

PARKINSON'S UK, EDINBURGH BRANCH

NOTE OF MEETING OF RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP, SCOTTISH CENTRE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE, LITTLE FRANCE CAMPUS, EDINBURGH, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 2012, 10.30-12.30.

Ken Bowler welcomed members, thanking Tilo Kunath and his team for their hospitality for the group on a busy weekend, as they were also open to the public on Sunday as part of 'Doors Open Day'.

1. PROPOSAL FOR PROJECTS WITH QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENTS

Jane Hislop and Gill Baer from the Physiotherapy Department at QMU presented their proposal for involvement of Edinburgh Branch members in research projects for final year Physiotherapy students and some MSc students. They explained that the evidence for benefits of physiotherapy for people with Parkinson's was quite weak, both in terms of the number of studies and in the strength of the evidence they contained. A recent British Medical Journal article (<http://www.bmj.com/content/345/bmj.e5004>) suggested that physiotherapy had short term benefits in Parkinson's disease, a wide range of techniques currently being used, with little difference in treatment effects. The authors concluded that large, well designed, randomised controlled trials with improved methodology and reporting are needed to assess the efficacy and cost effectiveness of physiotherapy for treating PD in the longer term.

Jane and Gill hoped ultimately to apply for funding for a larger study, but proposed two smaller student group projects this year with Edinburgh Branch members, to provide some groundwork for that future bid. The first would be a focus group with the exercise group at the Thistle Foundation, exploring the benefits of, and barriers to, participation. A second group of students would design, distribute and analyse a questionnaire about the perceptions of physio amongst Edinburgh Branch members. Although we noted that our membership is not fully representative of all people with Parkinson's in the region, and that not all Branch members have Parkinson's, using our membership lists would obviate the need to go through lengthy NHS Ethics Committee procedures for this preliminary study. The Research Interest Group welcomed this opportunity and looked forward to the promised dissemination of the findings.

2. THE RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP PROGRAMME FOR 2012-13

In the second half of the meeting, Ken Bowler outlined possible topics for the programme, and led our discussion of the options.

The meeting closed with a sandwich lunch.