

PARKINSON'S UK, EDINBURGH BRANCH RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP REPORT ON FEEDBACK ON MEDICATION SEMINAR, 22 FEBRUARY 2012

62 forms were returned at the end of the event. Percentages of those who responded to each question are rounded to the nearest 1%, so may not add up to precisely 100%.

MEDICATION SEMINAR

Participants were asked to indicate, on a scale of 1 to 5, how useful or interesting they had found the content of the event. Satisfaction was high, with 50 (85%) of respondents scoring it at 4 or 5, and the remaining nine (15%) awarding it 3. When asked if they would like to see more events on this topic in future, 57 (97%) said yes. Most (70%) wanted future events to be the same length, but 28% favoured a shorter format, with just one respondent suggesting that they should be longer. Unsurprisingly, given that this event was held on a weekday, most (85%) favoured holding future events on a weekday; the remainder either declared a preference for Saturday seminars or suggested alternating weekday events with Saturday events which might be accessible to people who were busy during the week.

Next, we asked people to indicate any other topics on which they would like to see events in future. Of the 62 participants, 24 (39%) answered this question. To demonstrate the range, we present these suggestions in full.

- *The dementia aspects of Parkinson's*
- *Physiotherapy and strategies to improve movement*
- *Foot problems; value of exercise; art & music; living alone with PD*
- *Current research on treatments, new drugs*
- *Appropriate activities, eg easy walking, art, dance, cycling; Oestrogen production – protects women? CoQ10 – May slow the progression of PD?*
- *Symptoms and their future development; early diagnosis; Up to date research; assistance and help available on all aspects, local & national, websites etc.*
- *earlier diagnosis of PD*
- *availability of day centres, activities etc*
- *coping methods – caring etc*
- *Exercise and Parkinson's*
- *Meditation*
- *Occupational therapists to talk about aids for everyday living. Social work department to talk about grants, financial help.*
- *Exercise; sleep*
- *Nutrition*
- *Compulsive behaviour*
- *More on side effects, alternative therapies*
- *topics could include case studies and interaction between pills*
- *Impact on continence; impact on sleep*
- *Sleep management; compulsive behaviour; anxiety and depression; lifestyle and fitness, diet*
- *Progress if any on stem cells treatment*
- *None come to mind*
- *Alternative therapies*
- *GP place in the wider circle of Parkinson's carers*
- *Non-medical ways of managing symptoms*

Some of these topics are already on the agenda for the Research Interest Group, others may provide inspiration for future Branch events.

THE VENUE

On the whole, participants were less happy with the venue than they had been with the content of the day. When asked about the convenience of the day's venue, in terms of transport, parking, etc., only 24% rated it as 5 (very convenient), 29% rating it at 4, 35% as 3 and 11% at only 2. Views on the suitability of the accommodation within the Eric Liddell Centre were also mixed: 11% rated it at 5, 36% at 4; 36% at 3 and 16% at only 2. Difficulties in hearing speakers and questions and the need for a microphone were mentioned in 19 of the responses. Other participants had been unhappy about the lift and being on the fourth floor; and a few had specific complaints about uncomfortable chairs or the strain of having to twist round to see the speakers and their presentations, or had found the room cold or too crowded. One suggested that it would have been more effective with a smaller number of participants to enable group work and discussion, and another advised that, if the event were repeated, two or three smaller sessions would be preferable to having such a large group.

Ten participants (16%) made suggestions for alternative future venues. They included: Boroughmuir Rugby Club; St Cuthberts; St John's; St George's West; St James Hotel; Stewarts Melville, Sports Pavilion, Ferry Road; Murrayfield Stadium Conference Room – subject to cost; Thistle Foundation; and the Singing 4Fun venue, St Giles Church, Strathearn Road. One participant pointed out that moving around, rather than always using the same venue, would be beneficial.

When asked for any other comments about the event or future plans, 36 (58%) added comments. As noted above, many of these comments were about the venue and the need for a sound system, but, as the following examples show, many had enjoyed the day despite these difficulties:

Excellent talk – very informative, friendly presentation. Microphone please.
Excellent presentation – informative, friendly, easily understood. Could there be a microphone?
Bad parking. First session was very lingo-heavy, which sometimes makes it harder to follow. Might have been helpful to reduce jargon. Stop people hijacking questions!
Overall very good – learnt lots!

We end with a selection of purely positive comments about the day, which demonstrate that the organisers' and presenters' considerable efforts were much appreciated:

Well done, the Edinburgh Branch.
An interesting and well-organised meeting. Well done, Marian, Leo and Liz.
Lunch delicious. Thank you.
Very informative – thank you very much.
Grateful to organisers for putting on informative event; first time I have attended such an event, met some nice people.
An excellent event.
Well supported event, shows that there is support for further meetings.