

MS SOCIETY FOYLE BRANCH
SUPPORT OFFICERS REPORT TO AGM

26th MAY 2009

THURSDAY SUPPORT GROUP

Our Support Group meet frequently at FDRC. Our programme varies from having guest speakers and presentations to lively discussions among ourselves. The evenings are rounded off with tea and plenty of banter.

We have had some very interesting speakers since our last AGM. Examples of these being:

- Doreen McClurg, University of Ulster discussing her research on bladder control for people affected by M.S.
- Dr Joe McEvoy, local GP discussing all aspects of MS.
- A local Reiki group explaining how relaxing and beneficial Reiki can be for M.S.
- Siobhan McCauley, physiotherapist, who was seconded from the Health Service to the M.S. Society, N.I. Siobhan explained to us how she planned to improve physiotherapy services for people affected by M.S. throughout Northern Ireland.

TUESDAY CLUB

From June until September of last year our Tuesday Club members had fortnightly outings in our coach to various resorts around the North West and Donegal. I have been told that the highlight of these trips was taking the ferry from Rathmullen to Bunrana. Why wouldn't it be when you end up in the Inishowen Gateway Lodge Hotel for afternoon tea? All the other outings and picnics were organised by our volunteers.

From the beginning of October last year the Club resumed their weekly meetings at FDRC where activities include quizzes and of course plenty of chat and banter. The afternoon is rounded off with tea, sandwiches and home baking provided by our volunteers.

YOGA

Yoga classes in Derry continue at FDRC every Tuesday afternoon. These Tuesday classes draw a large number of our members, e.g. last week 15 members of our group attended. Likewise our yoga sessions in Claudy continue weekly on a Friday morning, and Yoga sessions in Limavady are held fortnightly on a Wednesday afternoon. Our 3 Yoga

facilitators are very dedicated and committed to our branch. All our members are finding the gentle yoga exercises very beneficial for MS as well as enhancing our general health and well being.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

Louise Walker, our permanent physiotherapist facilitates 2 physio classes every Thursday afternoon in FDRC, including a fortnightly session on a Wednesday afternoon in Limavady. We have quite a large number of our members in attendance at these physio sessions, which are vital and so important for our physical and mental well being.

SUPPORT

Since our last AGM a number of our members have applied to and received support grants from our branch. These grants provided intercom systems, holidays/respite and specialist beds. Some of these grant requests were jointly funded by the WHSCT. The MS Society Foyle Branch has a very good working relationship with the WHSCT and I hope this continues in the future.

COUNSELLING

Our branch provides a much-needed counselling service, facilitated by Madeline Callaghan. Also we were very pleased that Pauline Ferry, trainee counsellor has come on board to help Madeline, due to demand.

Finally I would like us all to remember one of our very popular members, Eimear Cunningham who passed away in February of this year, leaving a void in all our lives. Eimear is sorely missed but her great wit and enthusiasm lives on in all our memories.

MOIRA LEITCH
SUPPORT OFFICER
MAY 2009