

MitoNews Oxford

Issue 12

Autumn 2022

Useful Contacts

Non-urgent email helpline for patients & professionals:
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Family Care Advisors
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Children:
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Welfare Officer
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07920414075

Physiotherapists
Adults:
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Children:
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Speech Therapist
claire.blair@ouh.nhs.uk

Dietician
rachel.brennan@ouh.nhs.uk

Clinical Nurse Specialist
sue.west@ouh.nhs.uk
07825 386230

Useful websites

www.mitochondrialdisease.nhs.uk
www.mitochondria-newcastle.com
www.thelilyfoundation.org.uk

Welcome to our Autumn edition of MitoNews.

We have been very busy this Autumn! We enjoyed meeting patients and their families at our first coffee mornings which were a success and we are looking forward to having monthly sessions for patients and their families to catch up about what mitochondrial disease means for them in a relaxed and friendly environment. Our next coffee morning will be held on 21st December. Please see our invite for further details.



Rachel and Sue

Mitochondrial Awareness Week

In September, we set up our stall at both the Nuffield and John Radcliffe hospitals to raise awareness of mitochondrial disease. Members of the team managed to do a little fundraising whilst talking to the public and medical professionals about mitochondrial disease. Let us know how you raised awareness this year!



Kate, Sue and Becky

We're on Twitter!

Follow our Twitter account @ServiceOxford

Top Tips



Our new Welfare Officer, Dacil, gives us some ideas for finding support with the cost of living.

If you are struggling to cover your living costs you may be able to access help from your local council to pay for bills and other essentials. You could contact your local council to access the **Household Support Fund**, you do not need to be in receipt of benefits to access this support. Councils may be able to give individuals vouchers for essentials like food or fuel. To find your local council you can go to www.gov.uk/find-local-council You could also check what benefits you may be able to claim. You may be entitled to benefits if you are of working age and on a low income, sick or disabled, a carer, responsible for children or of State Pension age and on a low income.

You could use the following **benefit calculators**:

benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk, entitledto.co.uk and betteroffcalculator.co.uk from Policy and Practice.

Remember to also check with your local council to see if you could receive a **Council Tax reduction** or a discount. If you need support with your benefit calculation you could contact Citizens Advice for advice. To find contact details of your local Citizens Advice please go to citizensadvice.org.uk

If you are out of work or on a low income you may be entitled to **Universal Credit**. If you decide to make a claim for this benefit you can contact Help to Claim from Citizens Advice. Their advisers will help you making your first claim. For more information go to citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/help-to-claim/ or call Help to Claim phone service: 0800 144 8444

If you are in debt to your **energy supplier**, you might be able to apply to them for a **grant** to help you with your utility bills. Check with your supplier to see if you are able to apply. If you are not able to receive a grant from your energy supplier, you might be able to apply for a grant from the **British Gas Energy Trust**. Everybody can apply for these grants, you do not need to be a British Gas customer. To find out more and to make an application you can go to britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/

You may also be able to get a **local energy grant**, you can check here : simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/grants

To search for other grants to help you financially you could use the **grant search** tool from Turn2us: grants-search.turn2us.org.uk

You could also access extra help and support from your energy supplier by signing up to the **Priority Service Register**. You should be able to sign up if you have reached state pension age, you are disabled or sick or your energy network considers you vulnerable. By signing up to the register your energy network could help you with things like reading your energy meter or give you extra support if you have a power cut.

Willow Foundation

We would like to introduce you to the Willow Foundation. **Willow is a charity who support 16-40 year olds** with life threatening illnesses, solely focused on improving quality of life and making memories. Willow currently has two services to support those with life threatening illnesses. **Special days out**, at home and breaks and **special treats** which are personalised gift boxes filled with luxury items to give a positive boost to those that need it most.

To be eligible for support applicants must be aged between 16 and 40 years old (inclusive), receiving treatment/care for a life-threatening illness or diagnosed with a degenerative condition, resident in the UK and have not received support in the past from Willow. You can find more about the Willow Foundation here <https://www.willowfoundation.org.uk/>

If you would like to be referred to Willow to access their support please contact Dacil, our Welfare Officer, on dacil.gonzalez@ouh.nhs.uk or 07920414075.

A big **'THANK YOU'** to
Dr Louisa Kent



who has almost completed her clinical fellowship with our team. She will continue her training as a doctor in neurology after Christmas. We wish her luck and hope to see her soon.