



November 12th, 2014

Helping patients to breathe easier

Patients with breathing problems can now travel lighter thanks to a generous donation by the South Tyneside Breathe Easy support group.

The group has supplied the Acute Respiratory Assessment Service (ARAS) at South Tyneside District Hospital with five, portable nebulisers, costing a total of £850.

The small, lightweight devices make it more convenient for local patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and other long-term conditions, who may have to use a nebuliser up to four times a day to clear their lungs, to go on holiday.

Respiratory nurse specialist Tracey Brydon explained: "This type of nebuliser is not routinely available on the NHS so we are delighted that Breathe Easy has enabled us to offer these new devices to our patients. Traditional nebulisers are fairly large and need a mains connection but these have a battery, which can be charged up before travel or in a car or even a bus, and they can easily be held in the hand."

Mrs Brydon and her colleagues in ARAS are joining Breathe Easy in supporting the British Lung Foundation's (BLF) campaign around World COPD Day on Wednesday, November 19th, which aims to show how successfully managing COPD can help people to improve their lives and keep a good level of independence.

COPD - the name used to describe a number of conditions affecting the lungs including emphysema and chronic bronchitis - is the UK's third biggest killer, taking 30,000 lives every year. It is estimated that there are 2.2 million people with the condition in the UK who have not been diagnosed, stopping them from getting the help they need to have the quality of life they deserve.

The ARAS specialist nurses and Breathe Easy have already raised £260 this month by joining in the BLF's Big Breakfast when they encouraged patients, visitors and staff to take a breather and have a breakfast bite with them.

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Pictured above: Beryl Johnson, of South Tyneside Breathe Easy, seated, with one of the new nebulisers and, left to right, respiratory physiologist James Andrew, student nurse Sarah Archer and respiratory nurse specialist Tracey Brydon

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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