

The Thalidomide Trust

DIRECTORS' UPDATE

September 2022

People News

There have been no changes to the staff team since our last Update in June, but we have successfully appointed a new trustee to replace Kevin Wesbroom who steps down at the end of the year when he will have completed his maximum period of 12 years as a trustee. Shan Abdullah, a qualified actuary with a wealth of experience, took up this role on 1 September and we are looking forward to having him as a member of our Board.

Unfortunately, we have to share the sad news that three of our beneficiaries – Neil Rodgers, Alex Hamilton and Philip Cooper – have passed away in the last three months. As we have not accepted any new beneficiaries to the Trust, the total number of beneficiaries is now 438.

Finance Update

Our second virtual 'Future Money Matters' event took place in July. 33 beneficiaries attended and their feedback was really positive – with an average rating score of 9.4 out of 10 for all the sessions. Topics covered included Pensions, Inheritance Tax, Inflation, Reducing the Risk of Financial Abuse and 'How the Trust Finances Work'. If you were unable to attend the event, you can [watch recordings](#) of all the different sessions on the Trust's website.

Because of increasing concerns about online scams, we also held a webinar last month on How to Keep Yourself Safe Online. This included lots of practical tips on how to spot and deal with suspicious emails and you can [check it out on our website](#).

We also continue to produce factsheets on a range of financial topics, all of which are on our website. Recent additions include a factsheet on divorce (and specifically the implications for the funding you receive from the Trust) and one on the Grünenthal Foundation.

Health & Wellbeing Update

We continue to regularly update the health & wellbeing content on our website and to plan and deliver webinars on topics that you have told us you want to find out more about. Since our last Update in June we have had three webinars – one on bowel incontinence 'Let's get to the bottom of it!', another on 'How to get the most from the Trust website' and, very recently, one on blood pressure – 'Know your Numbers'. These can be viewed by visiting the health & wellbeing section of our website.

We have an 'Alcohol Awareness' webinar planned for 17 November – just ahead of this year's Alcohol Awareness Week which runs from 18 to 25 November with the theme of 'Change'.

All our upcoming health & wellbeing webinars are listed in our [online events calendar](#) alongside our varied, ongoing programme of MeetUp events.

We know from our conversations with you that pain is the most common health issue impacting your daily lives. Effective approaches to pain management is something that we are planning to look at in more detail over the coming months, and we would be very interested to hear from you if you have had

a good experience of a pain clinic or other pain management referral. Please contact the Trust at hello@thalidomidetrust.org and we will get in touch to find out more.

We are continuing to get out and about visiting beneficiaries and undertaking HNAs. Now more than three-quarters of UK beneficiaries have had a second HNA and we hope to have offered one to all UK beneficiaries by the end of December.

And just a gentle reminder to overseas beneficiaries to complete and return their health and wellbeing questionnaire if you haven't already. We really want to ensure we understand your health and wellbeing needs and can offer appropriate support to you.

Strategic Planning

Our five-year Strategic Plan is close to being finalised and the process has been a really important opportunity for the trustees, the NAC and the staff to work together to review all the evidence that we have gathered from HNAs and Trust research and agree the key priorities for the next five years.

Some of the things we hope to include in our forward plan are dependent on additional funding from Diageo so the plan cannot be finalised until the Diageo Chairs Review process is concluded later this year, but we will update you all as soon as it is.

And Finally...

Just a quick reminder that if you live in the UK and need to use our Freepost address, you must use the new, shorter address - **Freepost THALIDOMIDE TRUST** written all on one line with the name of the Trust in capitals as shown. Our old freepost address is no longer valid so, if you use it, your letter will be returned to you.

Handwritten signatures of Deborah, Katy, and Suzanne.