



June 2nd, 2016

Simple as 1,2,3

A free, specially-designed programme is helping people in Gateshead with lung disease to improve their quality of life by managing their own condition.

Since it was devised two years ago by South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's community pulmonary rehabilitation team, more than 150 people with long-term lung conditions have been on the course and there have been some impressive results, with many reporting they have more energy, feel less troubled by breathlessness, feel more confident and find walking easier.

The scheme, 123 Manage COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), is unique to Gateshead and focuses on stopping smoking, using prescribed inhalers and keeping active. It is run at leisure centres across the borough and participants attend the group twice a week over the course of six weeks. They decide on the topics at each session and occupational therapy specialists, exercise instructors and respiratory nurses provide support.

Occupational therapist Lorna Peel said: "The emphasis is on increasing fitness and tolerance to exercise and promoting people's self-management of their condition. COPD is one of the most common respiratory diseases in the UK and can affect people's lives in many ways but by keeping healthy and being as active as possible they can reduce its impact. One person said that, after completing the course, they felt better than they had in the previous two years."

Patients can be referred for the course by their GP, GP practice nurse or hospital consultant, or they can refer themselves by contacting South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's Gateshead Occupational Therapy Department on 0191 445 5226.

ends

Pictured above: Staff in South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's community pulmonary rehabilitation team, back, left to right, occupational therapists Joanna Donnelly, Lorna Peel and Sue Easthaugh, occupational therapy technical instructor Emma McGlen and, front, occupational therapist Pauline Foster Kay

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

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