

♥ BACKUP BACKUP BACKUP ♥

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST.GEORGE'S ICD PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP

GREETINGS FROM YOUR EDITOR

AGM AT LAST

New s at last from your Backup supporting committee. I know it's been a long time coming but we have finally got our act together and are holding our Annual Meeting on SATURDAY 29th September. See details below. Unfortunately we could not get a suitable venue at St. Georges so we are holding it at Epsom Hospital, Post-Graduate Centre which is an excellent setting for this meeting. I know a lot of you live that way anyway so hopefully you will all be able to get there without too much trouble.

If anyone needs help in getting a lift we would be pleased to hear from anyone who could offer some help with transport.

**The date of the next
BackUp meeting is on
Saturday 29th
September**

**Post-Graduate Centre
Epsom Hospital
Epsom
10 – 4.00**

HELLO FROM THE BACKUP
STEERING GROUP

As we have not had a newsletter for some time I can only apologise. Life has been hectic and busy and it has been difficult to keep up with the demands. However here we are and I really hope that this is the first of a few more.

We have some changes in our committee. Simon who you all know and love as our very funny and I can only say brilliant editor is moving on to greater things. He and his lovely wife Gill who has been the mainstay of our partner group are moving to Bonny Scotland. They have made an invaluable contribution to Backup and will be really missed. I know they will keep in touch though and we wish them both all the very best for a happy move and future.

I am doing this as a temporary measure and we are busy looking for a new Editor. If any of you out there feel they might be able to take this on or make a substantial contribution please contact us. We would also like to hear from any one who would like to get involved with our group as a working or committee member or who would like to contribute articles for the newsletter.

We have many new members as the rate of ICD implantation has soared in the last year. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting in September and welcome any new members who we haven't met yet. For those of you who can't make the meetings, please feel free to contact any of the committee members. We are keen to hear your questions and thoughts about the Group and what we do and what new topics you would like to hear about.

Web site

Exciting news!!! - we now have our own website which can be found at:

www.stgeorges-icdsupport.org.

It is a bit basic at the moment but will get better.

Again if anybody would like to comment or contribute we would welcome your suggestions.

Thanks to Arrhythmia alliance for helping us to set

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HELLO EVERYBODY

HOT NEWS

What's happening in the world of arrhythmias?

The word is support.

We have formed an Affiliation group within the Arrhythmia Alliance and we are helping to provide support for support groups that are setting up around the country.

The Arrhythmia Alliance is a charity that has done an important job in bringing arrhythmia patients' problems into the public domain and has been working hard to try and help the situation. It has done an enormous amount to raise the profile of all our problems in this area. Check out their website if you can on www.arrhythmia.alliance.org.uk for loads of information about the current status.

HRUK(Heart rhythm UK) is working closely with the AA to provide as many facilities as possible for professionals and patients who have arrhythmias and are having a big conference in October to bring it all together. There will be a day when patients can attend and voice their concerns or just get to know more about what is happening in this field. I certainly hope that some of our group can attend on this day. Information about this for anyone interested is also available on the website.

Heart Rhythm Congress October 2007 Hotel Metropole Birmingham

The next item is the article from Simon which some of you will have seen before but I thought it was a fitting goodbye. Bye Simon and Gill and take good care of yourselves.

ABOUT PARTNERS

I was sitting chewing the fat, wondering what to write for this newsletter, when my train of thought (more minibus really) was interrupted by my wife – "You're late again".

To cut out the usual protestations of innocence, she **was** actually right. In fact she's always right, even when I'm not late. Truth is, I'm always the last one to saunter out the door, the one who arrives just on time. Not always exactly late, but generally pushing it a bit – and this is like a red rag to a bull. No, no! She's damn attractive. I mean, because she approaches everything in a different way (actually, as if powered by rocket fuel) and is never late (unless she's waiting for me to pick her up), my being late, or just in time, or sometimes just being me, drives her up the wall.

Now I can already hear mutterings from the audience. And not just that one at the back about being "not surprised the way he goes on". "What's this got to do with having arrhythmia and an ICD" I hear you ask? Well, bear with me.

I've had an ICD for nearly 9 years. I've had two shocks and two changes of device. Compared to many, I've considered this pretty straightforward, even if I've moaned about losing my licence twice (and the golf course I was on for both shocks). Outside the immediate aftermath of each episode and each little op to replace the battery, I've lived a normal life – work and play in reasonable balance, when I'm on time. Most of the time I'm free of any kind of symptom and, after the first 18 months or so, I'm much less prone to panics and imagined symptoms.

However, this isn't what her indoors thinks. Just as she knows I'm always late, she knows I'm having symptoms, a turn, a shock – all that's needed is for me to be late, forget to call when I promised I would, leave my mobile on the desk when she tries to call me, cough when I don't have a cold (I've tried it as a way of kicking my heart out of arrhythmia), moan out loud (usually because I'm late or I've forgotten something). **I'm** having a normal day, **she's** calming herself in the face of a crisis.

There's nothing neurotic in all this. Partners out there will recognise the signs. The patient carries on oblivious, leading life the way they've always done. Meantime their partner (or other family) remembers what happened last time they got a call from his/her work/felt sick/overdid it in the garden.

So you see – I **am** always late, that's how I am - and it generally winds my wife up. I **am** an ICD patient leading a normal life and my wife is a patient's partner and it does sometimes drive her to distraction. Small wonder....

For more information on BackUp here's details on how to contact members of the committee:

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