



The voice of those affected by cancer in Yorkshire and The Humber

Welcome to our April/May Newsletter

April has been such a busy month. Later this morning Cancer Champions Ric, Stewart and myself plus the Liver Buddies project (who offer mobile liver screening) and Janet, who volunteers for Prostate Cancer UK will be leading three information sessions at Howdens manufacturing site in Normanton near Wakefield. Getting to talk to a large workforce about spotting the early signs of cancer is so exciting, and we hope it will be the start of a meaningful relationship.

This month we also welcomed three new Cancer Champions – volunteers who help us to deliver the Cancer SMART message either by giving talks or holding information stalls.

Stephen, Lauren and Barbara are all passionate about raising awareness and have already started attending events. We also had an informal catch up with Champions this month. Thank you to The Keys, Huddersfield for their kindness in offering us a discount and making us so welcome when ten of us got together. We usually meet on zoom, so it's especially memorable when we get to see each other face to face and get to know each other better.

If you are thinking of volunteering, please do get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

Best wishes
Jill and Clare

Your stories

Knitted Knockers UK

Knitted Knockers UK is a registered charity in England & Wales which offers bespoke knitted and crocheted knockers to women who have had surgery following a breast cancer diagnosis. It also offers a knitted knocker which is suitable for swimming called an Aqua (this is filled with shower scrunchie material which dries quicker). All Knockers are provided free of charge. The charity relies on donations to help it do that and is run by volunteers, who also attend events and give talks around the country. The Charity also sells mini knocker keyrings and notecards through the website shop which help raise funds www.knittedknockersuk.com/shop



What do Knitted Knockers UK offer and how to order a Knitted Knocker

Women order knockers through the newly launched website www.knittedknockersuk.com and they can choose, bra size, knitted/crocheted/Aqua, colour, nipple or no nipple. They are all free of charge. The order is then allocated to one of the Charity's volunteers who are based throughout the UK. The Volunteer makes the knocker(s), they are given a quality control check, and then posted direct to the recipient. Each order is parcelled up with additional filling, spare lacing and a care card - all in an organza bag. Many of the volunteers also send a personal message to the knocker recipient.

The Charity also provides Display packs of knockers in different sizes, styles and colours, together with information leaflets, posters and business cards for breast cancer clinics, GPs and stores that sell mastectomy bras.

Volunteering for Knitted Knockers

To join Knitted Knockers UK as a knitter/crocheter you must knit two test knockers to a required standard. Each new volunteer is allocated a mentor who helps them through the process. (it's all done virtually but some volunteers do meet up to help each other and have a chat). The application process can be found at www.knittedknockersuk.com/volunteer **please note that the application process is currently closed as the Charity currently has enough knitters/crocheters to meet the number of orders coming in.**



However, if you'd like to support the charity by fundraising or spreading the word email then register your interest by sending an email to applications@kkuk.org.uk

Some Testimonials

A huge thank you to the fabulous Barbara who has knitted my new boobs. What an awesome, free service and one that is so very meaningful. Thank you Barbara for making them flatter at the back to help them fit better with my concaved chest. Super stars all of you, thank you so so much.

My order arrived today and they are wonderful, thank you! The everyday knocker is so comfortable. I've put the aqua one ready in my swimsuit and I am looking forward to trying it. They are both so pretty too. My NHS prosthesis split and it's taking forever to get a new one, so thank you and Pat for getting my lovely knitted knockers to me so quickly. They are so nice and light, I'd rather use these anyway! All the best.

My knitted knockers arrived today & they are perfect! I never chose a colour as I read on the site that the knitters like to get creative & I'm so glad I did that. It's like the lady who made them knew me, I couldn't have picked more beautiful colours.

Please pass on my thanks to Natalie who has made me two beautiful knitted breasts. Can't wait to try out the swimming one as soon as I'm able to get back in the sea. It's been immensely comforting to know that women are looking out for each other and to imagine someone thinking of me as they knit. Thank you for co-ordinating such important work. Very best wishes

Nurses Go Racing

Cancer Specialist Nurses from Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield, will swop life on the wards to get behind the wheel on Bank Holiday Monday 27 May.

The Macmillan head and neck team and other healthcare professionals from the Mid Yorkshire Hospital Trust are taking part in a super bangers race at Buxton Raceway, Derbyshire.

Laura Horgan, Clinical Nurse Specialist in the team said her partner loves racing super bangers, and she and her colleagues thought it would be a brilliant and fun way to raise funds for Macmillan.

If you would like to support Laura and the team, click the QR code to take you to the Just Giving fundraising page.



NURSES GO RACING

In aid of
WE ARE MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT

NHS
Mid Yorkshire Teaching
NHS Trust

Our own Nurses and Macmillan Professionals are braving the track to raise money in support of the people they care for. So, show how you care, for their care and RACE to donate.

BUXTON RACEWAY
Thrills in the Hills

DONATE HERE



To find out who really is the Fastest Nurse in Yorkshire, join us on May 27th 2024.

Tickets Available: at buxtonraceway.com

Donating through JustGiving is simple and secure. Once donated your money goes directly to the charity.

News

Carers group for those affected by cancer in the Barnsley area

ARE YOU A CARER OR LOVED ONE WHO HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY CANCER?

Social & support group for caregivers and loved ones of those going through cancer, and those who have lost loved ones to cancer.



1st Tuesday of the month at 6pm-7pm
3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm-3pm

Starts 16/04/24

**BHF Priory Centre @ Priory Campus, Pontefract Rd, Barnsley
S71 5PN**

This group is free to attend and refreshments are provided.



**Barnsley
Healthcare
Federation**



IMPACT

Integrated Multidiscipline
Personalised Care Team

Are you a carer or loved one who has been affected by cancer? A new social and support group for caregivers and loved ones of those going through cancer, and those who have lost loved ones to cancer has met for the first time.

Amy Bassinder, social prescribing link worker in Dearne who helped to set up the group said she felt it went well for a first time meeting and looks forward to the next meeting on Tuesday the 7th of May at 6pm.

This group is for all carers, loved ones, relatives, and friends of those living with cancer, and affected by cancer. The group is also open to those who have lost somebody to cancer too.

They now have a private Facebook group which people can join for information about meetings at BHF Priory Campus: m.facebook.com/...=share

The group will be located at BHF Priory Campus, Lundwood, Pontefract Rd, Barnsley S71 5PN on the 7th of May at 6PM. Please see the Facebook event for the group here: www.facebook.com/sh...L4k1g/ The group meet the first Tuesday of the month from 6-7 pm and the third Tuesday of the month from 2 – 3pm.

Amy said: “Our group at Priory Campus is a safe space to chat and get to know other people who just 'get it'. As well as being a hub for support from local services and professionals, and a place to support you with accessing other useful information and services.

We also hope the group will hold meetups across Barnsley, which include wellbeing walking socials, café meetups and more.”

If people have any questions they can feel free to telephone call the group Mon - Fri 07380863049.

Get Help and Support with Cancer – how a Macmillan Buddy can help

Going through cancer can be an isolating experience at any time. Macmillan can offer a free Buddy Service, formerly called Telephone Buddies, and currently have volunteers available.

Macmillan will match you with someone who understands what you're going through, and they will give you a weekly telephone call, video call or visit in your home.

Buddies undergo comprehensive training and are fully supported by Macmillan staff and lead volunteers.

Your volunteer buddy is there for you. You can talk to them about how you're feeling and your support needs during this difficult time.



How it works

- You sign up to register your interest – use the QR code or the telephone number below
- Macmillan will get in touch to find out what support you need
- They will find you a Macmillan Buddy who suits your needs
- You'll get a weekly telephone call, video call or in-person visit in your home (subject to an initial assessment call).

Sign up at macmillan.org.uk/buddies at any time
or call 0808 808 00 00 (7 days a week, 8am-8pm).

We also accept referrals from health and social care professions
providing support to people living with cancer.



Scan the QR code
to find out more

Return of the Lary All Stars

Laryngeal cancer patients in the areas served by Calderdale and Huddersfield hospitals will soon have a new support group for them and their families. The highly successful group which was named the Lary All Stars by its patients, closed for the pandemic, but is soon to return.

Catherine and Karina ENT specialist nurses, along with other hospital staff are launching the group on Tuesday 7 May . The group will meet from 11 am – 1pm at Focal Community Centre, New Hey Road, Lindley, Huddersfield HD3 4BZ.

The speaker at the first group will be Warwick Smith, poet, writer, fundraiser and laryngectomee.

Jill from Yorkshire Cancer Community will be one of the speakers on the second meeting 30 July.

On 10 September, Julie Richard will be showing the film: Can You Hear My Voice and on the final meeting of the year, 17 December, it will be time for the Christmas party.

Do go along or for further information contact your specialist nurse.



LARY ALLSTARS

Do you have a Laryngectomy?

Would you like to come to our group meeting's and meet others?

Come along and bring a friend & enjoy!

Refreshments will be provided.

**Meetings to be held 11am Till 1pm in
Community centre next to the salvation
army on New Hey Road**

7th May 11am - 1pm
30th July 11am - 1pm
10th Sept 11am - 1pm
17th Dec 11am - 1pm

International Clinical Trials Day – 20 May 2024

International Clinical Trials Day is celebrated globally each year on 20 May. This date marks the day in 1774 that James Lind, a ship's surgeon in the British Royal Navy, started what is often considered to be the first randomised clinical trial. Lind studied the effects of different treatments on scurvy, a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C, and a major problem for sailors on long voyages.

Incredibly, Lind did find a cure for scurvy. After carrying out a clinical trial in only twelve people, of whom only two received the active treatment of citrus fruits. Many historians believe that the prevention and treatment of scurvy using citrus was the single most important factor in enhancing the physical health of the British fleet.

Clinical trials have been part of the landscape of medical care for 275 years, creating opportunities for physicians to find viable treatments for a range of conditions including cancer care.

Research and Innovation are integral parts of the NHS constitution and key enablers in driving improvements in clinical care. It has been shown that research active hospitals deliver better care, have better Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings and better patient outcomes, with these benefits not just limited to patients who participate in research.

Here at Leeds teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT) we are passionate about providing our patients with the opportunity to take part in research. We work closely with commercial and academic partners to deliver high quality, ground-breaking clinical trials. Providing our patients with the opportunity to access new treatment options and be part of trials which change outcomes and opportunities for countless future patients.

In the year 2023-2024 LTHT recruited 25695 patients into clinical trials, this is an incredible achievement and the first time we as a trust, have exceeded 25000 participants recruited in one year. We are also the leading national recruiter for participants recruited into cancer studies.

LTHT is taking the opportunity this International Clinical Trials Day to raise awareness of clinical trials and the benefit they provide for our patients.

In the week commencing 20 May we will be facilitating several activities to raise awareness of clinical trials across LTHT. These will include stalls in the entrance ways to the Hospital and open days on the Oncology and Cardiovascular Clinical Research Facilities. We hope to engage members of staff and the public in conversations about clinical research and highlight the fantastic opportunities for patients and staff alike.



Welcome to our new Cancer Champions



We would like to introduce you to our three new cancer champions, Barbara (left), Stephen (2nd from right) and Lauren (right), seen here helping run our stall at Macmillan's Cancer Health and Wellbeing roadshow in The Ridings Shopping Centre, Wakefield on 18th April.

All three have shown a passion for spreading the important Cancer Smart message (right).

We met Barbara at the Women's Group in the Rosewood Centre, Dewsbury. She is a cancer survivor and is keen to spread the important Cancer Smart message.

Stephen came forward after hearing about us when Jill attended the Men's Group in Huddersfield. A prostate cancer survivor, he knows only too well how important an early diagnosis is when treating cancer.

Lauren is a mammographer, and is passionate about the importance of attending breast screening. She is keen to spread awareness of "knowing your normal" and to encourage people to prevent cancer or catch it early by attending the screening programmes that are on offer.

Cancer

Screening saves lives by prevention & early detection

Making cancer an everyday conversation

Awareness of unusual & persistent changes

Reduce risk with a healthy active lifestyle

Take action NOW against cancer

What have we been up to?

Well, what a busy few weeks it has been. The events are coming in thick and fast now, and we can hardly keep up! Here's some of the events we have attended since our last edition in March.



Here's our chairman Stewart promoting the Cancer SMART message at the Reginald Centre, Leeds on 19 March, at their Job Fair event.

Stewart said this was a very enjoyable event and he made some excellent contacts. He says it would be a great place to hold a health and wellbeing event in the future.

Stewart also visited UHC Leeds on 3 April, and Beckett University on 16 April, to talk about his role as chairman of Yorkshire Cancer Community, and present his personal talk "My lifelong association with cancer", as both a retired GP and as a carer.

If you would like Stewart to come and talk to your group, please get in touch.

On 28 March, Jill visited the Macmillan Information & Support Service at Calderdale & Huddersfield Men's group. They meet on the last Thursday of every month from 2.15pm onwards in the Legends Coffee Bar at John Smith's Stadium in Huddersfield. This group is for men with a cancer diagnosis and those supporting a loved one who has a diagnosis. They're a friendly and welcoming group, and pretty good at holding quizzes too (so Jill tells us). They have recently written to King Charles III to express their best wishes following his cancer diagnosis, and received a heart warming reply: "It was deeply touching to see the pride which you take in providing support to members of your community and The King can greatly appreciate the benefits that your discussions bring".



On 4 April, Jill visited the Women's Group who meet every two weeks at the Rosewood Centre, Dewsbury District Hospital. This friendly group is open to women with any cancer diagnosis and meets every other Thursday from 9.30-11.30am. The group spent the morning decorating our cotton tote bags and discussing the cancer SMART message with Jill. The Rosewood centre also runs other groups for both men and women. Chair Yoga will start later this month, meeting every Monday. There's also a social gardening group which runs every Wednesday 1-3pm, and Tai Chi is held fortnightly on Thursdays from 10-11am. For more details, call the centre on 01924 512038.



On 9 April, we attended the Autism Awareness Event at Leeds Market where we had an information stall. It was a really busy event and we had some great conversations. Did you know that people with autism are more likely to suffer health inequalities and are at greater risk of developing cancer? This is partly because they may feel unwilling to attend screening programmes, or be unable to understand the importance of seeking help for unusual changes to their physical health. Our cancer champions have recently received training to help them deliver the Cancer SMART message to people with autism or a learning disability. Here's a picture of visitor to the stall Christine and Champion Ric (below) at Leeds Market, and Bob (left), from People in Action who organised the event.



Ric (left) and new volunteer Shell at Leeds Market Autism Awareness event.



Our Cancer Champion Julie, from Bradford and Pennine Breast Screening visited Shibden WI on 10 April with her colleague Amelia. There, they spoke to the ladies to promote the importance of attending breast screening and knowing your normal.

Here's Jill (right) with new cancer champion Lauren setting up our stall at the Cancer Health and Wellbeing roadshow in The Ridings Shopping Centre, Wakefield on 18 April. This event was organised by Macmillan Support & Information Service at Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust to showcase support and information services available in our region. We had a fantastic time and were in a busy spot outside M&S food, so lots of useful conversations were had. It was lovely to see some familiar faces and was a great introduction to what we do for our new cancer champions, who came along on the day to help.



On 2 April, Oliver, the Liver Buddies' mobile scanning unit was outside Morrisons in Morley, offering liver scans to members of the public.

This unit travels around the district and offers scans to anyone who wants to come along.

Not only does the mobile unit help reduce hospital waiting times by offering scans to patients who need them, but it is hoped that by catching liver diseases earlier, it will improve the outcomes for people who were unaware they had a problem developing.





On 18 April, Clare visited the Bottoms Up support group who meet every third Thursday of the month at Brook House WMC in Wakefield at 2pm. This friendly group offers support to people who have had a diagnosis of Bladder, Bowel or Prostate Cancer, and their loved ones and carers.

This month they had a guest speaker, Fiona Cooper from Hollister UK (pictured here with John Whelpton, the support group leader).

Fiona came to talk to the group about Secure Start and the services they offer to people living with a stoma. They have Secure Start Next Steps which

is a telephone support and information service, and Ostomy Journey Companion App, which supports you through your journey from pre-surgery onwards. Both services are free. For more information, please visit their website at <https://www.securestart.co.uk/>

Upcoming events

DO YOU RUN A PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP?

PLEASE COME ALONG TO OUR

YORKSHIRE-WIDE ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP LEADERS' NETWORK

WE MEET EVERY QUARTER ON ZOOM
OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD:
THURS 23 MAY 14:00 - 15:00

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A MEETING,
PLEASE EMAIL US AT
[INFO@YORKSHIRECANCERCOMMUNITY.CO.UK](mailto:info@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk)
AND WE WILL SEND YOU THE LINK

WE DISCUSS TOPICS THAT AFFECT YOU AND YOUR GROUP

POPULAR TOPICS INCLUDE:

- PUBLICISING YOUR GROUP
- ATTRACTING NEW MEMBERS
- FUNDRAISING
- IDEAS FOR SPEAKERS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1185838

Yorkshire Cancer Community Online Support Group Leaders' Network

Thursday 23 May – 2-3pm

Did you know we run an online group for support group leaders? We meet every three months via zoom.

We discuss various topics relating to running a support group, from ideas for speakers, how to attract new members to your group, and how and where to publicise your group. It can be very helpful to chat to other group leaders about what has worked well for them, and to share knowledge and experience.

If you are thinking about setting up a group, it can also be a great networking opportunity, as our leaders may be able to help, or put you in touch with others.

If you would like to join our next meeting, just get in touch at info@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk and we'll send you a zoom link.



Yorkshire Cancer Community online support group

Wednesday 8 May 2024 11.00am-12.00pm

Come along to our online support group, for anyone affected by cancer. We're a friendly bunch. If you want to join us, just email us at info@yorkshirecancercommunity.co.uk and we'll send you a zoom link.

Firm Roots Cancer Support – Retreat day in Leeds May 2024

Former Macmillan Information and Support Manager at Calderdale and Huddersfield Hospitals, Helen Jones is organising two Retreat Days – one in Leeds.

Helen, now known as Rev Helen and a curate at Holy Trinity Church, Huddersfield, has run Firm Roots Cancer Support, a Christian organisation that offers prayer and spiritual support for people affected by cancer for a number of years.

She says: “Spiritual support is often really lacking for cancer patients and many don't know where to turn or who to talk to about faith issues. We run prayer groups and retreat days, and work with churches nationally to offer support.”

Helen also continues to work in cancer services heading up the First Steps Programme an online course for patients newly diagnosed with cancer.



Firm Roots offers a Christian retreat day for patients and family members coming up in Leeds on Saturday 18th May, their first in Yorkshire, and we also run an online cancer prayer support group once per month so that anyone from around the country can join.

A retreat is an opportunity to get away from the busyness of life and medical intervention. Anyone affected by cancer either themselves, or supporting someone through it, either currently or in the past, is very welcome to join.

Please see the flyer with QR code which links to the booking form.



'Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.'

Mark 6:31

Christian Retreat Days for People Affected by Cancer

'The God Who Sees'

Saturday 18th May 2024, 10am to 4pm

Hollins House, Weetwood Avenue, Headingley, Leeds, West
Yorkshire, LS16 5NG

Saturday 13th July, 10am to 4pm

Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church, Trinity Hill, The Parade,
Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham, B72 1TA

Our Firm Roots retreats are an opportunity for anyone affected by cancer to get away from the busyness of life and medical intervention, and to spend some time and space in God's presence. The retreat days are led by Rev Helen Jones who has worked in NHS cancer services for ten years, had cancer herself and is a curate at Holy Trinity Church, Huddersfield. The retreat days are free, though you are welcome to make a donation.

Further information at www.firmroots.org.uk or email Helen.Jones@firmroots.co.uk.

Retreat Booking at this link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/agazfskfSG>



Virtual 'Thinking Ahead Programme' For People Living with Incurable Cancer and their Families and Carers

A Collaborative Course for patients and family members living in Harrogate, Calderdale and Huddersfield, Leeds and Mid Yorkshire.

West Yorkshire and Harrogate
Cancer Alliance



MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



OVER A 7 WEEK PERIOD on Microsoft Teams plus an optional introductory week.

2024 Course Dates – all 1.30pm til 3.00pm:

- Tuesday 7th May to 25th June
- Tuesday 3rd September to 22nd October

To find out more and to book a place, please contact the Thinking Ahead Co-ordinator for the area where you live:

Harrogate: Contact the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service – 01423 557317 or email hdfc.cancerinformation@nhs.net

Calderdale and Huddersfield: Contact the Macmillan Information & Support Service on 01484 343614, 01422 222709 or email cancer.information@nhs.net

Leeds: Contact your Specialist Cancer Nurse in Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust.

Mid Yorkshire: Contact the Macmillan Cancer Support Centre on 01924 546072 or 01924 512204 or email midyorks.macmillan.infocentre@nhs.net

Further information at: <https://harrogatecancerservices.nhs.uk/health-and-wellbeing/thinking-ahead/>

Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service re-launches at Rotherham Hospital

Are you a patient, relative, carer, friend, or anyone affected by cancer?

The Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service recently reopened at Rotherham Hospital and the team are inviting you to the relaunch event from 11:30am on Thursday 23 May 2024.

Got questions about cancer? Give the team a call on 01709 427655, or pop in and see them in person – opening hours are Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, excluding bank holidays.



Macmillan Cancer

Information and Support Service

Are you a patient, relative, carer, friend or anyone affected by cancer? You're invited to the relaunch of the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service, at Rotherham Hospital.

We know cancer can affect you physically, emotionally and financially. Come and meet our team, and find out how we can help you.

When?
Thursday 23 May 2024 from 11:30am

Where?
Rotherham Hospital Main Entrance

If you have questions about cancer, please give us a call on **01709 427655**, or pop in and see us.
Our opening hours are Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm*.

*excluding bank holidays



NHS
South West
Yorkshire Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust



West Yorkshire and Harrogate
Cancer Alliance

Empowering people with long term conditions to live their best life

This programme is delivered by people with lived experience of a cancer diagnosis in their lives

Cancer: Thriving and Surviving

For those dealing with life after cancer

An opportunity for you to learn and share supportive tools and techniques together with others - to help you stay more in control of your health and wellbeing

Focus of the programme:

- Problem-solving skills
- Ways to talk to others about cancer
- Managing bodily changes after treatment
- Setting realistic goals, to build on recovery
- Ways to manage living with uncertainty
- Dealing with difficult emotions about cancer



This programme is also valuable for carers of loved ones who are living after cancer

When: Friday 17 May to Friday 21 June 2024

10:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Where: Agbrigg Community Centre, Montague Street, Agbrigg, Wakefield WF1 5BB

Please scan the QR code for more information



Participants must be 18+, and live in the Wakefield district, or be registered with a Wakefield GP

For more information and future dates, please contact us:



livewellwakefield@swyt.nhs.uk



01924 255363



www.livewellwakefield.nhs.uk

Other Items

Cancer Awareness Month – May



BLADDER
CANCER



MELANOMA &
SKIN CANCER

Bladder Cancer

In May, it will be bladder cancer awareness month. Bladder cancer occurs when there is a growth of abnormal cells in the lining of the bladder, which form a tumour. Sometimes, the tumour spreads into the bladder muscle.

The most common symptom of bladder cancer is blood in the urine, which is normally painless. If you notice blood in your urine, even if it comes and goes, you should visit your GP and get this checked out.

One of the main causes of bladder cancer is smoking. This is because the chemicals in tobacco are filtered by the kidneys into your urine. Exposure to some chemicals can also cause bladder cancer.

If you would like more information about bladder cancer, please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bladder-cancer/>.

Support groups in our local area include: -

Calderdale & Huddersfield Bladder Cancer Support Group – meetings are held three or four times a year in Huddersfield at the Briar Court Hotel HD2 3NT. This group was set up in conjunction with Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust and Action for Bladder Cancer UK. Contact Phil Kelly at philoutandabout@gmail.com for more information. Alternatively, you can contact urology specialist nurses Miriam Slade or Shawna Doyle on 01484 355269.

Wakefield Bottoms Up – meetings are held every third Thursday 2-4pm at Brook House WMC, Wakefield WF1 5NU. Contact John Whelpton at midyorks.bottomsup@gmail.com for more details.

Melanoma and Skin Cancer

There are two types of skin cancer - melanoma and non-melanoma.

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that can spread to other areas of the body. The main cause of melanoma is ultraviolet light, which comes from the sun and also sunbeds. Other risk factors include age, having pale skin, a large number of moles and a family history of skin cancer.

It is often possible to prevent skin cancer by being careful in the sun, for example by using a high factor sunscreen and reapplying it regularly. You should avoid being in the sun when the sun's rays are strongest (between 11am and 3pm), and seek shade wherever possible.

The main symptoms of melanoma skin cancer is a new mole, or change in an existing mole. Changes to look out for are a mole with an uneven shape or edges, a mole with a mix of colours, or large moles (bigger than 6mm wide).

Treatment for melanoma is usually surgical, but depends on where on the body it is, if it has spread and your general health. If you experience any of the symptoms described above, you should visit your GP and also take photos of the area of concern so you can monitor any changes. Your GP will probably also take a photograph to send to a dermatologist. Be sure to mention any family history of skin cancer too.

Non-melanoma skin cancer is a common type of cancer that starts in the top layer of skin and doesn't spread to other parts of the body. The main types are basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). They may appear as an unusual patch of skin, either by colour or texture. Treatments vary depending on where on the body it is, and how large it is. Surgery is a common treatment, or using a topical chemotherapy cream.

If you would like more information on melanoma and skin cancer, please visit

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/melanoma-skin-cancer/>

If you would like support, visit Melanoma UK <https://www.melanomauk.org.uk/Pages/Category/our-community> or join Melanoma Mates Facebook group.