

THE BRITISH PORPHYRIA ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Registered Charity No. 1089609



THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL PORPHYRIA PATIENT NETWORK

For some time the leaders of patient organisations have felt that it would be useful for the porphyria patient organisations worldwide to be linked in some way. This would give a stronger voice to aspects such as research and access to new medications.

In February this year, an international meeting was held in Rotterdam for porphyria patient organisations. This was kindly organised by the Dutch patient organisation, with the support of a number of other patient organisations from around the world.

John Chamberlayne and Sue Burrell attended from the BPA. There were representatives from the key European patient organisations, along with the Canadian and the American organisations too. The group had a valuable opportunity

to discuss what form an international organisation might take. It was agreed to call it the International Porphyria Patient Network (IPPN). The BPA are excited about this initiative and Sue has volunteered to be involved as the UK liaison between the BPA and the rest of the porphyria network.

It was agreed that the IPPN would in no way compete with or aim to replace any of the national patient organisations, such as the BPA. Instead, its ultimate aim is, "To promote, protect and preserve the interests of porphyria sufferers on an international level". Thus, the BPA will continue to work independently to provide our existing service to our members in the UK. The BPA will not financially contribute to the IPPN.

The BPA has already observed advantages to being part of the IPPN.

At the NICE meeting for SCENESSE® in March (see separate article), two extra people were able to attend the meeting (two from the BPA and two sent on behalf of the IPPN), which provided a much stronger patient voice. Being united together as part of an international group could provide the BPA with a solid support network in areas such as this.

The IPPN hopes to meet once a year, with other meetings via tele- or video-conferencing. There is much work to be done, from obtaining sponsorship to help with the establishment of an international patient group, through to creating international media campaigns and awareness weeks, etc. As things develop with the IPPN, we will provide additional updates.

THANK YOU AND CONGRATULATIONS

DOYNTON'S HARD HALF-MARATHON

The BPA would like to thank **Richard Bennett** for his amazing efforts in running in Doynton's hard half-marathon in February this year – a very dirty affair running cross-country, through rivers and in knee deep mud – where he even lost a shoe at one point! Richard not only finished respectfully 220 out of 282 runners, but he was also first in the 70+ age group! **WELL DONE RICHARD** and **THANK YOU** again for raising over £500 for the BPA.



PARACHUTE JUMP

The BPA would like to thank **Laura Parfitt** for her amazing efforts to continue raising funds for the BPA. This April Laura did a parachute jump and managed to raise £400... what an amazing way to raise funds for the BPA. Despite being terrified, Laura looks to have had a great time anyway – **WELL DONE** and **THANK YOU AGAIN** and keep up the great work!



LONDON MARATHON 2016

The BPA were delighted to have two people run in the London Marathon this April – Michael Lake (who managed to obtain his own ballot place) and Alex Gatty who took the BPA's official charity place. The boys were amazing, finishing in 5 hours and 8 minutes and 4 hours and 15 minutes, respectively – brilliant times – you should be very proud of yourselves! The BPA would like to say a massive **WELL DONE** for all of your hard work and commitment to training, as well as a **HUGE THANK YOU** for managing to raise well over £5,400 (including some very generous donations, gift aid donations and an amazing fundraising match of £2,000 from Schroder Investment Management)... and the money is still coming in!



LADIES OF TEIGNMOUTH

The BPA would like to thank Laura Parfitt again for her help in sending through a donation from the Ladies of Teignmouth Tangle Club for £100. This local amateur dramatic society has kindly chosen the BPA as one of their charities to donate funds to, in the hope of helping raise further awareness of the porphyria conditions – **THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO ALL INVOLVED.**

UPDATE ON ALNYLAM'S ALN-AS1 RESEARCH - AN INVESTIGATIONAL TREATMENT FOR ACUTE HEPATIC PORPHYRIAS

In September 2015, the initial positive data from Parts A and B (Phase 1) of the ALN-AS1 study were reported (relating to asymptomatic "high excreter" patients). Since then, Alnylam has initiated Part C of its ongoing Phase 1 clinical trial. Part C is being conducted in acute intermittent porphyria (AIP) patients experiencing multiple recurrent porphyria attacks, and will evaluate the safety and tolerability of multiple doses of ALN-AS1, as well as measures of clinical activity. This includes changes in attacks (frequency and severity), hospitalisations, use of medications, and quality of life. Alnylam hope to report initial data from Part C in late 2016 – once available, we will provide details in our next newsletter.

Alnylam has also completed enrolment in their EXPLORE trial with a total of 112



patients. EXPLORE is a multinational observational study of AIP, variegate porphyria and hereditary coproporphyria patients with recurrent attacks. The study is providing important information on disease symptoms, attack frequency, current treatment approaches, and the

impact of disease on patients and their families. This data will help in the design of future clinical trials of ALN-AS1 or other investigational treatments.

For more information about ALN-AS1, please visit Alnylam's website: <http://www.alnylam.com/patients/alnylam-clinical-trials/>.

LIVING WITH EPP – WINDOW FILMS HAVE MADE A SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TO OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

In common with many people, I think, who are the only members of their family with EPP and probably diagnosed rather late in life, my approach to managing light sensitivity has been to protect myself from the environment. So, I have spent my life covered up or under cover. It was only when Sam, my son, became light sensitive at the age of eight that I began to think about making the environment a better place for him (and of course for me too). With two people out of a family of three light sensitive it seemed to make sense to make life as comfortable as possible. And, of course, being a Mum, I was (and still am) on a mission to make Sam's life as pain and stress free as possible. Researching options via the BPA and other websites for light sensitive conditions led me to light proofing film. We now use film on our home, car and to some extent at Sam's school too. I know that there are people with EPP using film, especially on cars, with great success so I am not presenting anything new, but I also know, from contact through meetings and social media that there are people with EPP who

haven't explored this option; as a result, I wanted to explain how useful we have found film for improving our quality of life.

Although amber film gives the best coverage, we have chosen to have clear film on the south facing windows of our house – it has certainly given a level of protection which stops me panicking to shut the curtains if I see Sam sitting near a window. At school, the site manager called me with a problem: in one of the tech rooms, all the tools were fixed alongside a large window. Curtains and blinds could not be used due to safety issues and the tools are static so Sam had to access them in-situ. I suggested using clear film and it was greeted with enthusiasm as a simple 'fix'. The school already had a company providing film for various uses (tinting windows, reflective effects and so forth) and so it proved to be a simple job for the company to obtain the film I specified and fit it. Since then our lovely site manager has used it on a number of occasions where other window covering is problematic. Having asked around, it seems that film is used on public buildings, including schools, a great

deal and most county councils have firms providing this, so it is just a matter of giving them the film specification required.

The most important film we use is on our car. Initially, I had clear film fitted to all the windows and this was very effective. I cannot describe the joy of driving without long sleeves, gloves and scarf over my face and the knowledge that Sam didn't need to keep swapping around in the back to avoid the sun. After seven years the film deteriorated. Unfortunately our car is parked on a south facing drive which accelerated this process. As Sam's skin had become so problematic we had film re fitted last year with clear film on the windscreen and front windows and amber on all the rest. The amber film ensures complete comfort and safety for Sam. When I think of the stress of journeys prior to having the film fitted compared to driving in our lovely, safe, light proof box, I just wish I had had film fitted much sooner. My light proof car has improved my quality of life more than anything else over 52 years of light sensitivity.

By Claire

EVENTS IN 2016:

BPA PATIENT MEETINGS/EVENTS 2016

Our **Open Day** will be held on **Friday 8th July 2016** (10am to 4pm) at Salford Royal Hospital. We will have some updates on developments with regards to access to SCENESSE (a potential treatment for EPP) and the Alnylam research (a potential treatment for the acutes), as well as presentations from doctors and patient experience talks from EPP and AIP patients. We are also excited to be trialling a slightly different structure for the meeting. In addition to these structured talks, we also plan to have some 'table' style discussion groups to focus on different aspects, such as issues affecting children and teenagers, the various transition stages for the different porphyrias, as well as tables for patients and those providing support to patients, to name a few!

Our **Autumn Conference and AGM** will be held at the **Holiday Inn Peterborough West** on **Saturday 1st October 2016** (10am to 4pm), with the support of Dr Stein and the

team from Kings College Hospital London. Again, we will have updates on Clinuvel and Alnylam as well as various other talks from doctors, nurses and patients about living with porphyria. There will be plenty of opportunities to talk with others affected by porphyria, as we plan to group sessions together to allow a specific cutaneous section and an acute section, meaning that people will be able to use a breakout room for informal discussions, instead of attending talks that may not be as relevant to them.

Please let us know if you would be interested in attending either event as, based on the popularity of our 2015 events, we expect places to fill quickly. Please forward the names of anyone wishing to attend with you to: *sue.burrell@porphyria.org.uk* or call 0300 30 200 30 to confirm your attendance. The BPA will send further information to those interested a few weeks before the actual event.

SAVE THE DATE

Every two years, an International Patient Day is held in conjunction with the Porphyrins and Porphyrias Congress, which brings together porphyria experts and researchers from around the World. The Patient Day, in turn, brings together patients and patient organisations from around the world. We are able to announce that the next International Patient Day is now scheduled. It will be held in the beautiful city of Bordeaux on the west coast of France, on Sunday, 25th June 2017. Further details will follow as soon as we have them.

FUNDRAISING PLACES 2016:

WE NEED SPORTING FUNDRAISERS FOR 2016

The BPA have a number of places in some very popular sporting events in 2016. Please let any of your friends or family know about these, if you think they may be interested. We can send you specific details to forward on, if desired. Please contact *sue.burrell@porphyria.org.uk* for more details or to express your interest in applying for one of these charity places.

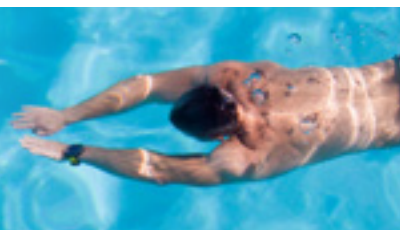
LOVE RUNNING?

The BPA has five places in the Great South Run on Sunday 23rd October 2016 – this event is a half marathon (13.1 miles) from Southsea to Portsmouth.



LOVE SWIMMING?

The BPA have four places in the Swim Serpentine on Saturday 24th September 2016 – this event is a 1-mile open water swim in Hyde Park, London.



These places will go on a first come, first served basis, so please contact the BPA, via: *sue.burrell@porphyria.org.uk* or on 0300 30 200 30, ASAP to confirm your place.

GOOD LUCK

The BPA would like to wish all of our fundraisers the best of luck in their training and fundraising for the different events that are scheduled over the coming months, from: the Great North Run, the Great South Run, Swim Serpentine and Ride London-Surrey 100, to name a few. If the BPA can help provide you with our branded running/cycle tops, fundraising packs, sponsorship forms, or anything else, please just get in touch: *helpline@porphyria.org.uk* or 0300 30 200 30.

HELPLINE

0300 30 200 30

Would members please note that our helpline is only manned at specific times, due to work and family commitments.

When it is not manned an answer machine will be in operation.

Please leave your name, phone number, day and time of message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.

web: www.porphyria.org.uk

email: helpline@porphyria.org.uk

address: BPA, 136 Devonshire Rd
Durham City, DH1 2BL

The BPA Newsletter is published by the BPA twice yearly.

Chairman: John Chamberlayne

Vice-chairman: Liz Gill

Treasurer: Anne Newton

Secretary: Jacqueline Binns

Administrator: Sue Burrell

Patrons: Prof. George Elder, Dr. Mike Badminton, Prof. Felicity Stewart
Prof. Timothy Cox

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NAPS SCOTLAND

The BPA are delighted to report that NHS Scotland has finalised arrangements to commission support for Scottish acute porphyria patients and their doctors from the English NAPS service. The new arrangements came into operation as of 1 April 2016.

A formal agreement has been made to enable shared care between NAPS doctors (mainly Dr Mike Badminton from Cardiff) and either Dr Alison Cousins or Dr Peter Galloway from Scotland. Outreach clinics will be held once every six months in either Edinburgh or Glasgow. This means that patients in Scotland suffering attacks of an acute porphyria will benefit from the knowledge and best practices of NAPS, while still being seen through an effective network with local porphyria specialists. Doctors caring for hospitalised patients will be able to access the NAPS out-of-hours clinical advice service, which will ensure appropriate access to haem arginate treatment for patients in Scotland. The aim is that new patients will be seen within six weeks initially, although this may take the form of a virtual appointment or telephone consultation to establish what support is needed. Patients will then be offered an appointment for one of the scheduled outreach clinics.

NAPS contact details: this is the emergency number at the University Hospital of Wales: 029 2074 7747. This 24/7 number should be used at all times for new patients, and out of working hours for existing NAPS patients.

THE BRITISH PORPHYRIA ASSOCIATION Registered Charity No. 1089609

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM & STANDING ORDER



Title Name

Address

Postcode

Email

Telephone

Type of Porphyria

Date

WAYS TO PAY

- I would like to pay my annual membership fee of £15
- I would like to make a donation of:
- £10 £15 £20 £25 £50 other £
- I would like to set up a standing order (please fill in the form opposite)
- I have set up a standing order using my internet banking*
- I enclose a cheque made payable to the 'British Porphyria Association' for £
- I have made a payment using www.justgiving.com
- I would like a receipt

*please use your name and postcode as reference for an online payment

By making a donation to the British Porphyria Association you will know that you are making a vital contribution to our work. Simply making a small donation will help us raise awareness, man our helplines or support research.

Do you pay UK tax?

If you pay UK tax, the BPA can reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 you give. This does not cost you anything and does not affect your personal tax position. Simply sign and date the Gift Aid declaration.

Standing Order British Porphyria Association

Please send this form to: The Treasurer, British Porphyria Association, Rothlea House, 7-8 Quarry Lane, Butterknowle, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL13 5LL
A monthly standing order or any donation you can give will make a difference.

Bank / Building Society name

Branch address

Postcode

Please pay the British Porphyria Association the sum of £
each month / quarter / year (delete as appropriate) from my account until further notice.

Account name(s)

Sort code Account No.

Starting on* (Date)

*This date must be more than one month after today's date

Signed Today's date

This cancels all existing standing orders to the British Porphyria Association
(please tick) yes no not applicable

Please pay to British Porphyria Association bank account:
Sort code: 20-43-63 Account No:7099 6904

Gift aid declaration

I am a UK tax payer and would like the British Porphyria Association (Registered Charity no. 1089609) to treat all donations that I have made in the last six years and all future donations that I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise. I understand I must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax reclaimed on my donations. (I will advise the BPA if my tax status, name or address changes).

Date Signature