**Macular Society Regional Newsletter Update from Marian Williams (Regional Manager North Wales) April 2022.**

Hello, I hope you are all keeping well?

The most up-to-date list of all groups' return to face-to-face dates and times can be found below.

Llandudno Support Group – 1Monday of every month at 11am.

Abergele Support Group – 3Monday of every month at 1.30pm

Pwllheli Support Group – 1 Friday of every month at 1pm.

Llangollen Support Group – 4 Monday of every month at 11am.

Aberystwyth Support Group – 4 Wednesday of every month at 11am

Welshpool Support Group – 2 and 4 Tuesday of every month at 2pm.

Newtown Support Group – 1 Monday of every month at 2pm

Dolgellau Support Group – 3 Wednesday of every month at 1.30pm

Blaenau Ffestiniog Group – 2 Friday of every month at 1pm

Holyhead Support Group – 3 Tuesday of every month at 1pm

Bangor Town – 2 Monday of every month at 1pm

Harlech Support Group – 4 Thursday of every month at 1.30pm.

Ruthin Support Group – 2 Thursday of every month at 11am.

**ALL WALES MACULAR SOCEITY GROUP CALLS**

As majority of groups in Wales are resuming face-to-face meetings, we have set up four weekly **All Wales telephone calls** to help those who are unable to make it to meetings in person. Please do tell your members about the All Wales Group Calls.

First Wednesday at 11am – English

Second Wednesday at 2pm – Welsh Only

Third Wednesday at 2pm – English

Fourth Wednesday at 11am – English

At the required time please dial **01264 601 037 when asked press number 1 this is your pin number** (all calls charged at local rate) we will all then be able to speak to each other.

These will be hosted by, Adele Francis (South Wales) and Marian Williams (North Wales). Please feel free to join the calls even if you are attending the face-to-face meetings and need further information.

**SKILLS FOR SEEING UPDATE**

One to one advice on how to make best use of the vision you have to continue doing the things you love. Combining vision know-how, magnification, lighting and, where it works for you, ‘eccentric viewing’ and ‘steady eye strategy’ techniques. Skills for Seeing continues to be in high demand so we will be recruiting new volunteers to deliver telephone and digital sessions later this year. If this role is of interest to you and you’d like to know more please contact Hannah Keegan on 01264 01264 560 201 or Hannah.Keegan@macularsociety.org

**RESEARCH UPDATE**

Apellis Pharmaceuticals, a company we’ve been working with for a while, have announced that they are about to apply for a licence for their new drug for dry AMD. If approved, it will be the first drug treatment for this form of AMD. The company said: “On Wednesday, March 16, Apellis announced longer-term results from the Phase 3 DERBY and OAKS clinical studies, testing the efficacy and safety of intravitreal pegcetacoplan, an investigational medicine, in geographic atrophy (GA). GA is also known as advanced dry age-related macular degeneration. In an analysis conducted at month 18 of the clinical studies, treatment with both monthly and every-other-month pegcetacoplan continued to show reduced GA lesion growth compared to sham injections (no treatment). Pegcetacoplan continued to demonstrate a favorable safety profile in both studies. Overall, these longer-term data provide further evidence that pegcetacoplan has the potential to meaningfully slow disease progression and to preserve vision longer.”  Apellis will first seek FDA approval in the US and then European Medicines Agency approval for the EU. As we’re not in the EU they’ll also have to apply to the MHRA for UK approval. It’s worth noting that this is not a cure, or even a drug that will stop progression of AMD. But it does look as though it may slow down progression which is its own progress and, as such, very welcome.

If you would like further information about any of the topics raised in the newsletter, please contact me on 07495 054 053 or you can ring the Advice and Information number on 0300 3030 111.

Best wishes,

Marian