



# TAKE A BREATH



Only When I  
Cough!



Caring for our  
Carers



Lanarkshire  
Lung  
Research

## Pulmonary rehabilitation

**My name is Jennifer McDonald and along with my colleague Lynn McCormick we are the physiotherapists responsible for running the pulmonary rehabilitation and education programme across Lanarkshire.**

I have been doing this since 2008 and the service is always changing to meet new standards and patient needs.

Pulmonary rehabilitation is one of the best interventions for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). It can help people with other lung conditions too, such as pulmonary fibrosis and bronchiectasis. The programme includes both exercise and education. It can improve people's fitness and strength, they can feel less breathless, and more in control and confident about living with their lung condition. It can be really sociable too! Education is also a huge part of the programme and will help people to 'self manage' their condition, for example having a better understanding of your condition, being able to make informed choices and decisions and feeling confident in managing it day-to-day.

Each class is led by a physiotherapist with a specialist respiratory nurse



present. People normally complete 12 sessions, attending twice a week. The classes are sociable with a relaxed feel, ideal for meeting people with similar conditions and symptoms. It's a great chance to swap hints and tips!

We start with exercise and follow with some education where we cover topics such as medication, chest clearance, what to do if you are having a flare up, stopping smoking, healthy eating, outings and travel, and benefits advice.

The programme offers an opportunity to get a better understanding of your condition, how to manage it, as well as a chance to exercise in a safe and supportive surroundings. We hope people continue to enjoy exercising and will support people to move on to other leisure services and activities.

## Pulmonary Rehabilitation Week

**is running from the 12th to the 18th of March 2017 and aims to celebrate and promote Pulmonary Rehabilitation.**

CHSS will be supporting this so follow us on twitter or facebook, or have a look at our webpage [www.chss.org.uk/LungRehab](http://www.chss.org.uk/LungRehab) for more information, news and updates on what we'll be doing!

For more information about Pulmonary Rehabilitation have a look at our Factsheet: F32 Pulmonary Rehabilitation Frequently Asked Questions

Or visit [www.mylungsmylife.org](http://www.mylungsmylife.org)

Or call the CHSS Advice Line Nurses

**Call the CHSS Adviceline telephone 0808 801 0899 free from landlines and mobiles**



## CHEST-A-MINUTE

I caught that nasty cold that was going around in winter and had a horrible flare up of my lung condition. I'm still quite breathless and I still feel quite weak, especially my legs. I wasn't expecting that.

Everybody is different when it comes to recovery. Sometimes it can take weeks rather than days.

Your legs can feel weaker because you haven't been as active. Steroids can make you feel a bit weaker too.

Don't worry, it is possible to get fitter again. Getting back to doing the things you enjoy and increasing activities is important to keep you as well as possible.

I just feel so weary I'm not sure where to start

If possible speak to your GP or nurse about pulmonary rehabilitation. Following a flare up, there is good evidence to show that pulmonary rehabilitation helps recovery and reduces the chance of you needing to go back into hospital.

I used to do some exercises at home that the physio gave me.

You could try to gradually build this up again. Try working on the large muscle groups such as muscles in your thighs. Take plenty of rest between exercises.

I haven't really been out much but I miss my daily walk.

Try some shorter walks to start with. If you're worried, have somebody with you and stay close to home. Remember to wrap up and take your inhalers.

Avoid longer walks until you regain your stamina and confidence.

## Only when I

**Stress incontinence is the involuntary leak of urine when you cough, laugh or sneeze. It is more common with women because of the difference between male and female anatomy and after having children pelvic muscles can be weakened.**

**What is the cause?** If muscles in your pelvis (known as your pelvic floor muscles) become weak, there is a risk of you leaking urine during exertion, or straining yourself. For example when you sneeze or cough.

**What are my 'pelvic floor muscles'?** Your pelvic floor muscles are responsible for helping to maintain bladder and bowel control.

**How can having a lung condition lead to stress urinary incontinence?**

- Often when you have a lung condition you will cough a lot.



## Caring for our

**Let's take a moment to appreciate the people who support us and help to keep a smile on our faces!**

Many of us are lucky enough to have friends, family or partners that give their time to help look after us and support us to live full and happy lives. Within Lanarkshire we are fortunate to have services to support those who care for others, often for free.

Look out for **Care for Carer information packs**, available in all hospitals and GP Surgeries in Lanarkshire. This pack provides information including what we mean by the term 'Carer', Carers rights, supporting young Carers, what happens when someone you care for goes into hospital, what services are available in your community and Finances (your carer may be entitled to some benefits).

There is also a list of useful contact telephone numbers and web site addresses. If you can't see the Care for Carer information pack ask member of staff who will find it for you.

# cough

- The repeated downward pressure on your pelvic floor muscles during excessive coughing can make them weak.

## What can you do?

- If you have been taught '**Pelvic Floor Exercises**' in the past then you should continue to do these again.
- Try to contract your pelvic floor muscles during your Airway Clearance Technique or when coughing and sneezing.
- If you haven't had any instruction on pelvic floor exercises in the past you can ask your GP for a referral for physiotherapy.
- Using an **Airway Clearance Technique** to clear sputum from your lungs reduces how much coughing is required to clear your chest. This can help reduce or avoid Stress Urinary Incontinence.
- Try to **reduce or avoid drinking things that will irritate your bladder** or make you need to pass urine more often. This includes:
  - Drinks that are high in caffeine.



- Fizzy drinks, especially those containing artificial sweeteners i.e. 'diet' or 'light'.
- Alcoholic drinks, in particular 'shots'.
- Some people find the acid in fruit juices can make problems worse.
- Try drinks such as herbal tea and diluting juice.
- Try to **maintain a healthy body weight**. Being overweight can put extra pressure on the pelvic floor muscles.
- There are a number of '**toilet finder**' apps available for smart phones which can help take the worry out of leaving the house. Have a look and see if there is one that has good coverage of your local area.
- You should also discuss a referral to the **continence service** with a health care Professional, or you may be able to self refer.

**Stress incontinence can be embarrassing but it can also be treated in a variety of ways. Don't suffer in silence when you can get help.**

# carers

Here are just a few examples of some of the support that is available:

## The Lanarkshire Centre:

Provide courses to help in assisting Carers such as first aid courses and moving and handling. They can also provide holistic therapy. They have a phone service where they can talk to carers who feel isolated and are unable to get to the Centre. This is free and can be used as often as needed. Sometimes they have even managed to get concert or show tickets that they pass on to carers that have indicated they would enjoy this. It gives those that are caring for others a chance to get out and do something for their own enjoyment.

Both South and North Lanarkshire Carers Network have **support groups** for carers, mixed or all male or female groups. They have regular monthly meetings where carers



have a chance to get together to chat and share their ideas and get support for themselves.

## VASLAN – Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire

can identify support in your area. Visit their website and click on their 'locator tool' to find services near you, such as lunch clubs and day centres [www.vaslan.org.uk](http://www.vaslan.org.uk)

Hospices also have facilities to provide support such as holistic therapies, art therapy counselling to both patients and Carers.

These are just a few examples of support available so remember to check the Care for Carers Information pack for more options.

*Sharon Ralph, Respiratory Nurse Specialist*

**Register** to receive an e-mail alert that the next issue of Take a Breath Lanarkshire is available [www.chss.org/takeabreath-lanarkshire](http://www.chss.org/takeabreath-lanarkshire)



## Come and Join Lanarkshire Lung Research

**Dr Andrew Smith and I are respiratory consultants based in Wishaw Hospital. We have a background in research and have wanted to extend our knowledge and treatments in asthma and COPD.**

Five years ago, Dr Smith and I were lucky enough to be awarded funding to support research in Lanarkshire. We have set up an excellent research unit with a fantastic group of trained researchers. This includes nurses, pharmacists and administrators. We have a dedicated research room in Wishaw Hospital, and are very keen, ready and enthusiastic to do more research. We have joined up with patients from all over Lanarkshire in several projects, and they tell us they have really enjoyed the experience.

Lanarkshire has a population of half a million people and unfortunately is the second biggest hotspot (behind Glasgow) for COPD in the whole of the UK. We also have a large number of people with asthma. These numbers are increasing and we also see more severe cases of COPD disease than the UK average.

We are very aware of the progress being made in COPD and asthma research. The respiratory unit in Lanarkshire is very keen to play an active role in developing new treatments. Currently, we have a number of research trials running which are looking at new treatments (mainly inhalers and tablets) to see whether they are better than what is currently offered. These new treatments have already been tested to ensure they are safe and do not have significant side effects.

If you have COPD or asthma, and are interested in joining us to try and improve respiratory treatment in Lanarkshire and worldwide, please get in touch. This is a very exciting time for us to help find new treatments for asthma and COPD.

*Dr Manish Patel, Consultant Physician, Wishaw Hospital.*

**For more information contact: Angela Brown  
Email - [Angela.Brown2@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Angela.Brown2@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)  
or Tel - 01698 366151.**

## This year World Asthma day will be on Tuesday 2nd May 2017.

Asthma is a long-term condition that affects the lungs. It causes swelling and narrowing of small tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs, causing shortness of breath, cough or wheeze.

Asthma is common, affecting over 350,000 people in Scotland and is the second most common long term health condition in the county. Sadly, there is no cure. However, the symptoms can be well controlled with treatment and by avoiding irritants (triggers) that make it worse.

Whether you have asthma yourself or you have children or grandchildren with the condition, visit the My Lungs, My Life Website to find out all you need to know about living with Asthma.

[www.mylungsmylife.org](http://www.mylungsmylife.org)

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**Can you find the following words? LEPRECHAUN, JIG, IRELAND, DUBLIN, IRISH, RAINBOW, SHAMROCK, GOOD LUCK, BLARNEY.**

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