A positive case in the Lindsay Leg Club

Earlier this month, I had the pleasure of witnessing, for the very first time, the Lindsay Leg Club in action. Having worked alongside the charity for the past 5 years, assisting in the Club's re-branding and subsequent redesign of many of their materials, I have amassed a general understanding of what the charity offers and the services that it provides to its members. However, I had never been involved in the 'on the ground' action of the Leg Club.

Importance of social interaction

From an outsider's perspective, regardless of how long the involvement is, or how close the working relationship might be, it is often not until you are actually on location that you truly get a sense of the value of the services that are being offered. My recent visit to the Weymouth Leg Club was no exception.

With the ongoing pandemic that we have all had to endure and the fear that has been instilled in us over the past year as a result, it is not difficult to see the consequential difference in human behaviour when out and mixing with others. Whether walking down the street, around the local shop or at the local park, we now conduct ourselves in a more distant and robotic way. Our expressions often hidden by face coverings, we experience much less interaction with the people and world around us, and we could be forgiven for thinking that we have actually become less human as a result.

During my visit to the Leg Club, and while filming for the upcoming Vein Week event, I felt genuinely uplifted by the warm atmosphere and positive energy that filled the Leg Club room throughout the day. While adhering to strict Government guidelines regarding COVID-19, it was a pleasure to still be able to witness the genuine care and relaxed human interactions that were taking place between the fantastic Leg Club nurses and the Club Members. This was a place where everyone felt safe and comfortable. Nurses were busy tending to members' needs while also engaging in light-hearted conversation and laughter, something that I could tell was very much appreciated by the Club Members.

While receiving care, Club Members told me of the many reasons they visit the Leg Club, the first and foremost being the fantastic care that they are given; another was that they simply could not rely on getting an appointment through their doctor in time for the care that they needed. From the members' perspective, it is much more convenient to be able to turn up on the day the Leg Club is open and know that they will be seen and cared for no matter what time they arrive in the day.

One Club Member told me that, due to the nature of his wound, there was a chance he may have lost his leg if it was not for the help he received at the Leg Club. Another prominent reason given for visiting the Leg Club was the community aspect; Club Members enjoy the social connection and tell of the ability to meet and converse with each other as well as the nurses and volunteers while receiving care.

The role of the volunteers I witnessed was also a very important one; as soon as a member had signed in, they were met and offered a seat and some tea, coffee, biscuits and (low calorie!) cake. It is this type of service that makes members feel at home, and that was very clear to see. Further proof was seeing members laughing and engaging in conversation with volunteers while waiting to be seen by a Leg Club nurse.

Under normal life circumstances, I believe that it is the combination of professional care within a social setting that make the Leg Clubs such a great success and truly unique. The convenience of arriving without an appointment and knowing that you will be cared for also makes for an enjoyable and stress-free experience for Club Members.

Conclusion

During the pandemic and national lockdown, healthcare becomes extremely difficult to attain, so the stress levels of Members are high. Social and human interaction opportunities are heavily limited due to Government restrictions and, therefore, the value of the Leg Club to the Club Members becomes drastically increased, and they are able to leave having enjoyed a positive experience with the peace of mind that their wounds are treated and will progress toward healing. It was a pleasure to visit the Leg Club for a day, and my experience has highlighted why I have been so involved in assisting the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation. CWC

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