

## April 2017 Newsletter

Providing a supportive and informative environment for people with a variety of lung conditions and their carers.

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**Next Meeting:** Thursday 13 April 2017  
10:15 am - 12 noon  
Weston Creek Labor Club  
Teesdale Close  
Stirling ACT 2611

**Guest Speakers:** Louise McLean and Stacy Fuller - managing partners of Capital Chemist, Southlands

**Topic:** Role of the chemist in the community

### Dates for your diary

Wednesday 3 May 2017 LFA Education Day  
Thursday 11 May 2017 10:15 am - 12 noon CLLSG Meeting

### March Meeting

**Helen Cotter**

Lyn welcomed everyone to the meeting. We began as usual checking on the wellbeing of those absent, then onto the other items:

- The Seniors Expo is on Thursday 23 March at Epic. Report later in the newsletter.
- We now have information about Education Day and its speakers. Information later in the newsletter.
- Helen Cotter reported on the POC trial which now has all the essential methodology in place and is all set to begin. The trial has undergone rigorous planning to enable it to give very credible results.

- Pam brought up the topic of the plastics recycling factory being set up in Hume. There are concerns about the possibility of pollution from the factory with its consequences on neighbouring areas.
- A report on the fish'n chips lunch late in February. Report and photos later in the newsletter
- Helen Cotter also reported on the CPAG teleconference which the Lung Foundation Australia organised with representatives around Australia. Kaye Powell and Helen Cotter are the ACT reps. During the teleconference the LFA reported that its four year plan is now underway, promoting awareness of lung disease, particularly COPD and asthma/COPD. The LFA is continuing to support both patients and carers and access throughout rural and remote Australia. It will continue to foster research, to upskill professionals and work towards abolishing the stigma in relation to lung disease.



A plate of fish 'n chips, looks good doesn't it?

## Guest Speaker - Jody Hook COPD Clinical Nurse Helen Cotter

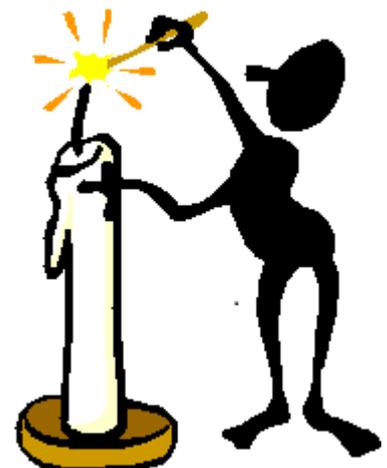
Jody Hook works out of the Sleep and Respiratory Department of The Canberra Hospital. She said that anyone who feels the need for her support only requires a referral to her from their General Practitioner.

Jody spoke extensively about her roles:

- support for people in the community to better manage their health in order to keep them out of hospital
- coordinate clinics at Canberra Hospital
- organise home sessions. In these, she not only looks at lung health but also looks for areas where the person may need additional assistance
- support and educate workers in the hospital and GP clinics.

Jody talked about the importance of having an **Action Plan** as this gives clear guidelines on what to do when feeling sick. She recommends you keep antibiotics at home and take them when phlegm becomes sticky and changes colour (the colour depends on what's not normal for you), and still go to the doctor as soon as possible.

The red zone in the Action Plan is when you're really worried about your breathing or can't get your breath and using a puffer has no effect. When you use a puffer, take one puff, breathe in 4 times, wait a few minutes, and then repeat the action four times. If no relief, get an ambulance.



When it's really bad you couldn't blow out a candle.

Jody was asked if it was better to use broad spectrum antibiotics or lung specific. She replied that broad spectrum is better first of all but if the bugs causing the infection are known, then a specific antibiotic can target specific bugs. The way to detect the bugs is to do a sputum test. The sputum will be tested in the lab to show the bugs in it.

If there is difficulty coughing up sputum, using a puffer, then a flutter (or bubble) device should help. Jody then went on to talk about the variety of puffers, whether they were short action or long action (these days 24 hours) and how to take them. She gave demonstrations on how to take the different devices so we could see the method. There are many different devices available and different devices suit different people so talk to your doctor if you are having problems with the one you are using.

She gave us so many useful pointers about each puffer. Some general points include:

- Depending on the puffer, use a spacer. It will deliver more contents to your lungs.
- Make sure you empty your lungs completely and breathe away from the puffer as the moist lung air may clump the powder bits together.
- Breathe in normally with as long a breath as possible but don't breathe in too vigorously as this affects the particle size in the powder which affects how it goes into your lungs.
- If you cough after you breathe in, maybe you need a different style of puffer.
- Make sure your lips don't go over any air vents.
- If you are taking a steroid, rinse your mouth afterwards, spitting out the rinsing water. Steroids can have nasty effects on the body so it's good to get rid of it from the mouth cavity.

Jody was asked a question about mycoplasma and how it is difficult to diagnose and can lead to COPD if not diagnosed properly and how it can keep recurring. Jody replied that you need to work with the doctor on the best medication as there are different types of mycoplasma and you need to work out whether it is the same bug recurring or a new infection with a different bug. With a lower immune system, it's easy to pick up a new bug.

Jody was asked about the use of morphine to counteract extreme breathlessness. She told us that morphine based medications work on the brain to slow down the respiratory rate but that it was generally prescribed by palliative care specialists rather than respiratory specialists. She pointed out that morphine causes constipation which causes breathlessness as the full bowels push up on the lungs. A comment was made that a hand held fan held near the face may help to calm the brain and calm the breathing.

Finally, Jody reminded us to keep up to date with our flu, pneumonia and whooping cough shots as all can affect our breathing.

Keeping up to date with injections:

- flu - every year
- pneumonia - twice, 5 years apart
- whooping cough - every 20-30 years as it wears off.

Jody gave a most enjoyable and informative session.

### For sale

Please note that all prices are negotiable

- **Elite Traveller Scooter** (bought new April 2014 \$2200.00). Asking price = \$1800.00.
- **Wheelchair** - aluminium/folding (bought new April 2014 \$590.00). Asking price = \$400.00.
- **Wheelchair** large self-propelling (like new). Asking price = \$1000.00.

Contact Percy Fleming on 02 6288 6935 or [pandmfleming@gmail.com](mailto:pandmfleming@gmail.com).

# Lung Foundation Australia's Education Day

Wednesday 3 May 2017

The Orion Room, Southern Cross Club, Woden

9:45 am - 2:00 pm

\$15 with lunch included (discounted entry for members of LFA)

## Talks on:

- **Living Well with Lung Disease and the importance of being proactive in your care** - Claire Mulvihill, lung cancer nurse
- **The importance of good nutrition and weight maintenance for lung health** - Julie Priestly, dietician and clinical educator
- **Exacerbations and your lung disease** - Mark Hurwitz, respiratory specialist.

To secure your place, call Lung Foundation Australia on 1800 654 301.

Please let them know if you have any dietary requirements.

## Inogen POC available

We have available an Inogen One POC - about 2 years old with reasonable use. It has:

- an electricity cord
- a charger for the car
- a battery
- a carry bag and strap
- nasal cannula – with mask
- a CD for getting started
- a manual

It does not have a trolley to hold it and has only one battery. A second battery, which most users have, will cost about \$500. We ask for a donation to Lung Life. Contact: Helen Cotter on [cotterhe@hotmail.com](mailto:cotterhe@hotmail.com) or 02 6281 2988.

## InogenOne G2 POC for Loan

We have a one year old InogenOne G2 POC with attachments for loan. If you are on oxygen cylinders and thinking of buying a POC, you may like to borrow this one for trial.

If you are on oxygen cylinders and need, for instance, to travel to another city for a break or to visit a doctor, this may help..

We ask for a donation to Lung Life for its use.

Contact Helen on [cotterhe@hotmail.com](mailto:cotterhe@hotmail.com) or 02 6281 2988.

## The A-Z of Preventative Health

Chris Moyle

### Shingles (Dr Oz)

In people who have had chicken pox the virus lies dormant at the root of nerve cells in the spine. Over the age of fifty years one in three people will fall victim to it again but as shingles, a painful and dangerous disease. With shingles the virus reactivates, travelling from the spinal nerve root along sensory nerves to the skin, producing blisters. It most often appears as a single stripe of blisters that wraps around either the left or right side of the torso. Shingles can reoccur over and over again.

Stress, lack of exercise and not eating the right way can cause shingles. It happens when the immune system is down. It is therefore important to keep the immune system strong to keep the virus trapped in the nerve system. If shingles occurs get help quickly and treat it very aggressively. If you are over sixty ask for a vaccination against shingles. Free vaccinations are now available for people over seventy.



## Serenity Prayer

Attributed to American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)

God grant me  
the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can change,  
and the wisdom to know the difference.

**IT'S TIME EVERYONE!!!!**

**WE ALL HAVE TO GO AND  
GET OUR FLU INJECTION.**

## Fish'n Chips

Helen Cotter

Over 20 people enjoyed the beautiful weather for our fish'n chips lunch at Snapper, Southern Cross Yacht Club. It was good to see so many people and a pity we couldn't all sit at the same extended table. We ran out of space.

We were harassed by a large black swan begging for food or trying to sneakily steal it. After a while, it gave up and wandered away. Apart from that, it was a most enjoyable event.



The large black swan was so innocent looking and made its presence known to all the diners who shared their meals with it.



Fingers were invented before forks. That may be so, but as my mother always told me, mine were not. Even so, it's funny that at a picnic, food always seems to taste better when eaten with one's fingers.

## Senior's Expo Helen Reynolds



Relaxing after setting up the display are Pam, Robyn and Carmel. Barry went off to have a look at what the Expo had to offer.

After having a Cook's Tour of areas of North Canberra, Helen Cotter and I arrived at Exhibition Park and began the invariable task, namely finding a park for the car. I hadn't been to the Expo for many years and was pleasantly surprised by the number of cars and people attending the event. Helen parked the car, perhaps a little illegally, but only one breath stop before we entered Exhibition Park.

Our stand, which had been set up by Pam, Barry, Robyn and Carmel was in a good position, one which most people wandered past sometime during the day. Many people stopped to chat and departed, chewing mints and caramels, armed with booklets and information as well as our pens. Pens are very popular.

While wandering around the Expo I managed to up date my Seniors' Card, get my MyWay, discuss the problems I'm having with my CPAP's humidifier and get a recipe for San Choy Boy all the while being entertained by a group singing my type of music.



The information booths were numerous and covered everything from Retirement Villages to what to have for lunch. And, most importantly, everyone was cheerful, helpful, supportive and caring.

Helen and Esther discuss the success of the stand. Many people stopped to discuss their problems and left, some showing interest in attending our meetings.



Esther and Linda discuss the goings on at the Expo, also deciding when they would start packing up. This left Barry and me to discuss our view of the Expo (all very positive) and also solve the world's problems.