



UK paruresis trust

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Reg. charity 1109541

Chairman's report 2007 - 2008

The provision of internet based information and support

As reported in previous years, the website and the bulletin board continue to play an important part in enabling people to make contact with the Trust, to find out more about the condition, and to seek support.

The board is still monitored daily, to guard against inappropriate postings, and to ensure that all postings are answered within 24 hours.

The promotion and provision of local support groups

These are now restricted to ad-hoc informal activity organised by past participants of workshops.

The provision of weekend residential workshops

Eight weekend residential workshops were held this year: four for beginners, and four for those who had already attended a beginners workshop. The beginner workshops catered for 46 newcomers, and the Improvers workshops catered for 31 returnees. As these are put on depending on demand, it shows a continuing awareness of their existence and usefulness.

A new helper has worked alongside Andrew Smith for two workshops in Manchester, and will do so again in October in London.. His professionalism and positive attitude have been a good example on the workshops he has helped on.

The promotion of the concept of individual privacy in the design of public toilets

There has been no progress on this front this year.

The promotion of research into all aspects of the condition, particularly its cause and treatment

There has been no progress on this item this year.

The raising of public awareness, including that of the medical profession

The National Phobics Society (Now Anxiety UK) holds an online chat-room every Monday evening for one hour. In May 2007 they decided to dedicate the first Monday of each month for twelve months to Toilet Phobia, with the session hosted by a different expert in turn. Andrew Smith was invited to host the session in July 2007 on paruresis. There were five attenders, and the session was so constructive that by general agreement it was extended to a total of 2¼ hours.

The National Phobics Society has advised us that the Anxiety Disorders Conference charity has been wound up and no more annual conferences will be organised. We understand it was due to a combination of funding difficulties, and the NPS finding it difficult to organise the event.

We were contacted by Fran Burgess, an NLP practitioner, who as part of her taking a further qualification, wished to research into how NLP could help in treating paruresis. After meeting with her, she came to observe a workshop, and subsequently shared her suggestions with us, which we appreciated.

Andrew Smith was interviewed in March on the BBC Radio4 program Extra Senses. It was the fifth episode, whose topic was digestion, and it was hosted by a GP Dr Graham Easton.

We were contacted on 5th Feb by Pilar Dell, a Development Producer of ORTV, who was looking into producing a one hour program on paruresis: however nothing has come of this.

The Channel 4 series on Embarrassing Illnesses featured a man with paruresis in its episode on the 5th July 2007. Unfortunately, though it did show his initial interview with the specialist Professor Gardner, it did not show him after his exposure session with Alex Gardner. However the main thing is that the term Shy Bladder was aired on prime time TV, and we have since been contacted by

viewers. As a result of his meeting Alex Gardner, he attended our workshops in May and July 2007 with success.

Judging from reports posted on our forum, there seem to be more references to paruresis in TV programs, usually fictional.

In December 2007, Andrew Smith visited the Clinical Psychology Department of Liverpool University to meet Dr Jen Unwin and a 2nd year student. The subject was the student's proposed research project on paruresis. This is an encouraging move forward, because Dr Unwin indicated that this project could stimulate further research projects.

Other matters

Andrew Smith reported that he has obtained an Advanced Certificate in Counselling. He thanked the trustees for their support.

Andrew Smith
Chairman