



TAKE A BREATH



Looking
after your
lungs



CHSS
Live
Better
Blog



Flu
Vaccination

Honours in the Highlands!

In April, Maureen Fraser from 'The Cheerful Chesters' in Inverness received a very special letter. It was marked as 'private and confidential' from the Cabinet Office so she was a little nervous! She could not believe the news inside..... she had been awarded The British Empire Medal for her services to the voluntary sector.

Someone who knows Maureen, and all the good work she does for others thought she should be recognised for it and what's more, the UK Government Honours Committee agreed. This decision was passed on to The Prime Minister, and then on to the Queen herself, who has awarded the honour! Maureen says "I felt total disbelief that someone had thought to nominate someone like me for something like this!" Maureen was nominated by fellow 'Chester' Jo, and seconded by people from the variety of good causes she gives her time to.

The big challenge was that Maureen wasn't allowed to tell anyone as the decision was confidential until June! When it came to receiving the award, Maureen wanted her family and the Cheerful Chesters to be there: "the Chesters are such a big part of my life, they are a super group".

The award was presented by Donald Cameron of Locheil, who is the Lord Lieutenant of Inverness, Badenoch, Strathspey and Lochaber. They had a lovely ceremony in front of the Cheerful Chesters group plus family and friends. The wonderful Community Volunteers from Tesco provided a buffet lunch afterwards. The Lord Lieutenant also stayed and everyone enjoyed speaking with him. It was a great day!

Maureen clearly makes a significant difference to people's lives through all her hard work and it is fitting that she has been recognised for it.

Many congratulations Maureen!



NEW! A blog about health, wellness and a healthier you

Did you know that CHSS produces a fortnightly health blog? The 'Live Better Blog' was launched in February 2016 by our Health Promotion team and covers a range of topics to help reduce your risk of chest, heart and stroke illness.

Why not check out our recent post about the e-cigarettes written by CHSS Cardiac and Respiratory Manager, Jill Adams – [find out the truth behind vaping!](#)

For more of our health blogs visit: www.chss.org.uk/livebetterblog If you would like to subscribe to the quarterly blog e-newsletter you can do so [by clicking here](#)



Looking after your lungs over winter

With winter fast approaching Katrina Flannigan, Respiratory Nurse Specialist for Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership is reinforcing the importance of monitoring the everyday symptoms of COPD.

COPD is a long-term condition which affects everyone differently. The key to managing the condition, minimising exacerbations and living a longer healthier life is recognising and understanding the symptoms that you live with on a daily basis. You may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- Breathlessness
- Cough
- Excess mucus production

It is important that you recognise your symptoms and how they affect you day to day when you are well. Once you know what your daily symptoms are it becomes easier to recognise when you are not so well.

Katrina's advice is to recognise when two or more of these symptoms are worse for more than 24 hours as that may be the time to seek advice from your GP or nurse.

Katrina would advise everyone to become familiar with their self-management plan. If you don't have a plan, speak to your nurse about how this could help you.

Take these simple steps to manage your symptoms when they are worse, for example:

- If your sputum is thicker or stickier, drink some more fluids.
- If you feel more breathless, use your blue (reliever) inhaler a little more.
- Pace your activity.
- Practise chest clearance techniques regularly. You may need to do them more often when you are unwell.

Whilst starting antibiotic and steroid treatment quickly is important during a flare up, remember that taking too many courses when they are not needed can cause problems.



Becoming more familiar with your usual symptoms and recognising when they are worse, means you will be able to get the most out of your medication.

Don't forget your flu vaccination; it is available to you all and will help to minimise the risk of a flare up. The 2016 programme is well under way and your GP surgery will be offering the vaccination to everyone with a long-term condition. See page 4 for more information.

COLOURFUL WORDSEARCH

Can you find the following colours?

- YELLOW
- RED
- GREEN
- ORANGE
- LIME
- BLACK
- BROWN
- BLUE
- RUST
- MAGENTA
- GREY

Y	E	L	L	O	W	L	E	Y	B
B	H	I	G	R	E	E	N	G	L
R	G	H	P	A	D	R	H	R	A
U	P	R	U	N	G	R	E	Y	C
S	L	E	M	G	A	U	V	R	K
T	S	U	R	E	D	A	Y	Q	U
A	L	I	S	O	L	I	M	E	N
B	R	O	W	N	T	R	U	O	C
M	A	G	E	N	T	A	A	I	R
B	L	U	E	S	I	E	G	L	O

Extract from *The Activity Year Book: A Week by Week Guide for Use in Elderly Day and Residential Care* by Anni Bowden and Nancy Lewthwaite, published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Have your say...

Do you have any new information about services in your area, an interesting story or a helpful hint to share with people affected by chronic lung disease? Then please let us know so that we can share it with others. We'd love to hear from you:

Contact us by e-mail on respiratoryservices@chss.org.uk, or call us on 0131 225 6963

We look forward to hearing your news!

CHEST-A-MINUTE

I don't feel that I'm getting out and about as much as I used to. Sometimes I can feel quite lonely.

Loneliness is a normal emotion, and all of us feel it from time to time.

That's good to know but I'm starting to feel lonely a bit more often.

Have you thought about joining a group, or a befriending service?

I haven't heard of 'befriending' before. What is that?

It is a bit of a funny word! A 'befriender' is a person who can pop in to see you, go out on short trips or visits with you, or even just give you a buzz on the phone from time-to-time, whatever works best for you both. They are not health care workers. A 'Befriender' is recruited, trained and carefully matched with you to make sure you have similar interests.

Do you think that would help?

Yes, definitely! Feeling lonely can actually make you feel quite unwell. Going along to a group where people have similar interests as you, or joining a befriending service can really boost your physical and mental wellbeing. It can open up a range of activities, or maybe you just need someone to talk to and share a cup of tea with? Either way you will get some company which can help you feel brighter and more confident!

If you'd like to know more about groups or befriending services in your area, call our Advice Line Nurses for free on 0800 801 0899 during office hours 9.30 to 4.00 Monday to Friday.

GET YOUR FLU VACCINATION

Getting your **flu vaccination** is a free and easy way to help keep yourself well, particularly over the winter months.

Influenza (flu) is feverish illness that tends appear in the winter. Your GP surgery offers the flu jab vaccine from October to March and you should have a flu jab once a year. Last year's vaccine might not work against this year's bug!

Don't wait until you start to feel unwell as you may not be able to get the flu jab while you are ill.

Some people worry that having the flu jab can end up giving them the flu. This is not true. The flu vaccine is called 'an inactivated injection'; this means there is no live virus in the injection.

Side effects are usually mild and only last a day or two. These include pain, swelling and redness where the jab was given. Occasionally people feel a slight fever, shivering, headache or aching muscles.

- ✓ If you have a sore or red area on your arm try applying a cold cloth.
- ✓ If you have a headache or slight fever drink plenty of fluids and take regular doses of paracetamol (but do not exceed the recommended dose).
- ✓ These symptoms usually disappear within one to two days without any treatment. However if you have increased breathlessness, swelling or a rash in the few days after vaccination contact your doctor or nurse.



HOW TO REGISTER

Don't want to miss the next issue of Take a Breath? You can sign up to receive an e-mail alert that will let you know that the next issue is available, and a link to take you straight there!

Visit: www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath