



MEDWAY ASTHMA SELF-HELP NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2021

WELCOME TO THE MASH NEWSLETTER,

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2021 from Medway Asthma Self-Help (MASH). We hope you are all keeping safe and well. Unfortunately, we find ourselves in another national lockdown due to covid, but with vaccinations well underway across the country we hope that we will begin to regain some normality very soon. We continue to offer our asthma support services via telephone, so if you need to speak with an asthma nurse then please get in touch to book an appointment.

This year we are excited to be celebrating our 25th birthday – that is 25 years of providing asthma support and asthma awareness in Medway. An amazing achievement! We have lots of plans for celebrating this milestone this year, so keep an eye out for more details in our upcoming newsletters.

Medway Asthma Self-Help is your local asthma charity and we are always keen to receive your feedback and ideas. If there is anything you would like to suggest, highlight or ask, you can always get in touch to discuss with us. You can call us on 01634 855844 (leave a voice message outside of our opening times and we will get back to you), email medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com or send a message via our website: www.medwayasthmaselfhelp.co.uk/contact-us/.

Clive Johnson. Chair of MASH Trustees



ASTHMA?

We are still able to help.

Get in touch to book a FREE telephone consultation with our asthma nurse.

MEDWAY ASTHMA SELF-HELP (MASH)
CHARITY NUMBER: 1058749

ONLINE QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 27TH FEBRUARY, 7PM
Suggested donation: £5 per household

To book, please email medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com or send a message via our website: www.medwayasthmaselfhelp.co.uk/contact-us/

Upcoming MASH events:

Sat 27th February
Online Quiz Night

Sat 13th March
Virtual Pamper Evening

Friday 26th March
Wendy's Family Fun Quiz Night

MEDWAY ASTHMA SELF-HELP'S

VIRTUAL PAMPER EVENING

AN EVENING OF DIY PAMPERING, TIPS AND BEAUTY DEMONSTRATIONS VIA ZOOM

SATURDAY 13TH MARCH, 7PM, £5 DONATION

To book: email medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com

SUPPORTED BY:

MASH is very grateful to have been supported by many amazing grant-making organisations during this very tough time, including:



WELL DONE, WENDY!

In the summer of 2020, Wendy Palmer, a long-standing MASH volunteer, challenged herself to raise £1,000 for MASH by running monthly online family fun quiz nights. The events have been lots of fun and have helped to keep us all entertained during the various covid restrictions. On the extra-special Christmas-themed quiz night in December, Wendy surpassed her target.

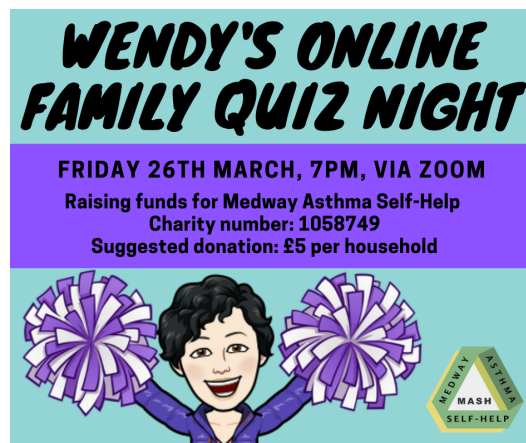
Everyone at MASH would like to thank Wendy for the amazing hard work and effort that she has been putting into her monthly quiz nights. Attendees have really enjoyed the evenings and, due to high demand, Wendy has agreed to continue running her quiz nights, every other month, in 2021 whilst covid restrictions continue and ideas keep flowing.

Wendy's next quiz night will be on Friday 26th March. Please get in touch if you would like to join us. Donations to Wendy's challenge can be made at: <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/WendyPalmer7>.



Wendy's next quiz night in aid of MASH will be on Friday 26th March at 7pm via Zoom.

If you would like to join us then please get in touch for more details.



HAY FEVER AND ASTHMA

Who knows what the weather will be like this spring. If it's anything like the mild spring of 2020, we may see people experiencing hay fever symptoms earlier than we may have expected in the past.

Seasonal allergic rhinitis (better known as hay fever) affects 1 in 5 people in the UK. Whilst, grass pollen – which peaks between May–July – affects the majority of people with hay fever, tree pollen can start as early as late January, peaking between March and April.

Did you know that allergies to grass, tree or weed pollen can also affect your asthma? If you reduce the risk of hay fever, you also reduce the risk of triggering an asthma attack.



Basic advice if you have both hay fever and asthma:

1. Start taking regular allergy medication (non-sedating antihistamines tablets and steroid nasal spray) prior to the expected start of your hay fever symptoms.
 - a. If tree pollen affects you, start taking by the end of February.
 - b. If grass pollen mainly affects you, start treatment by the end of April.
 - c. If weed pollen mainly affects you, start treatment by the end of June.
2. Carry your reliever (blue) inhaler with you at all times.
3. Take your preventer inhaler every day as prescribed.
4. Check the pollen count and avoid spending time outdoors when these are high.

More comprehensive advice on hay fever can be found on the AllergyUK or AsthmaUK websites:



www.allergyuk.org
www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/pollen



Doctors do not generally recommend injections of steroids for hay fever as these may result in severe side effects.

If you have hay fever and asthma and have further questions, please get in touch with MASH to make a telephone appointment with our Asthma and Allergy Nurse to discuss. All of our services are free and open to all.

Julie Millest, MASH's Asthma and Allergy Nurse

SUPPORT MASH FOR FREE

When you are shopping there are a few ways that you can support MASH at no cost to yourself:

Easyfundraising. Please remember to use easyfundraising every time you shop online! Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate, so you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying. These donations really help us, so please sign up if you haven't. You can get started at: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/medwayasthma/>

Amazon Smile. When shopping with Amazon, you can sign up to Amazon Smile and select MASH as your chosen charity, then every time you shop with Amazon, they will donate to MASH. Amazon Smile is now available via the Amazon app so it's now even easier. Sign up here: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1058749-0>.

Co-op Local Community Fund. We are also supported by Co-op members through the Co-op Local Community Fund. If you are a Co-op member, then you can select MASH as your cause and then you will earn donations for MASH just by doing your shopping! You can sign up here: <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/48338>



WHAT DOES MASH DO?

MASH supports people and families affected by asthma in Medway. We aim to improve awareness and understanding of asthma, its triggers and treatment, and to empower people with asthma to self-manage their condition. During Covid-19 telephone consultations, our asthma nurse can provide advice and support with asthma – discuss medications, asthma reviews and personalised asthma action plans. Letters containing the advice given and any recommendations will continue to be sent to clients to forward to their GPs.

When face-to-face appointments are able to safely resume, we will again be able to offer spirometry and FeNO testing for asthma diagnoses and monitoring, and airborne allergy testing. **All of our services are free and open to all.**

Please help us to tell anyone with or affected by asthma in Medway that we are here to help them. If you have groups that you could share our information with (online and off), if you have somewhere where you can display leaflets or posters, if you have events that you would like us to attend – then please get in touch.

KEEP IN TOUCH...

Telephone: 01634 855844

Email: medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/medway.selfhelp>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MedwayAsthma>

Website: www.medwayasthmaselfhelp.co.uk

The MASH trustees are grateful to our coordinator – Angela Stokes – for putting together and editing this newsletter.



Did you enjoy the recent snow? Why not colour in our snow Deano! Send a photo to MASH – we would love to see them.

MASH'S KIDS CORNER

If you need support with your child's asthma, then MASH can help. Get in touch to book an appointment with our asthma nurse.



TOP ASTHMA TIP

Remember to use your preventer inhaler (usually brown) every day, even when you feel well. This prevents inflammation and swelling in your airways so you have fewer symptoms and are less likely to react to triggers.

You can download MASH's asthma comic from our website.

