



HULL & EAST RIDING GLAUCOMA GROUP

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Newsletter: November/December 2020

Welcome to the Hull and East Riding Glaucoma Group Newsletter for Winter 2020, with many thanks to Alison and Sight Support who again have made it possible to get it sent out. Since last I wrote we've experienced the long hot days of summer, and thanks to easing of restrictions, many of us were able to 'take the road and watch the sea'. Now we've moved in and out of lockdown into Tier 3, and are faced with the shorter nights, the early frosts, the wind, mist and rain and decidedly winter air of November and December. I just wonder if someone will start producing fleece lined face masks!

Speaking of masks! If like me you're experiencing the problem

of 'fogged up' 'glasses when wearing your now compulsory face mask, the following tips from Specsavers might help: 1) a snug fitting mask helps to stop too much breath escaping and fogging up lenses, so if your mask is too big twist the straps into an x shape and then put them round your ears. 2) breathe downwards into the mask. 3) rest your glasses on top of the mask. I've tried this and it works -up to a point.

Group news: It will come as no surprise to hear that the December meeting with Pat Savage has had to be cancelled. She sends her best wishes to all and identifies although unable to see patients she is still available to help via phone calls if required.

Future Meetings Unfortunately it's impossible to identify exactly when the next meeting is likely to take place. Normally at this time I would be sending out our programme for next year, but at the moment all I can identify is that if things change for the better we may be able to have the speakers planned for this year appearing on a programme for 2021. All have indicated their willingness to be included. Watch this space!

Congratulations We're delighted to identify that Chris Walker, our 'refreshment co ordinator', and also a Sight Support volunteer, has recently been given a Highly Commended Award in the 'Behind the Scenes Category' of the regional 'Proud to BEE a Volunteer Awards.' Well done Chris.

Other news: Eye Hospital Some phone numbers to keep handy:
Eye Clinic : 01482 608788
Option 1 - Appointments.
Option2- Nurse advice;
Eye Ward: 01482 604385;
Lucentis appointment queries:
01482 816600;

Low vision: 01482 816605;
June & Louise (ECLLO): 01482 605333

Sight Support The latest restrictions mean once again offices are closed to the public but Sight Support have been supporting people with sight loss throughout the pandemic, and will continue to do so. Telephone lines remain open Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm. (01482 342297), and staff continue to offer support and advice, or just someone to talk to. Online and telephone activities developed over recent months will continue, as will calls from the telephone befrienders team. They will be closed for Christmas holidays from 4pm on Wednesday 23rd December 2020 until 9am on Monday 4th January 2021.

Local News: Keeping safe A password scheme which helps visually impaired people identify if a person at their front door is in fact a police officer has been launched by Humberside Police. It's very important that police officers and other police employees who come to the door for whatever reason are

able to identify themselves, usually by means of an identification card which proves who they are. However this isn't easy for visually impaired people who may not be able to see a photograph or name on an identification card clearly. The Visual Impairment Protocol (VIP) applies to anyone with a visual impairment, whether full blindness, with a guide dog, or any sight-impaired condition. It works by setting up a password system at the address of a visually-impaired member of the community. When an individual calls either 101 or 999 and informs the call handler that they have a sight impairment, a password of their choice will be agreed. An officer then visiting that address will be expected to state the password to the person answering the door. If they cannot do this, even after phoning the Force Control Room for verification - at your request- then call 999 to report a possible bogus official and request police attendance.

IGA: has changed its name to Glaucoma UK, with a new webpage: www.glaucoma.uk and

a new name for their magazine, now called Insight. Also if you would find it useful to have somewhere to store information about your glaucoma, a free Personal Glaucoma Monitoring Record is available to order from the website or by calling the helpline on 01233 648170.

Some observations. If nothing else, this year has taught us that life can be turned upside down in an instant. The continuing uncertainty of life under restrictions brings with it inevitably feelings of anxiety and apprehension, and everyone making the best of the situation. Like many others I've had some tearful times, some angry times, and some fed up times -like when I cut my finger on a hair cutting comb I thought would be the answer to my hair problems and found it wasn't. On many occasions I've wished for the proverbial magic carpet which could whisk me away, although it would need to be to a covid free planet! I've wallowed in nostalgia for childhood memories and spent time successfully, though painfully, searching for 4 leaf

clovers. An ancestor of mine reckoned you should never look backward, only forward, but at the moment perhaps the past looks more inviting. However "Today is the tomorrow we worried about yesterday and all is well" (Dale Carnegie). There's been a growing recognition of how much better you feel after having a good laugh -even if you start crying halfway through. Two tales that made me laugh: "I must go down to the sea again,
The lonely sea and sky
I left my shoes and socks
there,
I wonder if they're dry!"
and: Man bought a world map and told his wife: "I'm going to throw this dart and wherever it lands I'm taking you for a holiday when this pandemic is over". Turns out they're spending two weeks behind the fridge. Similarly some newly created words appearing in the Coronavirus vocabulary have provided a bit of light relief: e.g "quarantinis" -the experimental lockdown cocktails made from whatever you could find at the back of the drinks

cupboard, and "snaccident" - when you inadvertently eat a whole packet of biscuits.

And finally: Hopefully in spite of the continuing uncertainty over meetings etc we can continue to keep members informed. I remember my mother saying how during the war everybody learned how to make a tasty meal out of whatever was available. I don't know if this newsletter would match up to the tasty meals she used to produce but I've done my best with what news is out there! If at any time however you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter and have your name removed from the mailing list all you need to do is phone Sight Support and ask for your details to be removed (01482 342297) We've missed everyone from the group, and hope that it won't be too long before normal service can be resumed. All that remains is for us to wish you well over the coming weeks, and send you best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a 2021 that's better for us all. Stay safe. Kay Slingsby

