

15 October 2018

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Dudley leads way in national network**

A Dudley initiative to help keep Parkinson's patients out of hospital has led to the creation of a new national network which is being launched this month.

Janine Barnes, Neurology Specialist Pharmacist with The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, has set up a national network to train pharmacists across the country in how to help people manage their condition through medication.

The newly-formed Parkinson's Disease Specialist Pharmacy Network (PDSPN) is holding its first steering committee meeting in Birmingham on 18<sup>th</sup> October to develop an educational programme next year for the 200-plus pharmacists who have already shown an interest in receiving further training in the area.

Parkinson's is thought to affect around one in 500 people in the UK. It causes tremors, stiffness in the muscles and slow movement. It can also lead to depression, memory problems and insomnia.

Janine was the first Neurology Specialist Pharmacist in the UK and was named Clinical Pharmacist of the Year in 2012. She now works with other health authorities looking to follow The Dudley Group's lead.

She said: "We are seeing more people with Parkinson's due to an ageing population, better diagnosis and more people coming forward. Parkinson's medication is often very complex so pharmacists, as the experts in this area, are the ideal profession to help these patients. By being a point of contact we as pharmacists can use our skills to monitor their medication and possible interactions with medications prescribed for their other health conditions to keep them healthy and out of hospital."

The idea for the national network began when Janine was speaking at a conference in London. She was approached by pharmacists interested in finding out more about Parkinson's and because there is a lack of training courses for pharmacists in this area of medicine, suggested forming a national network.

Dudley is also leading the way in the care of Parkinson's patients with the neurology pathway of the Dudley Rehabilitation Service which consists of a community multidisciplinary team which includes the Neurology Specialist Pharmacist, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, Parkinson's disease nurses in community

and hospital locations, speech and language therapists, dieticians, support workers and with access to the continence and psychology teams.

“People with the condition have the support of this team which takes them out of the hospital system, freeing up nurses’ and consultants’ time,” Janine added.

Pharmacists interested in finding out more about the network and education available can contact [janine.barnes2@nhs.net](mailto:janine.barnes2@nhs.net)

\*\*\* ENDS \*\*\*