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Welcome... this is our first newsletter of 2006, there has been a great deal of work going on in recent months and the Trustees are delighted to be able to bring you the latest exciting news and developments from the Aspergillus Trust.

New Website Launched

Come and visit our wonderful new facilities at: www.aspergillustrust.org/

A huge 'THANK YOU' goes to Lloyds TSB whose grant has enabled us to fund this development work. Thanks also to **John Smout** (Trustee) and **Tony Cheetham** (IT specialist) who have given their time and professional expertise to oversee the design, upgrading and launch of this wonderful new set of features.

Membership and Registration

Please take a few minutes to check out our new website, you will need to fill out a very simple registration form with us at: www.aspergillustrust.org/register.asp in order to access the new member's area. Here you will find all our latest leaflets, news and information for free download. This is a very simple secure registration process where we will ask you for basic information some of which will also be entirely optional, about you and your health. This secure information will be used solely by the trust to help with research and development and will enable us to better understand your needs and to obtain some accurate figures on the number of sufferers of these dreadful illnesses. Your details will not be shared with any other parties. If you experience any difficulties in registering simply email us at: support@aspergillustrust.org and we will be happy to help!

Online AT forums

As part of the upgrade of the AT website we are especially pleased to launch our new online AT forums, where all our members can join in the friendly discussion, share tips, talk to the Trustees and offer help and support to each other.

There will be a future phased-in 'merging' of the Aspergillus Trust Members Group (ATMG) with our new AT forums... watch this space for future announcements!

Please come and join the new AT forums at: www.aspergillustrust.org/forums and help us support all those suffering from aspergillus related illnesses.

New Patient Information Leaflets

We have great pleasure in presenting our new patient leaflets:

A Guide to Nutrition and Health

Grateful thanks are given to **Helen Tate**, Dietician SRD MSc, for her professional help in compiling the nutrition information. Helen is the infectious diseases dietician at St George's Hospital, Tooting, London SW17. Her expertise is in HIV and Haematology.

A Guide to Chest Physiotherapy

Grateful thanks are also given to **David Barber**, Senior Physiotherapist, South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust, for his professional help in compiling the physiotherapy information. A thank you also goes to **John Smout** who has given us his time and professional expertise in the design and the presentation of both guides.

A to Z tips

An alphabetical self-help and informative guide to help us all get to grips with and gain a better understanding of medical terms and conditions, together with patient-led advice relating to Aspergillus illnesses.

A Guide to Aspergillus Infection and its Prevention

We have successfully funded and launched our second patient information leaflet on Prevention of Infection. Thanks to Candice Chan of Edinburgh Medical School who won our second medical student competition to design this leaflet. It has now been distributed to 1250 specialists within the NHS. We also extend our sincere thanks to our trustees John Smout (design) and Peter Henriksen (Project Manager) who have done a fantastic job in overseeing the launch of this new patient leaflets. Thanks also to Potts Printers and Dendrite Limited (distribution) who put in place the final segments in the successful launch. We especially offer our grateful thanks to the Fungal Research Trust / Newcastle Healthcare Charity / Hexham Trinity Methodist Church / Lions Clubs of Cornwall and from trust members Mr S. Hope and Mr M. Bland who have all helped with the funding of this patient leaflet.

All the New Patient Guides are available for download as PDFs from our website.

Annual Competition for Medical Students

This year medical students were asked to draft a leaflet on Allergic Fungal Sinusitis. All the entries were of a very good standard, and choosing a winner proved difficult. It was for this reason that once again we decided that a first and second prize were appropriate. All entrants had thoroughly researched their subject and used their verbal and IT skills to produce a patient information leaflet, which was both visually attractive, packed with information and patient-friendly. Thanks to all entrants, but particular thanks and many congratulations to our two winners - Ali Murad who won first prize and Tom Havard our runner-up. The work of both our winners will be credited at the end of our AFS/AAS leaflet.

During our general meeting of 6th May at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle it became clear during discussions that there was scope for further leaflets clearly of interest to sufferers of Aspergillus-related illness, and it was decided that a question be set out by Professor Paul Corris for this autumn's competition, on the complications of ABPA, including bronchiectasis and its treatment, and other bacteria which create additional respiratory problems for aspergillus sufferers, such as pseudomonas and non-TB mycobacteria. Professor Corris felt that whereas CF and COPD patients are now quite well looked after medically, those with bronchiectasis, the largest group, are unfortunately left out of targets for physicians, and therefore there was real scope for well presented information to be provided.

Annual Report and accounts

The annual report and accounts for the year ending 31st March 2006 are now available to view or download from the 'About the Trust' links on our website at <http://www.aspergillustrust.org/>.

AGM and General Meeting

In future extracts from the minutes of the AGM and general meetings will be available for download once you are logged in on the website.

The date and venue for the Annual General Meeting of the AT is yet to be finalised. It is proposed that it will take place in September - possibly either Saturday 16th or 30th in either Manchester or London. A further announcement will be made in due course.

Want to help?

There are many ways that you can help the Aspergillus Trust in its work, these include:

- **Becoming a Member...** join us and pledge your support.
- **Contributing to our voluntary subscription scheme.**
- **Support other members by joining our online AT forums**
- **Sharing your skills and ideas with us to further the aims and objectives of the AT.**
- **Volunteering to help us in organising our regional meetings and distributing information and help to other Aspergillus sufferers in your area.**
- **Inviting family and friends to become AT supporters...** many companies for example have 'Dress Down Charity Days' - suggest that they consider nominating the AT as their chosen Charity.
- **Helping to fundraise by taking part in or organising events and raising sponsorship for the trust**
- **Making a donation.**

Fundraising News Flora London Marathon 2006

We are really grateful to our four runners who kindly volunteered to help the AT by wearing our shirts and running the marathon after James Breen was forced to withdraw through injury.

Dr Phil Higgs BSc (Hons) BDS Dip Orth	
Runner No. 20552	Time: 4:40:00
David Scott - Runner No. 2438	Time: 4:36:11
Phil Buckingham - Runner No. 18927	Time: 4:34:06
Steve Bevan - Runner No. 26063	Time: 3:42:00

Congratulations to all our runners, it was a fantastic achievement by you all! The AT is really appreciative of the support of all our runners who stood in to help us at such short notice. We are also especially grateful to all our sponsors and supporters who have all helped make the Marathon Appeal such a success.

AT Running Alliance

We are hoping to get together a group of runners who would like to support the AT in its work by joining our running alliance - if you would like to volunteer, or know somebody who is willing to take part in a local running event and raise sponsorship for the trust, email runners@aspergillustrust.org. We will gladly send you our official sponsorship forms, provide you with an Aspergillus Trust T shirt or running vest and assist in promoting your efforts to help you gain as much support as possible.

Making a Donation

You can donate simply easily and securely here: <https://secure.efundraising.org.uk/tailored/donation.asp?charity=72201>. This is our secure online donation facility operated on behalf of the AT by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). You can choose to pay into the voluntary annual membership scheme, our marathon fundraising appeal or simply make a donation to the general fund of the AT.

This facility also enables you to pay by £ Sterling / \$ US Dollars / Euros ...you can also donate by Post to:

Aspergillus Trust
PO Box 168, Hexham, NE46 9AN
United Kingdom

Cheques should be made payable to the Aspergillus Trust and crossed 'A/C PAYEE'

Your feedback is important

Please take a little time to let us know what you think of our new website and any other issues that are important to you, our members - feel free to let us have your views.

If you have any news, comments, or information you would like to contribute to future publications of the AT News please email news@aspergillustrust.org.

Editor's Comment

It has been some time since the last proper newsletter, as you will have seen from the news items above there has been a huge amount of work undertaken during recent months. The launch of our new website is a solid new foundation stone and a wonderful window to the world that will help us secure a brighter future for the AT.

I am sure you will all join me in congratulating John, Tony and everyone involved in creating such a wonderful facility for us all - very well done!

Jim Breen, Editor