

Hemel & Watford Local Network

By Jessica Pound

CROHN'S, COLITIS AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2019 | 14:00-16:00
LT2, MEDICAL EDUCATION CENTRE
WATFORD GENERAL HOSPITAL
VICARAGE ROAD, WATFORD, WD18 0HB

Following our extremely popular medical meeting on Crohn's and Colitis and mental health, we are sticking with the theme of taboo subjects for our next meeting: *IBD and sexual relationships*.

Psychosexual nurse specialist Lorraine Grover will vocalise the topics we are too shy to talk about and discuss how living with IBD can affect relationships, dating, fertility and sex.

Join us on Saturday 12th October in LT2 at the Medical Education Centre at Watford General Hospital for this informative talk and have your otherwise unanswered questions resolved. We can guarantee you won't be the only one with these questions and this is the perfect opportunity to ask a professional on the subject.

LORRAINE GROVER

Lorraine qualified as a registered nurse from St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, in 1984 and qualified as a psychosexual therapist in 2003. She currently provides a private consultation service to help men and women overcome difficulties with sexual function.

Lorraine achieved a Developing Practice Award from The Queen's Nursing Institute to develop an information package for patients and partners regarding erectile dysfunction, which can be viewed on her website www.lorrainegrover.com. She also developed her own nurse-led erectile dysfunction clinics at St George's Hospital, London, and Wycombe Hospital, Buckinghamshire, and has received several national awards, both individual and team-based, for her contributions to the effective management of sexual function.

Lorraine is a Trustee of the Sexual Advice Association, a member of the British and International Societies of Sexual Medicine and College of Sex and Relationship Therapists and regularly contributes as an expert to the 'Ask about Sex' forum at Macmillan Cancer support.

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OUR INAUGURAL QUIZ NIGHT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

A big thank you to everyone who attended the first ever Hemel & Watford Local Network quiz and what a turn out it was! More than 60 people of all ages packed into Whelpley Hill Village Hall for a night of great questions, greater prizes and bountiful snacks!

Congratulations to the winners 'Team Twelvers' and commiserations to 'Snak Attak' (you can guess their priorities) who took home the wooden spoon!

We raised a whopping total of £337 which will go towards funding vital research for Crohn's and Colitis and future fundraising events in the Hemel and Watford area (watch this space!).



THE ROYAL PARKS LONDON HALF MARATHON

On Sunday 13th October, Jeff Salter, the husband of our Chair Tina, will be running The Royal Parks London Half Marathon to raise funds for the Hemel & Watford Crohn's & Colitis UK Local Network!

Crohn's & Colitis UK is a cause close to Jeff's heart as Tina was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 2007. Taking on the Half Marathon will help to raise funds for our volunteer group which will allow us to organise more medical education meetings and fundraising events to provide donations for vital research into Crohn's and Colitis.

We wish you the best of luck Jeff and we are so grateful you are taking on the challenge for our Local Network! If you would like to sponsor Jeff, you can find his JustGiving page [here](#).

Got a story? Get in touch at hhw@networks.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk and you could be featured in our next newsletter!

OUR PREVIOUS MEDICAL MEETING: CROHN'S, COLITIS AND MENTAL HEALTH

This year our medical meetings are tackling the more taboo issues faced when living with Crohn's and Colitis.

Our previous medical meeting took place on Saturday 23rd February and we packed the Medical Education Room at Hemel Hempstead Hospital to capacity!

Dr Lyndsay Hughes, Health Psychologist from King's College London, shared her expert knowledge on the topic of Crohn's, Colitis and mental health.

During the session, Dr Hughes discussed how living with a chronic illness can affect all aspects of life and take a toll on mental wellbeing. Key points that rang true with the audience, who were seen to be nodding in unison, were the impacts of the conditions on socialising and work. Dr Hughes pointed out that socialising seems to revolve around food and drink, specifically alcohol. This can make social events difficult and even cause anxiety for people with Crohn's and Colitis. There are trigger foods to take into account and it was revealed that many sufferers review the menu before arriving at a restaurant.

Social situations surrounding alcohol can also lead to anxiety as many patients on medication for Crohn's and Colitis have restricted or prohibited alcohol consumption. Many sufferers avoid these situations altogether, particularly young women who are often presumed to be or asked if they are pregnant as a reason for being tea-total - this in itself can cause distress.



Cancelling social events is common in people with Crohn's and Colitis and can lead to isolation and depression. Reasons for cancelling can be due to the involvement of food and drink, being mid-flare or the fact that there are no toilets nearby.

Fatigue was also identified as having a negative impact on mental health; specifically the fact that fatigue is so much more than just 'being tired' which many people, particularly employers, do not understand. Needing time off to recover from a flare, the element of stress which can worsen symptoms for some people with Crohn's and Colitis and rushing to the toilet multiple times a day at work, can lead to employer misunderstandings and people with the conditions feeling burdensome.

This medical meeting reiterated the point that we need to continue raising awareness of Crohn's and Colitis to avoid any presumptions or stigma around the illness.

It takes guts to live with Crohn's and Colitis and it can take even more to be able to discuss it with family, friends and employers. We need to break the silence to allow others to understand what it is like living with a chronic illness.

Join us for our next medical meeting on the subject of Crohn's, Colitis and sexual relationships, taking place 2-4 pm on Saturday 12th October in LT2 at the Medical Education Centre in Watford General Hospital.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MEDICAL MEETING: IBD AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Saturday 12th October
LT2, Medical Education Centre
Watford General Hospital

If you have received this newsletter by post and would be happy to receive future editions by email please provide your name, membership number and email address to networks@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk.

This will save the network valuable funds which can be used to benefit all those affected by Crohn's and Colitis.

The Hemel & Watford Network has made every reasonable effort to ensure the content of this newsletter is accurate, but accepts no responsibility for any errors or omission. The views of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Crohn's & Colitis UK and no reference in this newsletter to any product or service is intended as a recommendation.

CONTACT US

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COLITIS UK**

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CrohnsColitisHW

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registered in Scotland Number SC038632

A company limited by guarantee in England: company
number 5973370

HELPLINE

Our helpline is a confidential service providing
information and support to anyone affected by Crohn's
Disease, Ulcerative Colitis and other forms of
Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD).

Our team can:

- help you understand more about IBD, diagnosis and treatment options
- provide information to help you to live well with your condition
- help you understand and access disability benefits
- be there to listen if you need someone to talk to
- put you in touch with a trained support volunteer who has a personal experience of IBD

CONTACT US BY:

Telephone: 0300 222 5700*

Mon, Tue, Wed and Fri - 9 am to 5 pm

Thu - 9 am to 1 pm

Email: info@crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Web Chat (Live Online): see our [website](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk) for details

**Calls to this number are charged at a standard landline rate or may be free if you have an inclusive minutes' package. Calls may be recorded for monitoring and evaluation purposes.*