



Issue 2  
Spring 2013

# Lymph-notes

Keeping you in the loop about  
St Oswald's Lymphoedema Service

## Keeping you informed

Thank you to everyone who requested to be on our Lymph-notes mailing list, we hope you enjoy reading our second edition. If you have any suggestions for features or there's anything in particular you'd like us to cover in future issues then please email [patientfeedback@stoswaldsuk.org](mailto:patientfeedback@stoswaldsuk.org). We look forward to hearing from you.

## 'A Problem Shared'

The North of England Cancer Network (NECN) Lymphoedema Conference is taking place on **Friday 8th March, 9.00am to 4.30pm** at Ramside Hall Hotel, Durham. The theme is 'A Problem Shared' and it's hoped that the event will raise awareness of Lymphoedema and its symptoms. We've been heavily involved with organising the day and hope that lots of health care professionals will come along.



North of England  
Cancer Network

The day will cover topics including Rehabilitation Pathways, Weight Management, an Overview of Treatment and Risk Reduction/Preventative Advice and will include presentations from our very own Dr Andrew Hughes and Lymphoedema Team Leader, Jill Nandy. Andrew will be speaking about Incidence and Prevalence of Lymphoedema and Jill will be discussing the Psychosocial Impact of Lymphoedema.

We will let you know how the event goes.

A huge thanks must also go to St Oswald's patient Joyce Ford. Joyce kindly let us film her telling her very own Lymphoedema story. The film will be shown at the conference.

## Reducing our waiting list

As a team we've been looking at the Lymphoedema Service as a whole to see if there are any ways we can become more efficient and effective. One aspect of our care that was identified was the current waiting list for Decongestive Lymphoedema Therapy (DLT). This treatment is given by a therapist who has had specialist training and can include a bandaging treatment, a special massage by hand, exercise and skincare.

During April and May we will be focussing on reducing the waiting list and seeing as many DLT patients as possible. During this time the Lymphoedema Keyworker clinics won't be affected and all remaining patients shouldn't see a difference in the service we provide. We'll do all we can to maintain our regular level of care.

During this busy time we would appreciate it if anyone who is able to make their own way to and from the Hospice to please do so. Thank you to everyone in advance for their understanding and co-operation.

## Text me!

As you may be aware last year we introduced a text alert system where by we can text you a few days before your appointment to remind you about your appointment date and time. If you haven't yet signed up for this and you'd like to please let reception know. Even if you don't have your own mobile phone we can text a relative so they can pass the message on to you.



Do we have all  
of your up to  
date details?  
If not please let  
us know.

## New piece of equipment

When patients are seen we assess their circulation as this helps to guide us regarding the possible cause of their swelling and treatment options. We're currently looking into purchasing a new piece of equipment called a Vascular Assist Device. This is a compact, portable device that will give us more detailed information about an individual's blood circulation.

The information gathered will help our decision making in relation to applying external compression, which is an important aspect of lymphoedema management.

By adding optional sensors and cuffs to the device, it is also possible to measure blood pressures in two limbs at the same time. This is a lot quicker than the traditional method which can take up to 20 minutes and is also more accurate.

Look out for the new device being used in clinic soon and let us know what you think.

## Useful hints and tips for garment care:

- Don't cut or alter the shape of your garment – it will reduce its effectiveness
- Wash them according to the manufacturers instructions
- All sleeves or stockings should be hand washed or gently machine washed daily
- Garments are best air dried without excessive exposure to the sun
- You will be given two garments so you can wash one and wear one
- Replacement garments will be supplied by the Lymphoedema Clinic. However more garments are now available on prescription
- You will need replacement garments; every six months or when they begin to lose elasticity, develop holes or ladders or they become too tight or loose

## BLS Childrens Special Interest Group

The British Lymphology Society Childrens Special Interest Group (BLS CSIG) is a group of physiotherapists, nurses and a doctor who are working with children with Lymphoedema across the country.

The group have recently been collating information about childhood Lymphoedema and how many children in the UK it affects. This is the first time an attempt has been made to gain information about childhood Lymphoedema from a national perspective. Once we receive further information about their results we will share them with you.



The group also held a national event for children with Lymphoedema and their families last September. The event was called 'Lymphaletics' and was a great success. Children were able to meet others with the same condition and it was good for parents to get together and share stories.

To find out more about the group and the work they do please contact the BLS Admin Office through their online form or on **01452 790178**.

## Northern Lymphoedema Support Group (NLSG)

Please remember that the NLSG hold their meetings at St Oswald's and their next meeting is on **16th March 2013**. If you'd like to come along or find out more please contact Monica Burns, Secretary on 0191 259 5793.

## Stay in touch...

If you'd like to receive Lymph-notes via email please drop us a line at [patientfeedback@stoswaldsuk.org](mailto:patientfeedback@stoswaldsuk.org) or complete one of our Lymph-notes forms in the Outpatient Suite and pop in the return box.

