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The APNI Newsletter

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News from the Office

We hope that you have all enjoyed the summer break and managed to get some sunshine here, or more likely, abroad!

In a bid to raise awareness of APNI's existence and purpose, Siobhan visited excellent local charity Family Friends in June. They have trained volunteers who provide practical and emotional help to families-in-need.



The current APNI office team is Siobhan, Alice, Jenny, Venelina and Dave and our mascot Alfie the cocker spaniel!

Thanks so much to all our wonderful volunteers for their continued support and also for helping to raise awareness of APNI by kindly distributing posters and leaflets. If anybody else is able to do this, please drop us an email and we will post some out to you.

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all of you who have already donated this year. The Association is run solely on donations and we could not continue to run without your generous support. For roughly every £5 we receive, we are able to support another mother.

APNI's New President: Professor Brice Pitt



Brice is honoured to have been invited to follow Professor Merton Sandler as APNI's new president.

Brice's research in the 1960s helped put post-natal depression 'on the map' and he welcomed APNI as offering help to

deeply troubled young mothers at home. Brice has previously served as Chairman on the APNI Committee for 20 years. Brice has also been President of the Marce' Society and was honoured by our American colleagues Post-partum International when he went to collect an Award for Excellence which APNI won in 1997. A small earthquake in San Diego marked this occasion.

Brice wrote 'Enjoying Motherhood' and 'Down with Gloom' with cartoonist Mel Calman for the general public.

Brice's colleague at the London Hospital, Professor John Cox, devised the popular EPDS (Edinburgh Post-natal Depression Scale) and he cherishes the memory of APNI's former Chairman and Vice-president, the late Channi Kumar.

Brice's kindness and humanity, coupled with his brilliance as a doctor and diagnostician, have benefitted thousands of patients.

When Brice took up the Chair in Old Age Psychiatry at Queen Mary's Hospital, he revolutionised care given to the frail and elderly patients at the hospital. A journalist told us that she took her demented and incontinent mother to be treated in Brice's unit and within three weeks her mother was discharged and in full control of her faculties and able to recognise her family and friends again.



Brice trained young medics, who positively hated his rule that they must remove their white coats and sit down when speaking with a patient (rather than towering over them).

Brice is the son of a surgeon and a midwife. His brother Peter is a surgeon. His sisters were a district nurse and a health visitor. The youngest of his four children is a counsellor with a degree in psychology.

Brice loves the theatre and has been a (too?) busy actor with London's Tower Theatre Company; his novel is available on Kindle – not, perhaps, to all tastes, so written under a nom de plume! He has played many notable roles and he has a puckish sense of humour.



The Linda Page Unsung Hero Award

Each year we ask mums to nominate their volunteer to receive some flowers as a thank you for their invaluable support. This year the winner we picked from the hat is Kate Kenyon. Nancy wrote about Kate:

“Kate is my lifeline. She knows what to say, what to tell me, what I need to hear. She is brilliant”.

Thanks to Kate and all our wonderful volunteers whom we could not do without. If you would like to nominate your volunteer for next year, please do write in.



Fundraising

Over the last 12 months, we have had some fantastic fundraisers who have given so much of their time and energy to raise funds for APNI. We would like to say huge thanks to Suwun Cheung & colleagues (Barclays cake sale), Dace Medne (Worksop Half Marathon), Louise MacQueen (Sober for October), Abbi Rendell (Slimathon), Robin Evans (Milton Keynes Festival of Speed Half Marathon), Samantha Booth (Plymouth Half Marathon), Laura Combe & Sarah Wilson (Great Women's Run 10k Glasgow) and last but not least, Lucie Holland for her on-going fundraising efforts in JustGiving.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to our supporters who have been giving regular monthly or annual donations as well as those who have raised funds for APNI in their own little ways. We fully appreciate your generosity. As you may know, every penny we receive enables us to continue our work in helping mothers and their families on their journey through postnatal illness.

A short note for the working mums and dads or anyone who is reading this newsletter. If your company donates to charity, please could you put our Association's name forward. We exist solely on donations, so any help you can extend to us will be a great help.

Some of our fundraisers:



Robin Evans



Laura Combe & Sarah Wilson



Suwun Cheung & colleagues

PND Awareness

In March this year Lucie Holland delivered her 51,000 signature petition to the NHS for an urgent review of perinatal mental health services. The petition is now closed and has almost 55,000 signatures. Lucie has met with NHS England and is meeting them again this month. We wish her all the best and hope that we start to see some much needed changes.

There was good news in the budget this year with George Osborne announcing £75 million over 5 years to be allocated to perinatal mental health services, as well as the acknowledgement of the unmet mental health needs of pregnant women and new mothers. This is a vital first step but there is still a long way to go. The Maternal Mental Health Alliance Everyone's Business continues to work with national and local stakeholders to ensure perinatal mental health has parity of esteem with physical health.



New Research

EXERCISE MAY BE HELPFUL TREATMENT IN POST-NATAL DEPRESSION

BY Dr Raj Persaud Consultant Psychiatrist

A recent study just published in a prestigious academic psychiatric journal has found that exercise could be an effective treatment for post-natal depression.

A pragmatic randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of a facilitated exercise intervention as a treatment for postnatal depression: the PAM-PeRS trial
A. J. Daley, R. V. Blamey, K. Jolly, A. K. Roalfe, K. M. Turner, S. Coleman, M. McGuinness, I. Jones, D. J. Sharp and C. MacArthur

Psychological Medicine / Volume 45 / Issue 11 / August 2015, pp 2413 – 2425

Postnatal depression affects about 10–15% of women in the year after giving birth. Many women and healthcare professionals would like an effective and accessible non-pharmacological treatment for postnatal depression. Women who fulfilled criteria for major depression in the first 6 months postnatally were randomized to receive either, usual care plus a facilitated exercise intervention, or usual care only. The intervention involved two face-to-face consultations and two telephone support calls with a physical activity facilitator over 6 months to support participants to engage in regular exercise. 34% reported thoughts of self-harming at baseline. This trial found that an exercise intervention that involved encouragement to exercise and to seek out social support to exercise may be an effective treatment for women with postnatal depression, including those with thoughts of self-harming.

Volunteers Needed for Research

A specialist team at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, is looking for mothers between 20-45 years of age to participate in a research project. Please see below.

“We are looking for volunteers with a past history of postnatal depression that started for the first time within 6 weeks of having a baby. We are also recruiting mothers who have suffered from a depression in the past, but NOT after having a baby.

This is not a treatment trial and participation in this project won't help you directly. However, we hope that this project will help us better understand why some mothers suffer from depression after having babies.

The project includes taking pictures of your brain with a brain MRI scan, some questionnaires, and a blood

test. The brain MRI scan does not involve any radiation and has no known side effects. We'll ask your permission to let your GP know if you decide to participate.” For more information, please contact Vladi Stoencheva at the Institute of Psychiatry via email: Vladimira.stoencheva@kcl.ac.uk or 0207 848 0942.

Support Groups

If you have come across any good PND support groups, please do let us know as we try to keep our database as current as possible. Thanks

Green Smoothie

Green smoothies are such an easy way to get large amounts of fruit and greens into your daily diet and give your body the nutrients it needs. The phytonutrients in leafy greens provide a huge boost to your body's immune system – something well worth thinking about as we head towards Winter.

These smoothies do taste a lot better than they look and can be made in less than five minutes. No need to buy any fancy equipment just dig out your blender and away you go. This is our current office favourite:



½ cucumber
5 mint leaves
Two handfuls of spinach or kale
Large knob of ginger
Two kiwis
Half a large mango
2 cups of coconut water
1 stick of celery
Peel the ginger, mango & kiwis.
Everything else can go straight in.
Add ice if you like it cold and blitz away! (2 generous glasses)

Facebook



Once again, we'd like to say a huge thanks to Mel for managing our Facebook page and all her helpful posts. Please visit our page and give us a 'like'. www.facebook.com/associationforpostnatalillness

Keeping in Touch

We are missing many of our supporters' and volunteers' email addresses and it is obviously the quickest way to contact most of you. Could we ask you to inform us of your current email address by sending us a quick email to info@apni.org. Thank you.

Finally



We would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.