

BARRETT'S SUPPORT NETWORK, EAST ANGLIA

EVENING OF TALKS ON BARRETT'S OESOPHAGUS

We held another very successful meeting at Westminster College, Cambridge on Friday 8th May 2009. Proceedings were opened by **John Clarkson**, Chair of BSN East Anglia, who welcomed fellow patients to the event. The first speaker was **Mimi McCord**, Chair of the National BSN, who gave an enthusiastic overview on the national picture regarding BOC, BSN and the new website. It was particularly encouraging to learn of the establishment of new BSN branches e.g. Kent, London City and Wessex. This can only help to raise both awareness of Barrett's Oesophagus and funds for essential research.

Dr Rebecca Fitzgerald then chaired the session on her team's research progress and gave the first talk herself on transnasal endoscopy work by her Research Fellow and Gastroenterologist, **Dr Kareem Shariff**, who was unfortunately unable to be present. The equipment under test consists of an ultrathin endoscope introduced into the oesophagus via the nose which will hopefully reduce the time, cost and discomfort of standard endoscopy by mouth. A clinical trial appropriately entitled NOSE (Nasal Or Standard Endoscopy study) is currently evaluating the technique. This study has been generously funded by a peer reviewed grant from the McCord Fund part of BOC. Next on the agenda came the star of the show - not so much the speaker, Senior Post-doctoral Scientist **Dr Pierre Lao-Sirieix** - but his dummy named "Norman" (after Norman Barrett)! Norman is an anatomical model (well at least the top half!) with his coloured innards demonstrating transit of the capsule sponge for collecting oesophageal biopsy cells. A screening trial (BEST www.beststudy.org) is currently evaluating the technique. Following this entertaining presentation, refreshments and accompanying music were very welcome. During the interval, **Scott Bromiley** of Endoscopy UK showed us film of the transnasal endoscopy procedure on his laptop.

The next talk was on Trimodal Imaging, presented by **Dr Massimiliano di Pietro**, Gastroenterologist and Research Fellow. He showed us the benefits of enhanced colour imaging methods for viewing affected areas of the oesophagus which facilitated targeted biopsies of potential cancerous tissue. Evaluation of this technique in combination with a molecular test is being conducted in a trial called TIME (Trimodal Imaging and Molecular Evaluation). This technology offers great hope of quicker and more accurate diagnosis and prognosis for the future.

More information about all of these research studies and how to take part can be obtained by contacting Dr Rebecca Fitzgerald rcf@hutchison-mrc.cam.ac.uk

The evening concluded with an inspiring, illustrated talk by **Claire Twort** who raised £10,000 for BOC by organising a cycle ride around the Isle of Wight in memory of her late husband who tragically died from oesophageal cancer.

I would like to thank all the speakers, particularly Mimi and Claire, also Rebecca and her research nurses and the BSN East Anglia Committee members for contributing to an informative and enjoyable evening. Sincere thanks also go to Endoscopy UK for sponsoring the event.

John Clarkson, Chair BSN East Anglia