

Swindon & District Branch

Dance for Parkinson's with **SWINDON DANCE**

The Parkinson's UK website tells us that research studies have shown that activities like dance improve quality of life for people with Parkinson's. It also says that lots of people with the condition say that they enjoy and get many benefits from dancing. After the Dance "Taster Session" on 3rd March with Sarah Fletcher from Swindon Dance who is a qualified trainer in Dance for Parkinson's we received 100% positive feedback. One comment being that for one hour "I forgot I had Parkinson's", others state they found the music very stimulating and invigorating. Parkinson's UK and our own Parkinson's Health Professionals at GWH encourage dance as a therapy.

With this in mind I am pleased to announce that Dance for Parkinson's is being added to our Exercise Programme starting Friday 28th April. Following an initial 3 month trial, should sufficient numbers continue to support this new venture, it will continue on a permanent basis providing funds remain available.

Dance for Parkinson's will be held on Friday afternoons at the Swindon Therapy Centre for Multiple Sclerosis, Bradbury House, Westmead Drive, Swindon, SN5 7YS from 1.30 to 2.30pm followed by a half hours sit down for a chat with tea or coffee. Swindon Dance will provide the service with Sarah Fletcher as our instructor during normal school term on the dates below:

Summer Term

April 2017 Friday 28th

May 2017 Fridays 5th 12th 19th 26th

Half Term Break

June 2017 Fridays 9th 16th 23rd 30th

July 2017 Fridays 7th 14th 21st

The Autumn Term will probably start on 11th September, dates will be confirmed later.

Sarah explained that the class starts with us all seated together in a circle allowing us to get used to being in a dance movement class. Slowly progressing up into a standing position, and then moving across the space either walking or putting movements together into a sequence. The aims of the class are to address the issues often associated with Parkinson's whilst having fun! So Sarah often looks at posture, gait and balance which are the three main points she usually works on during the classes. The music Sarah uses often comes from musicals and is a great starting point for participants as it is something they can connect with so they can do the movement without having to think about it and enjoy it as well. Sarah feels really passionately about the music she uses and wants to see smiles in class or the pulling of silly faces so that it brings out laughter and relaxes everyone. Tuning into the music helps the participants to be fully engaged and fully going for it. The classes are designed to be fun and relaxed, participants can be seated or standing. Classes finish with tea and coffee, with the chance to chat.

Dave Logan (Branch Chair)