



## Annual Review 2004-2005

### Executive Summary

As Women's Health Concern (WHC) moves into its 33rd year of operation, it may be a time to reflect on the changing information needs of women. When WHC was first launched, women rarely spoke about their gynaecological problems and the menopause was rarely acknowledged, let alone treated. The late Eighties and early Nineties saw an explosion of disease-awareness campaigns. Women could regularly read about their symptoms and identify their possible condition. GP waiting rooms were full of information leaflets and women were encouraged to attend Well Women Clinics.

The Millennium saw health information on the internet explode and newspapers such as the Daily Mail, Telegraph and Times expand the number of pages they dedicated to health, due to consumer demand. The level of information available to women has led to a change in the type of information that women want when they contact WHC. Whilst the menopause remains a key focus for WHC, 50% of women contact us about their general gynaecological problems, including pelvic pain, period problems and heavy bleeding. Most women have already identified their problem and want a second opinion, or alternatively they have been to see their GP and are not happy with or want to clarify the advice they have been given. This is why it is important that WHC's helpline is staffed by qualified gynaecological and menopause nurses, who have the backing of 21 medical experts in the field.

As well as supporting women, WHC plays a pivotal role in the education of GPs through its seminars programme. This year saw us debate teenage pregnancy, caesarean section vs. natural child birth and premenstrual syndrome.

Of course, none of this work could be undertaken without our generous donors such as the Big Lottery Fund, Lloyds Charitable Foundation, the Department of Health, the Pharmaceutical Industry and various other charitable trusts, who we would like to thank for their sustained support.

## Conference and Meetings Programme

The 15th Annual Women's Health Concern Symposium took place on 29 October 2004 at the newly-refurbished conference facilities at the Royal Society of Medicine in London. The event attracted a record number of attendees – almost 200 medical professionals – who came to hear a variety of topical and educational sessions including the Gerald Swyer Memorial Lecture on Caesarean Section versus Normal Birth given by Professor Philip Steer.

The Charity also ran two successful regional meetings during the year – Worcester in February 2005 and at Derby in March - with over 190 GPs and nurses turning out to hear a variety of informative presentations on Women's Health. These events helped to bring in some additional income, with the number of meetings organised being directly relational to the resources available. The funds raised are ploughed back in to the charity's work.

Evaluation form feedback from all events shows that we are providing an invaluable educational service to many medical professionals.

## Website Revamp

The Women's Health Concern website underwent a complete revamp. As well as a fresh, new design, we introduced a regular feature called 'Focus On ...' Each feature goes in-depth on a different women's medical condition or issue, exploring the symptoms, diagnosis and treatments available. Topics have included The Menopause, Urogenital Problems and Osteoporosis.

Other new additions to the site were a set of 23 downloadable factsheets, written and edited by our medical experts, on everything from Continence to Sexual Health.

Access to the new email counselling service was made available, offering a confidential and unbiased reply service from our nurse specialists.

Web visitors could also find information on WHC's educational events for GPs, the WHC Helpline and our Nurse Counsellors.



## **Nurse Counsellors' Report 2004-2005**

The nurse counselling service continued to offer help and advice for 40 hours per week via our local call rate helpline. The quantity of calls saw a rise over the previous year with approximately 3500 calls in total. 55% of these calls came from women aged between 36 and 56 years. A percentage of these calls were referrals from other helplines and health advice services, including the NHS.

The percentage breakdown of health-related enquiries received were as follows :

- 36% Menopause and HRT
- 20% General Gynaecological
- 21% Periods
- 6% Vaginal
- 4% Sexual health
- 4% Post-operative care
- 4% Continence
- 5% Other women's health

Caller feedback was positive, with very many callers appreciative of a supportive and useful person-to-person service.

### **Email Enquiries**

Email enquiries saw a large increase over the previous year with over 720 enquiries requesting a response. There was also a significant increase in email enquiries from women aged between 25 and 35 years.

### **Professional Development for Nurse Counsellors**

In order to maintain their clinical skills and ensure that their knowledge is current, extensive and wide-ranging in women's health issues, our Nurse Counsellors attended a variety of seminars and educational programmes throughout the year. This was important as the nature of enquiries received by the Counselling service became ever more complex.

## Income & Expenditure projections - for year ending 31 March 2006

£

### Income

#### Known income

#### Restricted Funds

Grant Giving Bodies 24,090

Other 12,174

#### Unrestricted Funds

Corporate Sponsorship 14,000

London Symposium (net) 4,000

Membership 1,250

Interest 160

#### Unknown income

Fundraising 36,000

**Total Income 91,674**

### Expenditure

Funded positions 39,400

#### Counselling Helpline

-Staff & related costs 28,500

-Telephone costs 3,300

Printing costs for publications 6,000

Fundraising & publicity 7,200

Professional Fees 2,600

Administration 3,500

**Total Expenditure 90,500**

Surplus 1,174

These income & expenditure projections are unaudited and are based on the budgeted figures for the year, which have been agreed by the Trustees.

The Annual Report and Accounts are available on request.

## What Women Say about the Nurse Counselling Service

'The advice I have received from the nurse on the helpline has been so useful. It has made me feel confident enough to approach my own doctor.' Miss K

'My health issues were complicated but you gave me very good advice and pointed me to some great additional sources of information and I am going to recommend you to several friends' Mrs M

'I had been putting off getting help but now wish I had phoned your helpline months ago'. Mrs E

'Friendly, helpful and useful advice. I found your website really good too' Ms C

'I now have all the info I need – and such a quick emailed response. Thanks so much'. Ms A

'So much better talking to a real person – and you are so knowledgeable . It would have taken me ages to find the information myself. Thank you very much'. Miss H

'Great service – so nice to get a personal (and confidential) reply to my email enquiry with all the information I need to go back to my doctor for another discussion'. Mrs S

## People at WHC

**Meet Nick Panay** BSc MBBS MRCOG MFFP

Nick is a member of WHC's medical advisory panel. He has worked in Obstetrics and Gynaecology for more than 15 years.

As director of the Menopause and PMS Centre at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, he heads a busy clinical and research team which publishes widely, presents at scientific meetings and trains health professionals at all levels.

He set up one of the first "General Practitioner with a Special Interest" schemes in women's health and menopause in the UK in order to improve the delivery of women's health at a primary care level. Recently, he unified the menopause units of Queen Charlotte's Hospital and Chelsea & Westminster Hospitals in London to form the "West London Menopause & PMS Centre"

Nick is Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, Sub-specialist in Reproductive Medicine & Surgery, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital, Hammersmith

Hospitals NHS Trust and Honorary Senior Lecturer, Imperial College London. He is also Director West London Menopause & PMS Centre, Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea and Chelsea & Westminster Hospitals, London

As Vice President of The Royal Society of Medicine, Council member of The British Menopause Society, Chairman of The National Association for Premenstrual Syndrome, as well as adviser to Women's Health Concern, Nick campaigns for women's health issues both nationally and internationally.

### **Donate to WHC**

If you would like to make a donation to WHC, please send a cheque made payable to Women's Health Concern to our mailing address below or alternatively visit the [www.justgiving.co.uk](http://www.justgiving.co.uk) website. Thank you.

## **Women's Health Concern Contacts**

### **NURSE COUNSELLING SERVICE**

Telephone Helpline	0845 123 2319
E-mail	<a href="mailto:counselling@womens-health-concern.org">counselling@womens-health-concern.org</a>

Mailing Address	Whitehall House, 41 Whitehall, London SW1A 2BY
Main Office	+44 (0) 20 7451 1377
Press Enquiries	<a href="mailto:execdirector@womens-health-concern.org">execdirector@womens-health-concern.org</a>
Facsimile	+44 (0) 20 7925 1505
Website	<a href="http://www.womens-health-concern.org">www.womens-health-concern.org</a>