



March 2011

THE DERBY FIBRO

**N
e
w
s
l
e
t
t
e
r**

National Awareness Day

Thursday May 12th

At the Cathedral Coffee Shop

Irongate Derby

10.00 – 12.00

Special Guest

Amar Nath Mayor of Derby

Mobility News

ESA and Benefits Cuts

Lords May Challenge Harsh New
ESA Medical

Message from the Chairperson

Hi Fibro friends,

*It's coming to that time of year, when spring/summer fairs and open days are our busiest times to raise awareness for Fibromyalgia. There is an open day at Derby College at Broomfield on **20th March**; on Saturday **16th April** we are holding an awareness stand in the Eagle Centre Market. Thursday **12th May**, we are having a coffee morning at the Cathedral Coffee Shop on Iron Gate, Derby City; With the Mayor of Derby joining us. And Sunday **12th June** 11-4 there is a Family Fun Day at Alvaston Park (off London Rd), and we will be holding an Awareness stand there too. As always, it would be good if you could join us or even help us with the stand, even for half an hour to give some of us a breather and a well earned break to stretch our legs.*

We are asking for any items we can put on the tombola or Raffle as this can be our best way of raising funds for the group.

I met some of you from the group at the Tara Buddhist Centre at Etwall on Thursday, for a cuppa and a piece of cake, it was a lovely atmosphere, so we decided to book in for Meditation and a Meal on Friday 11 March. As we know; relaxation and meditation is the best form of starting with managing your pain, and why not go to the experts to teach us how to meditate and relax. I would like to make it a regular meeting place, especially as the weather gets warmer, so if you would like to join us, you are welcome, the more the merrier.

Best wishes

Jackie x

Meeting Dates 2011

THERE ARE NO MEETINGS IN AUGUST

Thursday

April 14th

May 12th at The Cathedral

Coffee Shop. Irongate

June 9th

July 14th

August..No meeting..

September 8th

October 13th

November 10th

December 8th

10.30am – 12.30pm

Saturday

March 26th

April 23rd

May 28th

June 25th

July 23rd

August..No meeting..

September 24th

October 29th

November TBC

December 17th

2.00pm – 4.00pm

Admission

£2.50

Free Car Park at Back of Church

Off Melbourne Street

Enter gate on the right after the last
terraced house

Contact Jackie on:

0845 345 2319 or Text: 07973285571

Email: derby.fibro@btinternet.com

Website: www.derbyfibro.co.uk

45 Magellan Way, Derby, DE24 1AD

Forthcoming Church Events

SPEAKERS			Regular Events	
March			<p>Open Circle</p> <p>Every 2nd and 4th Thursday Of Each Month</p> <p>7.30pm</p> <p>No Admission After 7.35pm</p>	<p>Healing Services</p> <p>Thursdays</p> <p>2.00pm – 4.00pm</p>
Sun 13 th	6.15pm	Emily Baker		
Mon 14 th	2.30pm	Sue Presley		
Sun 20 th	6.15pm	Myrrha Hibbert		
Mon 21 st	2.30pm	Lucy Watts		
Sun 27 th	6.15pm	Alex Whiting		
Mon 28 th	2.30pm	Lynette Foster		
April				
Sun 3 rd	6.15pm	Janet Bird & Coral		
Mon 4 th	2.30pm	Kathy Grindly		
Sun 10 th	6.15pm	Dean Kenyon		
Mon 11 th	2.30pm	June Berks		
SPECIAL EVENTS				
<p>Saturday 12th</p> <p>March</p> <p>Private Readings £12</p> <p>and</p> <p>Healing Free</p> <p>Will Offerings</p> <p>10.00am – 3.00pm</p>			<p>Saturday 9th</p> <p>April</p> <p>Supper With Spirit</p> <p>Cake and Cobs</p> <p>7.00pm</p>	
<p>For More Information</p>			<p>18 Charnwood Street, Derby. DE1 2GU. Tel: 01332 386 204. www.snu-emdc.org.uk/charnwood</p>	

Mobility News

There are strong indications that the government plans to end mobility payments to PIP claimants once they reach pensionable age. It also seems likely that DLA for children is to be replaced by PIP, in spite of ministers' claims that no decision has been reached.

Two rates

Last week's welfare reform bill confirmed that personal independence payment (PIP) will be less generous than DLA, but gave little more in the way of definite details about PIP, which is set to replace DLA for working age claimants starting from 2013.

The bill confirms that there will be a mobility component of PIP, with a standard and an enhanced rate, and a daily living component, also with a standard and an enhanced rate. Thus there will only be two rates of what is the care component under DLA, rather than three.

Waiting

We also now know that PIP is less generous in its qualifying periods.

For DLA, you need to have had your care or mobility needs for at least three months and be likely to have them for at least another six before a claim can be paid. Under PIP you will have to have had your needs for at least six months and be likely to have them for at least another six before being eligible.

The extra three months waiting time could make a big difference to the hardship suffered by someone who, for example, has had a very severe stroke and has considerable extra needs from the day they leave hospital.

Residential care

It has also been confirmed by the bill that neither component of PIP will be paid to claimants in residential care. The government has recently been engulfed in a controversy about ending DLA mobility payments to people in residential care, which they claim overlap with support provided by local authorities. There has been some backtracking on this issue by David Cameron, but it seems that the intention to prevent care home residents being able to get out and about is still a very firm one – it may just have to wait until PIP is rolled out to be implemented in full.

Pensionable age

What is not certain is what happens to PIP claimants once they reach pensionable age. The bill states clearly that PIP cannot be paid beyond pensionable age. This means that when PIP comes to an end claimants will need to replace it with another benefit, if they are not to have a big cut in income.

However, male claimants will be too old to make a claim for DLA, which must be made before your 65th birthday – and it will not be possible to make a claim for DLA whilst you are still eligible for PIP. Female claimants will still be young enough to make a claim for DLA when PIP first comes in, but pensionable age for women is intended to rise to 65 between April 2016 and November 2018.

This leaves attendance allowance (AA) as the only other option for former PIP claimants. Attendance allowance has two care rates, which have virtually the same qualifying conditions as the middle and higher rates of DLA. But it has no mobility component whatsoever. On the face of it then, the welfare reform bill means that many current recipients of DLA, including those with a Motability car, will lose their mobility payments once they have been transferred to PIP and reach the age of 65.

It is worth noting that the consultation on PIP, which ended on 18 February – after the welfare reform bill was published –, had this to say about age limits:

“Individuals who receive the benefit before reaching 65 may continue to receive

Personal Independence Payment if their needs continue. We will keep the upper age limit for receiving the new benefit under review, given the changes being made to the State Pension age.”

We must stress that the DWP have given no clear indication that ending mobility payments for people over 65 is what they are planning, but the welfare reform bill certainly makes this a real possibility. We know that a number of individuals and organisations are seeking clarification of this issue and we'll let members know as soon as any more certain news becomes available.

Children

There is also uncertainty about what will happen to sick and disabled children in the benefits shake-up.

The coalition has, elsewhere in the bill, removed the ESA in youth provision which allows young people to claim contribution-based ESA without having worked and paid national insurance. So it is clear that they have no qualms about cutting the income of young people who have been sick or disabled from a very early age.

In relation to ESA ministers have stated that they have yet to make up their minds about whether children under 16 would be included in the new PIP benefit. However, there are indications in the bill that the decision has, in fact, been made.

The welfare reform bill contains provision for the introduction of a mobility component which can only be claimed if 'the person is of or over the age prescribed for the purposes of this subsection'. This is the currently the case with the DLA mobility component, where there is a lower age limit of three for higher rate mobility and of five for lower rate mobility. This is to take into account the fact that babies and very young children have only limited independent mobility in any case.

However, if PIP cannot be claimed by children under 16 then it makes no obvious sense to impose a lower age limit on the mobility component.

Just as importantly, there is no such lower age limit for the two daily living components of PIP – they can, it seems, be paid as soon as the claimant reaches six months of age.

Again there has been no definite announcement on this issue from ministers, but the logic of the welfare reform bill makes any conclusion other than that DLA for children is to be abolished and replaced with PIP hard to support. We'll keep members informed as more information becomes available.

ESA and Benefit Cuts

ESA claimants in the work-related activity group can be ordered to improve their appearance and undertake work experience or face having their benefits cut.

Provisions in last week's welfare reform bill, if made law, will allow private sector personal advisors to issue instructions to claimants, who can face cuts in their benefits for an unlimited period if they do not comply.

Under the welfare reform bill most work-related activity group claimants will have to make a 'claimant commitment', which is a record of the work-related activities they have agreed to carry out in order to avoid sanctions.

The claimant commitment will set out the claimant's responsibility to attend work focused interviews – also known as pathways to work interviews – as and when directed.

It will also include a 'work preparation requirement' which will detail the specific actions that a claimant will have to undertake, and the amount of time that must be spent on them, to improve their chances of getting paid work.

The actions can include:

- Attending a skills assessment;
- Improving personal presentation;
- Participating in training;
- Participating in an employment programme;
- Undertaking work experience or a work placement;
- Developing a business plan.

The explanatory notes to the welfare reform bill make it clear that 'No ESA claimant will be required to look for or be available for work', though it's difficult to see how being ordered to attend a work placement is entirely compatible with this.

Claimants may, however, have to attend a work-focused health-related assessment. These assessments previously formed part of the work capability assessment, but they were discontinued last year following evidence that they were of little, if any value.

In addition, claimants can be summoned at any time to attend compulsory meetings to check that they are complying with their work-related requirements or to 'assist' them in doing so.

Some ESA claimants will not have to draw up any kind of claimant commitment at all. This will include:

- People in the support group of ESA.
- People with 'regular and substantial caring responsibilities for a severely disabled person' – none of these terms has been defined as yet.
- Single people caring for a child under one year of age.
- Single people caring for a child aged between one and possibly three – the precise age has yet to be decided – will only have to attend work-focused interviews.
- Other groups of people may also be exempted from work-related requirements if the secretary of state so decides.
- People who fail to meet their claimant commitments will have their benefit cut until they meet the requirement, or until a fixed period of not more than 26 weeks has elapsed, or a combination of the two. This would presumably be a fixed period penalty that only begins once the claimant has done what they were told.

Sanctions can only be imposed by a DWP decision maker.

But all the decisions leading up to the sanction, such as decisions about what will be in the claimant commitment and whether the claimant is considered to have breached that commitment, can be made by private sector advisors or by their voluntary sector sub-contractors.

The value of claimants to a private sector company will range from £14,000 down to mere hundreds, depending on how long they have been on benefits and the type of condition they have. It will, therefore, be interesting to see whether some of the high value claimants will be offered cash to help with such things as 'improving personal presentation'.

Given that the private sector will have complete freedom to work with claimants as they wish, they could even offer genuinely useful training courses and help with transport to attend them.

If such help isn't offered, there's nothing to prevent claimants attempting to negotiate it as a sort of 'private sector bounty hunter's commitment' - £14,000 is a lot of money, after all.

Lords May Challenge Harsh New ESA Medical

3 March 2011

There is still a slim chance that the harsh new work capability assessment, due to come into force on 28 March, will be struck down. The House of Lords' Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee has raised the alarm about the new WCA, warning that 'there are serious concerns about the effect on already vulnerable people' if the new test is introduced.

The role of the committee is to 'draw the special attention of the house' to any statutory instrument which it considers to be flawed or inadequate. In this case the committee has said that they that the new regulations "give rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the House and may imperfectly achieve the policy objective."

The committee's concerns may lead to a debate in the House and, should a prayer be raised against the statutory instrument, it is possible that it could be thrown out in its entirety.

Amongst the concerns that the committee say they have been warned of are:

- The current Regulations are premature and that piecemeal change will cause more harm than good
- There is insufficient data from the initial trial of the migration of Invalidity Benefit [sic] claimants to ESA to be clear whether the changes proposed will be an improvement
- The WCA system has not bedded in fully and the operation of the system needs to achieve greater consistency before further changes are added
- The current changes may not maintain the distinctions set out in the Act between the two levels of capability and may over-estimate many individuals' actual ability to work
- There are serious concerns about the effect on already vulnerable people from repeatedly changing the WCA eligibility descriptors

Much of the report by the committee is based on hard-hitting submissions made to it by a range of voluntary sector organisations, including:

- Disability Benefits Consortium
- MIND
- MS Society
- RNIB and Action for Blind People

We are grateful to Alban Hawksworth of RNIB for drawing our attention to this report.

Disclaimer.

The information given in this document does not necessarily imply endorsement by Fibromyalgia Association UK or the Members of the Yorkshire & Humberside FM Regional Consortium. Any information or recommendation of a medical nature must always be discussed with a qualified professional. The Fibromyalgia Association UK or the Members of the Yorkshire & Humberside FM Regional Consortium cannot be held responsible for omissions and/or errors.

Try These



Fluffy American pancakes

Ingredients

- 135g/4¾oz plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tbsp caster sugar
- 130ml/4½fl oz milk
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tbsp melted butter (allowed to cool slightly) or olive oil, plus extra for cooking



To serve

Maple syrup
Butter



Preparation method

1. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt and caster sugar into a large bowl. In a separate bowl or jug, lightly whisk together the milk and egg, then whisk in the melted butter.
2. Pour the milk mixture into the flour mixture and, using a fork, beat until you have a smooth batter. Any lumps will soon disappear with a little mixing. Let the batter stand for a few minutes.
3. Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and add a knob of butter. When it's melted, add a ladle of batter (or two if your frying pan is big enough to cook two pancakes at the same time). It will seem very thick but this is how it should be. Wait until the top of the pancake begins to bubble, then turn it over and cook until both sides are golden brown and the pancake has risen to about 1cm (½in) thick.
4. Repeat until all the batter is used up. You can keep the pancakes warm in a low oven, but they taste best fresh out the pan.
5. Serve with lashings of real maple syrup and extra butter if you like.



Rich chocolate mousse

Ingredients

- 170g/6oz dark chocolate
- 4 free-range eggs, separated
- shot of liqueur, such as Cointreau or amaretto

Preparation method

1. Place the chocolate into a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water and melt it, taking care not to let the chocolate over heat.
2. Meanwhile, whisk the egg whites until they form soft peaks.
3. Stir the liqueur into the beaten egg yolks and add to the melted chocolate.
4. Pour the chocolate mixture into the egg whites and gently fold together.
5. Divide evenly between four ramekins and transfer to the refrigerator to chill. Decorate with whipped cream and grated chocolate.



Puzzle page

Lofty		Variety meat		Reservoir		Snake-like fish	Array		Crony		Australian state, initially	
Perplex						Persecute					Drink	
						Baked item						
Cape		Bird of prey							Depleted			
		Bid							Shooting star			
						Molecule				Legging		Traps
						Canish						
Fairy	Fragment						Type of nut					
	Words for a song											
			Satire	Well-being							Star	
Conifer				Pique		Metallic element	Barn					
							Redout					
									Musical work			
Perform		Lukewarm						Employer		Destiny		Typeface
		Three people										
			Edge tool			Pen tip				Chart		Twitch
						Epoch						
Form							Edible plant					
Photo equipment	Put to use											
							Facet					

February's Answers

3	8	9	5	7	2	1	6	4
1	5	4	6	8	9	2	3	7
7	6	2	3	1	4	8	9	5
8	2	5	1	9	7	6	4	3
4	3	7	8	2	6	5	1	9
9	1	6	4	3	5	7	8	2
2	9	1	7	4	8	3	5	6
6	7	3	9	5	1	4	2	8
5	4	8	2	6	3	9	7	1

D	E	V	E	L	O	P
E		E		E		R
T	O	R	N	A	D	O
R		B		T		G
A	N	O	T	H	E	R
C		S		E		A
T	H	E	O	R	E	M

S	A	P	I	E	N	T
W		R		N		R
I	N	E	R	T	I	A
N		F		R		I
D	I	A	L	E	C	T
L		C		A		O
E	L	E	C	T	O	R

Did you know?

Nostradamus predictions

NOSTRADAMUS, the French Christian Jew who lived in France in the 16th century, made many accurate forecasts, including the two World Wars. 18 of his 950 quatrains refer to a third world war. Some Nostradamus experts had given the date for the start of such a war as mid-1999, referring to the Balkan conflict surrounding Kosovo. They obviously misinterpreted the quatrains. Their attention then turned to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York.

NOSTRADAMUS

Born Michel de Notredame on 14 December 1503 in St Remy, France, he was the oldest of five sons. His grandfather, Jean, taught him Latin, Greek, Hebrew, mathematics and astrology at an early age. Nostradamus received a medical degree in 1529 and became physician-in-ordinary to Charles IX during the bubonic plague. He is said to have had extraordinary healing abilities.



Nostradamus was in his late 40s when, it is told, he frequently went into a meditative state and had visions of the future. He began to document the visions in a mixture of Latin, French, and Greek quatrains, publishing his famous “Centuries” in 1558.

Nostradamus was married twice, losing his first wife and two children to the plague. He died on 2 July 1566. “Centuries” was translated into English in 1672. In 1781 it was banned by the Roman Catholic Church. Ironically, in 1553, when Nostradamus encountered a group of Franciscan monks he threw himself on his knees, clutching at the garment of one of the monks, Felice Peretti. When asked why he had done this he replied that he must yield “before his Holiness.” Nineteen years after the death of Nostradamus, Peretti became Pope Sixtus V.

What the experts say Nostradamus predicted about the Balkan war

The war prophecy is reserved for someone whom Nostradamus refers to as “the tyrant.” He predicted that the Slavs will “change their prince” and “raise an army in the mountains,” suggesting a guerrilla war. He speaks of “when the north pole is united” (perhaps NATO?), and there are many geographical references to the Balkans, such as Greece, Italy and the Mediterranean.

The war is linked to when the “eagle” (United States) and the “cock” (France) stand together. There also is specific reference to the time when England, Poland and Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic and Slovakia) “form a new alliance.” The former Eastblock countries recently joined NATO.

He predicted that the Allies will win, that the war will be protracted, lasting seven months, and that it may go beyond the Balkans, toward the north, but that after the war there will be “peace on earth for a long time.”



The forecasts by Nostradamus seemed to be confirmed by other seers, including Nicolaas van Rensburg, the famous South African seer who lived 1862 to 1926. At the turn of the 20th Century Van Rensburg had also predicted the use of electricity, the massacre of six million Jews, the Chernobyl disaster, the rise and fall of Russia, and the European Union – in the last two instances accurately describing the flags before they were designed. Of the third world war, he predicted that England would left weakened, while Germany would rise to become the world’s most powerful nation. Further such predictions by the famous American seer Edgar Cacey are available in the book Predictions for the 21st Century

What the experts say Nostradamus predicted about the WTC attack

“In the year of the new century and nine months, from the sky will come a great king of terror. The sky will burn at 45 degrees... fire approaches the great new city... there will be thunder... The third big war will begin when the city is burning.”

So it is quoted among rumor mongers. The facts are:

Nostradamus appears not to have made predictions about the World Trade Center attack or, at least, none that could easily be understood from the quatrains. He did not mention “the new century,” or “nine months” and New York is not at 45 degrees; the Manhattan latitude is 40° 47' N. For more, see Skeptic's Dictionary

What then?

Of course, not only have the “experts” on the prophets not always been correct – the seers themselves have not always been quite so accurate in their forecasts. In fact, many predictions have missed the mark.

Time will tell if the Kosovo conflict or, indeed, the World Trade Center attack had put the spark to a bigger barrel. As for the end of the world... Nostradamus predicted it to be the year 3786 or 3797, depending on which Nostradamus expert you believe.