

# Brachial Plexus Injury Newsletter

In this edition...

**Welcome to the Autumn 2008 edition of Brachial Plexus News. There's lots of interest in this edition, with conference and study day news, together with patient experiences of helpful kit.**

**We have...**

- **Another staff baby for the team!**
- **Evaluation from professionals study day**
- **Results of patient satisfaction survey**
- **Beverley and Jane go to Switzerland**
- **Active hand glove – information from patient**
- **Useful websites**

## Other News

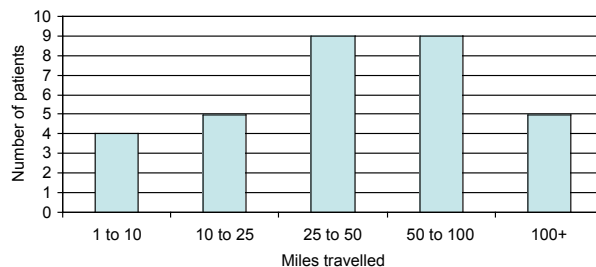
Plans for next year include holding a holistic day for patients and carers which will include information, education and therapies and will explore the idea of a patient group. Anyone interested should contact Beverley.

We wish all our patients, past and present, a very happy and healthy festive period!

## Brachial Plexus Service – Patient Satisfaction Survey

This survey was originally undertaken in 2006 and was repeated during the first quarter of 2008. 53 questionnaires were sent out and resulted in a completed response rate of 57%. The returned papers were all anonymous. From the questionnaire we were able to gather information on the distance travelled to clinic by the patients and by what modes of transport.

Survey of distance travelled to clinic by patients  
2008



We also asked the patients about any information that was provided to them about their clinic appointment and for those new patients whether the information had been verbal or written or both. Of the 12 patients who responded that it was their first clinic appointment, 75 % stated they had received information. As a result of this, an action point has been raised to ensure that our practice of providing clinic information continues to all patients.

A large majority of those who responded (87%) were happy with the introduction of team members and the time they had for their direct consultation.

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## Contact the News Team

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## Report from the Eurohand Conference, Switzerland



As many of you may be aware I had completed my research into quality of life after brachial plexus injury earlier this year and was pleased when I was accepted by the organisers of this conference to present the findings.

It was just my lucky break that the conference in June of this year was in Lausanne, Switzerland!

Needless to say that Jane had to come with me (professional educational reasons of course...or just to carry my bags?!)



The conference was attended by over 1500 delegates from the medical, nursing, physio and occupational therapy professions from all over the world. In a wonderful setting the conference presentations were wide and varied and had something to please everyone with lots of learning taking place. Rather daunting for me as a speaker was the traffic light system they worked whilst you spoke...with lights going from green (at the start when all is OK), to amber (nearing the last minute or two allocated so get a move on) to red (help, I've run out of time and expect to drop into a hatch opening beneath me any second!).

There was a lot of interest in brachial plexus injuries with presentations from other countries as well on the topic.

Of course, as well as the exceptional hard work that we both put in during the conference we also had the chance to practice our schoolgirl French in the cafes and bars (amazing how similar the words are when ordering '2 beer' and it sounds like '2 wood!').

Lausanne was a beautiful town on the Lake side although really busy (and noisy) with Euro football being played during our time there (an excuse for all cars to 'toot' their horns after every match until the wee small hours). We also experienced staying in a hotel opposite the lovely Cathedral with the bells that rang out every hour....enough said!

Jane and I would like to express our sincere thanks to all parties who provided financial assistance to enable us to attend the conference and I would specifically like to thank my BPI colleagues who must have got fed up listening to me going on about it!

*Beverley Wellington*

## Active hands – a gripping experience



I purchased a general purpose gripping aid from Active Hands ([www.activehands.co.uk](http://www.activehands.co.uk)) after suffering nerve damage in a road accident. Now, with this aid, I am able to use all the available gym equipment, which helps in my rehabilitation. Before I had this glove, my gripping ability was really non-existent due to my injury. In addition, I can now use my dumbbells at home.

The glove is really strong as is the Velcro. I thought it would give out very soon but no. It is easy to put on and it's nicely padded and really comfortable.



As you can see from the pictures, there are loops that I used to clip some cable driven exercise equipment. Of course the item itself does not only have to be used at the gym, it can also be useful in the home.

I highly recommended this item to anyone that also has difficulty in gripping/holding items etc.

A thank you to Jacqueline Wallace (Physiotherapist) for the link and also a big thank you to Yvonne Cassie for her help in putting this together and her help/support over the years.

Last but not least, thank you to Beverley Wellington for her fantastic support.

*Paul Oag*

**General purpose  
gripping aid available  
from Active Hands at  
[www.activehands.co.uk](http://www.activehands.co.uk)**



### ..... Patient Satisfaction Survey continued

Those patients taking part in the survey wrote some comments concerning the length of time to wait at clinic. An action point was raised as a result of these experiences and we continue to monitor our clinic time management. Unfortunately given the nature of the service (seeing far travelled patients, undertaking complex examinations, discussing ongoing treatment plans etc) we are often unable to determine how long an individual appointment will take at the clinic. We appreciate all our patients' needs and your patience with us during these busy and lengthy clinic times. Thank you.

Overall, when asked to rate their experience at the clinic 91% rated it between good and excellent. Thanks go to all those patients who responded to this questionnaire.

Your comments are valued and acted upon within our area of responsibility.

## Brief report on evaluations of Brachial Plexus Injury Study Day

**The study third Brachial Plexus Injury Study Day for healthcare professionals was held in Ebenezer Duncan Centre, Victoria Infirmary on 25th April 2008.**

30 people attended along with other members of the team and assistants for the day. We asked them to evaluate the day and 29 evaluation forms were returned (96.6%). From these forms it was identified that 4 nurses attended, 13 physiotherapists and 12 occupational therapists.

These respondents came from a wide geographical area including NHS Glasgow and Clyde; Tayside; Lothian; Borders; Grampian; Highlands; Dumfries and Galloway and North and South Lanarkshire councils and other areas.

There were many comments made but this seemed to sum up the opinions after the patient workshops:

Good mix of BPI in patients seen...very good to encourage holistic approach to treatment...Great insight into the lives of people with BPI...patients obviously benefit from excellent service they get...

The team would like to extend our grateful thanks to the 4 patients who willingly gave their time to participate in the workshops and coped admirably with the numbers of questions from the groups!

**We couldn't do it without you!**

## Brian's baby



The team are pleased to announce that our orthotist, Brian, and his partner Gillian are now the proud parents of Abbie Louise McLaughlin, born on the 2nd of June weighing 7lb 1oz.

### Useful websites

#### [www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

The Department for Works and Pensions. Advice on benefits and services including attendance allowance, carers allowance, disability living allowance, incapacity benefit and statutory sick pay.

#### [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

Jobcentre Plus. Part of the DWP, supporting people of working age from welfare into work, and helping employers to fill their vacancies.

#### [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. Information for drivers on subjects including fitness to drive and medical conditions, disabilities and adaptation to vehicles.

#### [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

The Citizen's Advice Service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free information and advice.