

Black Country Neurological Alliance (BCNA)

Annual Report 2018

BCNA Committee has met on eight occasions since our last AGM, and members communicate frequently by email, phone and in smaller groups.

Achievements during 2017/8:

Early in the year we held two further *“Question Time – continuum of care” events*, in Sandwell in February and in Walsall in April. As with earlier events these were well attended and well received by all who participated. A panel of Service providers was given a short time to introduce themselves and their work, and then took challenging questions from the audience.

At the Sandwell event we had speakers from the ICARES team, a speech and language therapist and an OT, the CEO from Sandwell Cares (Carers Advice Network), Dr Anna Lock (Palliative Care Consultant) and Consultant Neurologist Dr David Nicholl

Dr David Nicholl also challenged both the audience and ourselves with a question

‘how would you measure the quality of your neurology service?’

At the Walsall event, our speakers were Joe Korner acting CEO of the National Neurological Alliance, Professor Adrian Williams - UHB Lead Consultant Neurologist and Chair of the National Neurosciences Clinical Reference Group, Dr Mo Myint Neurology Rehab Consultant, Tracy Grinell, Clinical Nurse Manager (Fair Oaks Day Hospice) and Marco Longhi Chair of the Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. We also had a fantastic presentation from a service user on disability wheelchair sports.

The Sandwell event proved very positive in further raising our profile amongst health and social care agencies and the Walsall event built further our campaigning credibility and allowed both the audience and ourselves to raise still further the concerns regarding neurology support provision in Walsall.

Our project, *Café Neuro*, which launched in Dudley in August 2017, has continued to meet monthly, with the exception of February when snow prevented it. Café Neuro set out to provide an opportunity for anyone with an interest in “neuro” conditions, whether personal or professional, to meet over a cuppa for informal conversation and advice. At each Café different service providers have given brief presentations about their work, which has always triggered lively discussion. Participants have heard about a significant range of support services available and have been able to ask questions and follow up. The informal, friendly setting for these meetings has also encouraged people to meet and chat amongst themselves and share experiences.

In February a second Café Neuro was launched, with support from Parkinson's UK, this time in Walsall, and the third in Wolverhampton in March, supported by Compton Care and Healthwatch. Later in the year, in October, the fourth Café was launched in Sandwell, with support from Headway Black Country and SAFS (Sandwell Asian Family Support Service).

In summary, Café Neuro takes place as follows:

- ❖ Dudley on the first Thursday of each month from 2pm to 4pm at Queen's Cross Network, Wellington Road, Dudley, DY1 1RB, co-ordinated by Bill Weston and Pam Archer, both from BCNA.
- ❖ Walsall on the first Friday of each month, from 1pm to 3pm at The Crossing at St. Pauls in Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1DA, co-ordinated by Sue Worrall, BCNA and supporters from Walsall Parkinson's.
- ❖ Sandwell meets on the second Monday of each month from 2.30pm to 4.30pm at Windmill Community Centre, Messenger Road, Smethwick, B66 3DX, co-ordinated by Teresa Brown, BCNA and Headway Black Country.
- ❖ Wolverhampton meets on the third Thursday of each month from 2pm to 4pm at Action 4 Independence, Albert Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 0AF, co-ordinated by Compton Care and Wolverhampton Healthwatch.

BCNA Committee:

At this 2018 AGM we are pleased to formally accept a healthcare industry professional with extensive knowledge of the NHS and business onto our committee.

Funding

Our funding streams are now much lower, so we are in the process of seeking further funding opportunities. This is much needed not only to support our day to day and campaigning activities but also to further support and develop the Café Neuros (currently supported by very limited finances and fantastic volunteers).

Working with other charities and organisations:

We continue to work closely with representatives of charities which support people with various neurological and neuromuscular conditions in particular the Motor Neurone Disease Association, Parkinson's UK, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, and Headway Black Country. Their collaboration and support are greatly appreciated. We are also in contact with Healthwatch in all four Boroughs, as well as the Councils for Voluntary Services or their equivalent. Particular thanks to Dudley Healthwatch and Dudley CVS for their continued support and charity guidance.

We continue to meet regularly with Dudley CCG, attending their neurology strategy meetings and supporting their neurology long term condition initiatives. The CCG continues to promote and develop 'neurology services' and has been very supportive of the BCNA and helped to secure some funding for our Dudley Café Neuro.

Other Activities

As we reported last year, the neurology support provision (neurologist availability) in Walsall continued to provide concern and continued to be a main area for our campaigning activities. The Walsall QT raised still further these concerns. We believe our collaboration with a number of charities AND the high-profile speakers we attracted to the QT, helped ensure Walsall CCG looked to review again with Walsall HCT and we are very pleased to report that late October the agreed 1.8 WTE Neurologist support is now available. Following on from this positive news we have been invited to meet with Walsall CCG and hope that we can be part of the now agreed review of unplanned admissions (underlying neurology related)

Website:

Our website is managed by Calming Influences, and will be updated monthly, with contributions from all Committee members. It is not easy to keep the website up to date and it is appreciated when we are notified of errors.

Ongoing / New activities for the BCNA in 2019

- [The development and support of the Café Neuro initiative](#)
 - Coordinator review meeting TBC – challenges, positives, new initiatives sustainability and network growth
 - Future funding

- [Campaigning, influencing and collaboration activities](#)

Increased collaboration with other condition specific charities, Staffordshire Neurological Alliance, National Neurological Alliance, CCGs and other health & social care organisations

The National Neurological Alliance AGM and Members Meeting 2018 we attended recently highlighted the relevance of.....

- NHS E – 10 Year Long Term Plan – the need to raise the profile of neurology
 - Mental Health, integrated & coordinated care closer to home
 - Neurology Data – its importance
- [Volunteer & Supporter Recruitment](#)

Latest Updates

We will be supporting and encouraging other charities and support groups to promote the National Neurological Alliance - Patient Experience Survey – Oct 2018 – Jan 2019

<https://www.neural.org.uk/patient-experience-survey/>

BCNA Committee November 2018