

## West Lancs and Sefton Myeloma Support Group

### End of Year Report 2016

The West Lancs and Sefton Myeloma support group was formed to provide an opportunity for all those affected by myeloma to meet in a supportive environment; to share experiences; to exchange information and ideas; to learn more about myeloma and keep up to date and to provide support to each other.

The group held its first meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at the Living Well Centre in Southport with 20 attendees, both patients and carers. Eric Low, Chief Executive of Myeloma UK sent a welcome letter wishing the group success. We are very grateful to the Macmillan Information and Support Centre for hosting our meetings.

Since January the group has met on the first Tuesday of every month with attendance varying between about 7 and 20. We have had a very successful first year.

The meetings are informal, based around coffee and chat with a loosely structured agenda which allows time for invited speakers or feedback from other activities.

The group has agreed a constitution, election of officers and has agreed that for the time being it will be self-funded by members. Any monies raised through fundraising will be used for donations to Myeloma UK instead of funding activities of the group. The group has no bank account so there are no annual accounts to audit and sign off.

During the year the group has received feedback from members on a number of different activities including: Myeloma UK webinars on topics such as understanding infection, recovery from stem cell transplant, dealing with peripheral neuropathy; Patient Information Day at Belfast ( May ); Research and Surveys organised by Myeloma UK; Support Group Leader Weekend in Reading (September ).

We have been pleased to welcome a number of speakers including Sara Morgan from Myeloma UK; Lucy Holmes from the Sefton Active Lifestyles programme and Helen Jones, MacMillan Information centre manager,

Support group members have attended a number of events to promote the group and provide information about Myeloma UK. These included the Macmillan Health and Well Being Event, Southport 17 March 2016, the 30 June 2016 and 3 November 2016; the MacMillan Health and Well Being Event, Royal Liverpool Hospital on 17 October 2106; the Mini Marathon Fund Raising Event, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2016. The support group also had a stand at the Myeloma UK Patient infoday at Manchester on 5 November 2016.





In raising funds for Myeloma UK, our support group has had a fantastic first year, donating a total of £4,138.14p. This money came from the Easter Raffle ( £50.99), the mini marathon in August ( £3999) and the 5p Dimple Whisky jar quiz run at the Manchester info day ( £88.15). A big thank you to all our supporters and those who took part.

Our August fundraising event was a mini marathon in which 26 volunteers each walked a mile along Lord Street Southport. We managed a mention in the printed and online editions of Champion and Southport Visitor Newspapers and On The Spot News. Our support group is now included on the Myeloma UK web site , and also gets a regular mention on the Southport Macmillan website and in the local Trader magazine.



Members of the group have also arranged for leaflets to be left in various clinics including Fazakerly and Aintree Hospital Ward 10Z, the Royal Liverpool Hospital, Arrow Park Hospital and Southport Medical Day Unit.



We look forward to our second year in 2017 hoping to help and support all those affected by Myeloma.

You can find out more about our group by ringing the Myeloma UK Helpline on 0800 980 3332, or by visiting [www.myeloma.org.uk](http://www.myeloma.org.uk)

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2017

David Simister

