acupuncture needles are fine and solid. When the needle is inserted, the sensation is often describes as tingling or a dull ache. Needles are inserted for either a second or two, or left in place for up to 20 minutes, depending on the effect required. During treatment patients often experience a heaviness in the limbs or a pleasant feeling of relaxation. Many people find that Acupuncture can also lead to increased energy levels, better appetite and sleep as well as an enhanced sense of well-being.

To find a qualified acupuncturist call 020 8735 0400 or visit www.acupuncture.org.uk

Tried and Tested

Client suffers from stiff lower limbs and feeling very unsteady on their feet due to their muscular condition. Acupuncture has given the client a greater range of movement especially in the legs and made her feel more "grounded" when moving about.

REIKI

Is a very simple, yet extremely powerful process. Reiki is natural healing. The therapist channels this life energy, through their hands to the recipient, which then activates the body's own natural ability to heal itself. The client remains fully clothed and the treatment lasts about half an hour. A short course of treatments is usually suggested.

INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE

Indian Head Masage is a traditional Indian technique of treating the upper back, neck, shoulders, face and scalp. It provides relief from aches and pains and is renowned for its relieving stress symptoms and improving joint mobility. As well as being a relaxing experience, it can also be an invigorating and refreshing one. The massage is performed with the client sitting down fully clothed. Indian Head Massage is suitable for all types of clients. It can be performed anywhere so those clients who use a wheelchair can receive the treatment with the minimum of fuss.

MASSAGE

Massage therapy helps us to relax and can help ease aches and pains. It helps trigger the release of the body's natural painkillers and gives a general sense of contentment. Massage is suitable for most adults. Your therapist may use oils, creams or talc during the massage. This will help nourish the skin and allow a fluid, free-flowing massage.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Did you know?

- Walnuts are rich in omega 3 fatty acids which may help fuel the brain to produce more energy.
- Mixed nuts such as almonds and hazelnuts make a great healthy snack between meals.
- A teaspoon or two of seeds every day is good for you. They can be added to recipes or sprinkled over soups, breakfast cereals or yoghurts. They are a good source of iron, zinc, manganese and chromium and contain high levels of essential fatty acids (EFA's).
- Turkish dried apricots are a good source of iron which essential for the renewal of red blood cells. These cells oxygenate the body, helping you to stop feeling tired and lethargic. They contain the same concentrated nutrients as fresh apricots.
- Figs - a festive treat are also very nutritious and a good source of fibre, calcium and iron. Two figs count as one of your 5 a day portions.
- For most medical conditions it is best to eat little and often.

Healthy Drinking

Warm drinks are a must at this time of year. People automatically think of tea and coffee but there are also lots of healthy alternatives. Herbal teas, festive drinks even a slice of lemon added to boiling water. A great antioxidant and a firm favourite at the NMC!

KEEPING HEALTHY AND WELL

As the colder weather approaches it is important that we keep as warm and as well as we are able. It is sensible to wear lots of loose layers that can be easily removed. For those of us who suffer with poor circulation it's a good idea to think about thermal underwear, hats, scarves and (thermal) gloves. It's never too early!

Look Good Feel Good

If you look your best then somehow you feel better inside. The smallest things can help give you a boost. It might be having a relaxing bath, having a haircut or treating yourself to a new piece of clothing.

Flu Jab

Influenza (Flu) is a viral infection that strikes mainly during the winter months. While most people recover rapidly from flu, for those in the over 65 age group, and / or those with a serious medical condition and or respiratory disease you could be at risk from complications. You are entitled, to a yearly flu jab. It is important that you have a jab every year to protect you against the latest strains of the virus. The flu jab is free and available from September until early November. Please ring your GP to arrange for a vaccination.

Echinacea

A traditional herbal remedy available for both adults and children, Echinacea is considered a boost to the immune system a good preventative measure for coughs, colds and other germs. If taken when you have a cold it will speed up your recovery.

Arnica

Are you prone to falling and great big bruises? Arnica is a herbal remedy with excellent healing properties. It visibly reduces bruises. It is available in cream and tablet form.

Vitamin C

Suitable for both adults and children, an essential vitamin particularly at this time of year.

Lavender

Drop a bit on cuts, bruises, bites and stings. Lavender has excellent healing properties. All of the above are available in supermarkets and leading high street chemists. It is advisable to check with the dispensing chemist prior to use.

RECIPES - Happy Cooking!

Ruth's Christmas Florentines

(a festive favourite)

- 85g butter
- 85g golden syrup
- 30g plain flour
- 60g chopped almonds
- 30g mixed peel 60g sultanas
- 60g chopped glace cherries
- 110g chocolate
- 2 baking sheets lined with baking parchment

Method

Put the butter and golden syrup into a medium heavy based saucepan and heat until melted. Stir in the remaining ingredients - except the chocolate. Place teaspoons of the mixture on the prepared baking sheets spacing them well apart and flatten lightly. Bake in pre-heated oven 180C gas mark 4 and bake for 7-8 minutes until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool for 1-2 minutes until firm enough to be transferred to a wire rack to cool completely. When cold coat the flat underside with the melted chocolate and make a pattern with a fork. Leave to set and store in a cool place in an airtight container.

Makes about 20

Margaret's Mars Bar Cakes

(so quick to make, yet so delicious)

- 3ozs margarine
- 3 mars bars
- 3 cups rice crispies

Melt the margarine and mars bars together, then add the rice crispies and mix well. Press the mixture into a tray and leave to sit. Cover with melted chocolate. Allow to set and then cut into squares.

C H R I S T M A S

Christmas Shopping Can't face the crowds? Take the strain out of Christmas with on-line shopping and support The NMC at the same time. Visit www.buy.at/nmc. - all your favourite shops on line including, Amazon, M & S, Index, John Lewis, Thorntons . Items delivered to your door. For every £20 spent about a pound comes to support the Centre. Whilst it doesn't sound a huge amount if everybody did their bit it would soon mount up! If we raise £400 by January 2006, an extra £100 will be donated to the NMC. Please do pass on the details to family and friends. See back page for more information.

NMC Christmas Cards - Now on Sale

Designed by members of the NMC Design Team, with four different designs. Priced at £3.50 for 8 cards.

Christmas Present ideas

Want to personalise your wheelchair or walking aids? Jazz up your wheels, fancy a new seat cover or some new gloves. Fancy a new cover for your walking stick? Please contact Dean Cutler on 02380 436 573 or visit www.wheeliefactor.co.uk for great products at sensible prices.

Need a new walking stick?

For a good selection of fashionable and collapsible walking sticks visit Cochranes of Chester. Friendly staff. Accessibility via The Grosvenor Shopping Centre.

**RADAR KEYS - Do you need one ?
Please ask at the NMC**

FINALLY . . . *The festive season can be a very busy and stressful time of year. Remember to look after yourself. Why not try and take "time out" each day for you - to relax. It might just be 10 minutes, but that might just be what you need to reflect and recharge.*

FORTHCOMING EDITION *Next issue due March 2006 to include mobility aids, buying a wheelchair,*

UNTIL NEXT TIME . *Remember that just because you have a disability life does not have to be boring. There's lots you can do. Enjoy the festive season!*

Please drop me a line by post to the NMC or e.mail andrea@nmcentre.com or telephone 01606 861733. The NeuroMuscular Centre, Woodford Lane West Winsford Cheshire CW7 4EH.

shop for less and support

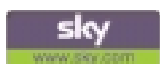


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- Gift ideas - from our great selection of retailers

FREE postage in many cases

REMEMBER every purchase

MUST be made through our website, at www.buy.at/nmc

Check out the website for a complete A to Z list of all the retailers available online, the above is just a taster.

You must adhere to the terms of use explained on the website and follow the instructions within the help section. All offers are subject to change without notice. Most commissions are available if the purchase is completed online. Subsequent visits to a retailer's site need to be made via the webshop for commission to be payable.

NMC Design

Did you know that we have our own in-house design team at the NMC? We are a commercial organisation that can design and produce all your stationery requirements, promotional items (mugs, pens, key rings) and publicity material, even Christmas cards. We offer an efficient and friendly service. Why not give us the opportunity to quote? Please contact Dan Cundall on 01606 863464.

FROM THE EDITOR

A warm hello to you all as the festive season approaches. May this newsletter find you all well. Thank you for your feedback and comments about One Voice. Thanks to those of you who have sent in articles, website details, passed on holiday and leisure information and also sent in recipes. Do keep sending them in, along with any ideas that you may have for future editions of One Voice. Remember that this is your newsletter. Since the last newsletter, for me personally, these past few months have seen some highs and also some lows. My condition seems to have deteriorated quite significantly and daily living has become ever harder. It seems that no matter what I do to help myself, through physiotherapy and the use of alternative therapies I seem to be constantly battling against the tide. Like you, I have to increasingly ask for help. Although I am still on my feet, my balance is very poor and I am very susceptible to falling. However, on the positive side, in the summer, we took a family holiday to London. Despite having two disabled members in our family, and having to contend with the "not very disabled-friendly" tube stations, I made it! I even managed the London Eye which was a fantastic experience, disabled-friendly and very well organised. Also, in September, I travelled on my own, (with my ventilator and a large suitcase) to the United States to visit my brother and his family in Los Angeles. Despite an epic journey, with two long flights and a three hour wait in Philadelphia, I made it. As a mobile passenger with limited mobility it was not easy particularly as I had to carry my ventilator as hand luggage. However, on the return flights to the UK I requested a wheelchair, and the service I received was better. I was even pushed to the front of the queue in passport control! So what I would like to say is that like you, there are times when life does feel unfair but sometimes, if you go outside your "comfort zone" you can have a pleasant surprise and have a real sense of achievement. Wishing you all a peaceful and relaxing Christmas and all good wishes for 2006.

Andrea