



Parkinson's disease nurse specialist forum

*Linda Caie, Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist/Honorary Research Fellow, University of Aberdeen and Chair of the Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist Association, Woodend Hospital, Eday Road, Aberdeen AB15 6XS. Tel: 01224 556854
Email: linda.caie@nhs.net*

Tracey Ward, Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist, Suffolk Primary Care Trust, Disability Resource Centre, Papworth House, 4 Bunting Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7BX. Tel: 01284 748840 Email: tracey.ward@suffolkpct.nhs.uk



Linda Caie is the Parkinson's disease nurse specialist (PDNS) for NHS Grampian in Scotland and was appointed to this new role in July 2000. Her career as a nurse spans over 30 years and includes experience in clinical, educational and management roles. Linda's current role, which takes the nursing lead in Parkinson's at NHS Grampian, is to coordinate and provide specialist Parkinson's care by providing support, education and advice to patients, carers and fellow health professionals within the hospital and community.

Linda has a masters degree in nursing and has completed the Parkinson's specialist course at London Southbank University. She is also an honorary research fellow at the Centre for Advanced Studies in Nursing at the University of Aberdeen and is actively involved in nursing research and education. Her particular interests include nurse-led activities, multiprofessional education and developing nursing through research.

Linda is the chair of the Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist Association (PDNSA), a national group supporting and representing PDNSs and has also previously held the role of research coordinator for the association. She values opportunities to work closely with colleagues locally, nationally and internationally to develop Parkinson's nursing.

Tracey Ward has been nursing since 1982. Having developed a specialist interest in oncology and palliative care, she worked in oncology and hospice settings, before moving into community nursing where her Parkinson's career started.

Tracey has been a PDNS for 10 years, working initially for a primary care trust in Essex. Now employed by Suffolk Primary Care Trust, she has an agreed responsibility for patients within secondary care at West Suffolk Hospital to develop a seamless service between the two, linking directly into the neurology service. Cognitive issues are her main areas of interest within Parkinson's, particularly the relationship between anxiety and the motor symptoms of the condition.

Tracey has completed a BSc (Hons) degree in specialist nursing practice (adults), is a qualified independent prescriber and secretary of the PDNSA.

Presentation abstract: The role of the clinical nurse specialist is continually evolving and can be diverse – both within specialties and between them. The profession of Parkinson's disease nurse specialist (PDNS) was first developed in Cornwall in 1989 and there will be a celebration of its 20-year existence in 2009. The PDNS is a specialist practitioner whose essential skills are¹:

- Clinical leadership
- Research awareness
- Development of nursing knowledge

- Acting as a consultant
- Educator
- Change agent
- Evaluator of care.

An important and essential element is continuing professional development and support for the PDNS. In partnership with other organisations, support and education is now available, including:

- An induction programme
- Joint NHS/university programmes
- Expert practice course
- Development of educational resources.

The Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist Association of the United Kingdom² was formed in 1999. It acts as a resource and network for nurses to share knowledge, expertise and best practice about Parkinson's and its management locally, nationally and internationally. In 2005, the Parkinson's Disease Society, the PDNSA and the Royal College of Nursing worked in partnership to develop a competency document, which details the knowledge and skills required by nurses to manage the care of people living with Parkinson's in healthcare settings. This publication also offers signposts for good practice³. The development of independent and supplementary prescribing has meant that many nurses are taking a much more active role in the management of their patients' symptoms. Government initiatives in patient care have influenced this progression, which may be uncomfortable for some people because it can be seen as a move towards a more 'clinical/medical' model of care, rather than what 'nursing' is about. As a profession, PDNSs need to:

- Clearly define their role,
- Be aware of boundaries
- Be confident that what they offer to patients and their families is different from that of medical colleagues – as would be expected.

However PDNSs have very definite skills that they can bring to their individual services. These can enhance patients' management of Parkinson's and their ability to live with this long-term condition. This forum focused on:

- The development of the PDNS's role over the past two decades
- Non-medical nurse prescribing in Parkinson's
- PDNS education
- Publications/resources available to PDNSs
- The PDNSA
- Developing a competency framework for PDNSs
- Research and audit in Parkinson's nursing.

References

1. Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialist Association (PDNSA). The role of the parkinson's disease nurse specialist. PDNSA 2001. For more information, see www.pdnsa.net.
2. See www.pdnsa.net.
3. Parkinson's Disease Society, PDNSA, Royal College of Nursing. Competencies: an integrated career and competency framework for nurses in Parkinson's disease management. Parkinson's Disease Society 2005.