

# TAKE A BREATH



**Planning a holiday?**



**World Asthma day**



**My Lungs My Life**



**FREE calls to Advice Line 0808 801 0899**

## Looking to try something new?



**For those with a lung condition, it can be hard to find places to go that are suitable. I am sure others find this a problem too. I am therefore delighted to tell you about a service that runs in the Inverness area.**

'Friendship Services in the Highlands' is an organisation that was founded and is run by Alan Michael, a man with a huge personality (almost as big as his heart!). They organise lots of different activities and there really is something for everyone!

There's a **Men's Shed**, where they have activities including computer advice/instruction, water colour painting, photography, indoor bowls and keep fit activities. They have also taken an order to provide several decorative, wooden

benches for placement along the banks of the Caledonian Canal!

The **Dunbar Centre** has something to offer from Monday to Friday with various activities depending on the day. Activities include games, crafts, book clubs and live music! There are also teas, coffees, snacks, soup and daily specials, all at a very reasonable price.

A **pop-in centre** runs at Smithton Church on a Wednesday between 10am and 3.30pm for people aged 50+ (although I am assured birth certificates are not checked!). There is tea, coffee, home baking, soup and various activities. 'it's a great place and the soup is lovely!'

*"It's a great place and the soup is lovely!"*

As if that wasn't enough, there is a **housebound library service** for people in the Inverness and Nairn area! Anyone who can't get to their local library will qualify for the mobile library. What an excellent initiative, bringing books to people who are housebound or have serious mobility issues. Not only do they have access to books, there's also some social contact too.

*'Basically we wish to help people who are lonely and isolated in whatever way suits them best. This can vary from a daily telephone call to a regular visitor, or attending one of the groups we run. We can adapt to suit the person's wishes. The best way forward is to speak to us and we will try to suit the person's needs'*

*Alan Michael*

Friendship Services in the Highlands also offers a **visiting service**.

If there is anything you are interested in (and how could you not be!) and you want to find out a little more, you can either **call Alan himself on 01463 790410** or have a look at the friendship services website.

[www.friendship-services.com/index.html](http://www.friendship-services.com/index.html)

Enjoy!

*June MacLeod - C&RSS Local Co-ordinator, Inverness & NE Highland*

**CALL FOR ARTICLES**

Do you have some exciting information, an interesting story or a helpful hint to share with people affected by chronic lung disease? We'd love to hear from you:

**Lorna Stevenson**  
Respiratory Co-ordinator  
Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland  
E-mail:  
[Lorna.Stevenson@chss.org.uk](mailto:Lorna.Stevenson@chss.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 225 6963



## PLANNING A HOLIDAY?

**Holidays are a good way to spend time with friends and family, unwind and relax. Having a lung condition should not stop you from going on holiday. Plan ahead and let your travel operators know about any special needs to overcome most sticking points. Here's a few tips for planning a good holiday:**

### **What's the best way to travel?**

Have a chat with your GP or specialist about which travel options are best for you, for example flying can make some breathing symptoms worse, but there may also be a solution.

### **What about medicines?**

Make sure that you take enough of your medicines for the whole trip. If you have 'rescue medication' take them with you too. A doctors letter describing your condition and medication is useful if you become unwell, and for airport security. Carry this in your hand luggage along with your medication, and keep your medication in its original packaging. If you take more than 100ml of a liquid medication let your airline and departure airport know.

### **Do you need insurance?**

**Travel insurance protects you against having to pay huge medical bills.**

Try to arrange this as early as possible to protect you if you become unwell before you go. Shop around to get the best deal and check that the policy covers all of your medical conditions. Carry your insurance documents in your hand luggage, and keep them safe.

If you are going on holiday in **Europe** you can get a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This gives you free or reduced cost treatment in the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. **The EHIC is not a replacement for travel insurance!** It doesn't cover the cost of getting you home, and may not cover all the care you normally get from the NHS - you may still need to pay for some of your care.

Some countries **outside Europe** will provide free emergency treatment to UK citizens. Again, this may not cover all the things you would expect from the NHS.

In other countries you will have to pay the full cost of any care that you need.

Information on which countries have a healthcare agreement with the UK can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health)

### Where to go?

As well as the activities you enjoy, think about terrain and climate in the resort, and whether you will feel comfortable there. Make sure your accommodation will have all the services you need.

### How to make the journey a bit easier

**Transport providers** can often make your journey easier by reserving accessible seating and offering help. Call their customer services to ask.

**Airports, Ferries and Cruise companies** can usually help too. For example, Inverness airport has a team of people offering special assistance.

### What if I need Oxygen?

If you are **staying in the UK**, check that your accommodation will accept oxygen, and contact Health Facilities Scotland (HFS) to let them know. Try to give them 4-6 weeks notice. If you plan to fly you should:

- Contact customer services to tell them about your oxygen and any other devices such as a nebuliser or CPAP.
- Check if you need your own oxygen for the flight, or if the airline provides this for you. There may be an extra charge.



**You are not allowed to take oxygen equipment supplied by Health Facilities Scotland out of Scotland.**

Within the **EEA** you can access the same oxygen services as local residents, but this can still have a cost. Ask HFS how to arrange this.

**Out-with the EEA** you need to arrange your own oxygen through private supplier. The CHSS Advice Line Nurses can help you with this.

**Most importantly, holidays can be good for you. So whether staying in Scotland or going further afield.....Bon Voyage!**

**Let us know if you have a good holiday experience and we can feature it in our next edition**

## CHEST-A-MINUTE

*I've really been struggling to maintain my weight lately.*



*My nurse told me that when we use more muscles for breathing, like with a lung condition, you use up more calories.*



- Use your inhalers and let your breathing settle before your meals. If you try to eat when you're breathless you end up swallowing some air which makes you feel bloated.
- Avoid drinking too much before or during meals, because this fills you up.
- And if you take nutritional supplement drinks, did you know they could be frozen? The juice type can be frozen to make ice lollies, and the milky type can be frozen to make ice cream! It's a nice way of having something different and great for the summer!

# USEFUL CONTACTS WHEN PLANNING YOUR HOLIDAY

## Vaccinations

- Find out more about which vaccinations you may need by visiting **NHS Fit For Travel**: <http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations.aspx>
- Some vaccinations are free, but you may have to pay for others. For more information visit **NHS Inform**: <http://www.nhsinform.co.uk/health-library/articles/v/vaccinations/introduction>

## Insurance and healthcare cover

- Apply for your **FREE EHIC** card at: <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx>

## Destinations, accommodation and services

- **'Tourism for All UK'** is a charity. Their website contains information on a wide range of services and products that may be helpful when planning a holiday: <https://www.tourismforall.org.uk/>
- **'Open Britain'** allows you to search a number of properties within the UK and also gives information on places to eat and drink, activities and events: [www.openbritain.net](http://www.openbritain.net)
- **Disabled Access Holidays** offer wheelchair friendly holidays at home or abroad: [http://www.disabledaccessholidays.com/disabled\\_holidays\\_cruising\\_for\\_disabled\\_people.asp](http://www.disabledaccessholidays.com/disabled_holidays_cruising_for_disabled_people.asp)

## Cruise

- **The Disabled Cruise Club** can provide advice and help with booking a cruise: <http://www.disabledcruiseclub.co.uk/>

## Air travel

- **Inverness Airport** telephone number: (01667) 462 445
- **FlyBe** and **EasyJet** fly out of Inverness Airport and their customer helplines are given below:  
**FlyBe:** (01392) 683 152    **EasyJet:** 0800 998 1130

## Rail

- **National Rail Enquiries:** [http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations\\_destinations/disabled\\_passengers.aspx](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/disabled_passengers.aspx)  
Or telephone: 08457 48 49 50

## Oxygen

- **Health Facilities Scotland:** [nss.oxycon@nhs.net](mailto:nss.oxycon@nhs.net)  
Or telephone 0131 275 6860

## Other useful contacts

- The **CHSS Advice Line Nurses** can give advice on travel when you have a Chest, Heart or Stroke condition. Call FREE from landlines and mobiles on 0808 801 0899.

Also see page 6 for information on our new website **My Lungs My Life**, coming soon! This will include a large section on travel with links to other useful information and organisations.

## WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Where would you expect to see or experience the following?

Taken from 'the Activity Year Book: a week by week guide for use in elderly day and residential care' by Anni Bowden and Nancy Lewthwaite, published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

1. Beefeaters, ravens, Crown Jewels?
2. Hot climate, Taj Mahal, crowds?
3. Cuckoo clock, skis, Heidi?
4. Pyramids, camels, sand?
5. Opera house, outback, corks on hats?
6. Clogs, tulips, windmills?
7. Cigars, Che Guevara, samba?
8. Tea ceremony, paper houses, kimonos?
9. A tower with a tilt?
10. Table Mountain, Mandela, gold?
11. Sausages, Bier, leather shorts?
12. A canal and a special hat?
13. Birthplace of the Olympics and Plato?
14. Was British until 1997, an island, horse racing?
15. The Andes, beef, Evita?

Answers on page 6

# IT'S WORLD ASTHMA DAY ON THE 5TH OF MAY

World Asthma Day is organized by the Global Initiative for Asthma to raise awareness about asthma and improve asthma care across the world. There are over 330,000 people in Scotland with Asthma. It is important that people with asthma and their families understand asthma and how to control it. Many people are not aware that asthma can be fatal. Sadly, three people die each day in the UK because of their Asthma. Many of these deaths can be avoided. There are lots of things you can do to reduce the risk of having an Asthma attack:

**Know your triggers and how to manage them** – for example, we are coming into the hay fever season. Does this affect you and do you need to think about increasing your medication

**Recognise the signs and symptoms of an asthma attack, and what to do about it** – it is important that you recognise when you are starting to have an asthma attack, and how to manage asthma it. This includes knowing how to get help.

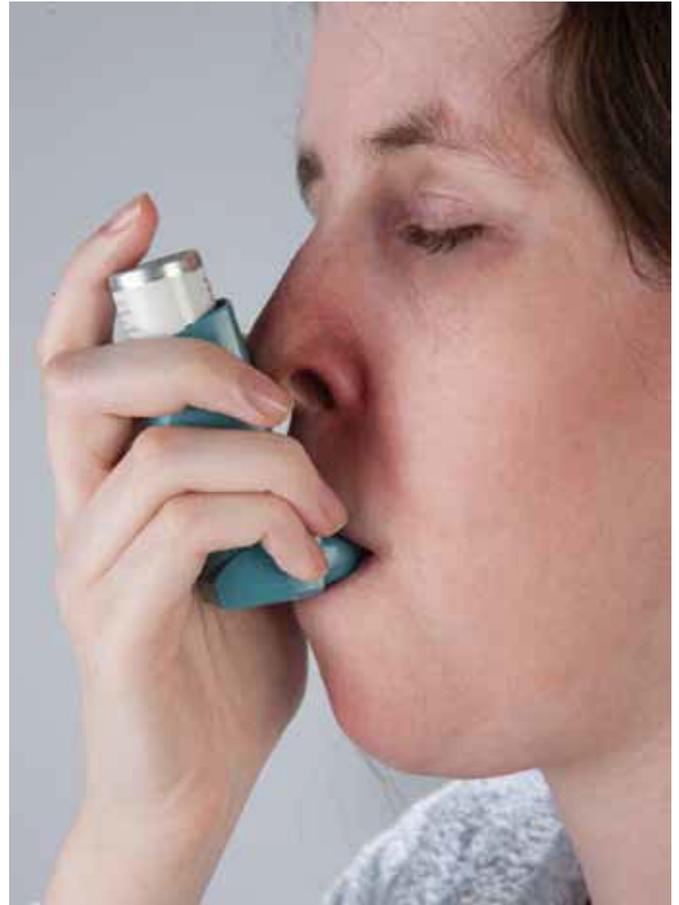
**Asthma Action Plans** – Having an asthma action plan will give you specific information about what to do if you have the early signs of an attack. You can follow the plan and catch your attack early. This might help you to avoid:

- it getting worse
- uncomfortable symptoms and worry
- the need to go to hospital or be admitted as an emergency

It will also tell you what to do if you are not responding to your usual inhalers and when to call for help or an ambulance. If you don't already have one, ask your doctor or nurse about an asthma action plan.

### Attend your Asthma Reviews

You should have appointment with your doctor or nurse at least once a year to talk about your Asthma. This will give you a chance to discuss and personalise your action plan.



They will also check that you are on the right medication and using your inhalers correctly. **It is important to attend your Asthma Review even though you may be feeling well and in control of your Asthma.**



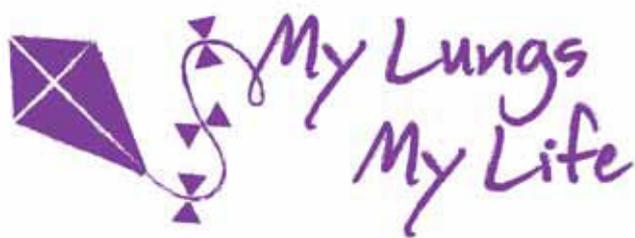
[www.MyLungsMyLife.org](http://www.MyLungsMyLife.org)

For more information, see our article on page 6 about a new website 'MY Lungs My Life'

[www.MylungsMyLife.org](http://www.MylungsMyLife.org)

Other useful sources of information:

- For national guidelines on Asthma:  
**BTS/SIGN guideline** [www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/101/index.html](http://www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/101/index.html)
- **NICE quality standards** [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs25/chapter/Introduction-and-overview](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs25/chapter/Introduction-and-overview)
- **www.asthma.org.uk** is a UK wide asthma charity



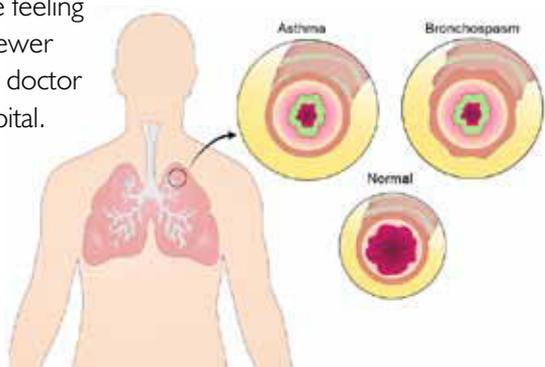
[www.MyLungsMyLife.org](http://www.MyLungsMyLife.org)

**My Lungs My Life is for people living with COPD or Asthma and for Parents or Guardians of children with Asthma. This new website will help you to find out more about your condition and offer some practical tips. As well as written information there are plenty of animations, films, audio clips and pictures to bring it to life!**

You actually spend very little time face to face with your healthcare professionals. You are busy living your life and managing your condition on a day-to-day basis!

My Lungs My Life will support you with this and help you to have a strong role in managing your own condition, alongside your healthcare professionals.

My Lungs My Life has been written by respiratory healthcare specialists here in Scotland, including some from Highland. It is not a replacement for your healthcare professionals, but it will help you to understand your condition better. This can mean knowing what to do when you're feeling worse and fewer trips to your doctor and the hospital.



If you have increasing symptoms of COPD you may be recommended some of the following. Select the items to find out more about each one.



**Inhalers**

You will be assessed on using your inhaler to make sure you are taking it correctly to get the maximum effect and you may be changed to a new one or have a change in strength of your current one.

Does this sound like **Self-management** to you? You'd be right! Self-management refers to the skills, knowledge, contacts and tools you use to live with your condition.

People like you living with a chest condition have described how self-management works for them:

*"Don't get stuck thinking about what you can't do – remember and celebrate what you CAN do"*

*"Having something to look forward to each day gives me motivation. Dreams can become reality – or at least bits of them can! So dream of what you want to do and go for it....."*

*"Remember the Tortoise and the Hare story – go canny to win!"*

Look out for helpful self management tips throughout the My Lungs My Life website!



The website is being launched on 3rd June 2015  
[www.mylungsmylife.org](http://www.mylungsmylife.org)



## HOW TO REGISTER

Don't want to miss the next issue of Take a Breath!?! You can sign up to receive an e-mail alert that will let you know that the next issue is available, and a link to take you straight there!

**Visit: [www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath-highland](http://www.chss.org.uk/takeabreath-highland) for more information**

QUIZ ANSWERS: 1. London, 2. India, 3. Switzerland, 4. Egypt, 5. Australia, 6. Holland, 7. Cuba, 8. Japan, 9. Pisa, 10. South Africa, 11. Germany, 12. Panama, 13. Greece, 14. Hong Kong, 15. Argentina



**FREE** calls to Advice Line 0808 801 0899  
or text **Nurse** to 66777