

Edinburgh volunteer shortlisted for award



Mrs. Nancie Swan from Edinburgh is in the running for the 'Chairman's award for volunteering' as part of the Macular Society's Awards for Excellence. The nomination recognises her hard work and dedication in her role leading the sight loss charity's Edinburgh support group.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) affects the central vision and is the most common cause of sight loss in the UK. More people are affected as our population ages.

The Macular Society has 300 support groups across the UK, all aiming to increase the confidence and independence of people affected by central vision loss.

Mrs Swan who is herself has dry macular degeneration in both eyes said she felt "greatly astonished and very honoured".

She enjoys "Meeting people from all walks of life, many of whom have other problems besides AMD who show such courage and assuring the newly diagnosed that Life is for Living and that there are aids and ways to help oneself"

"It is because of dry AMD and the idea that 'nothing can be done' that I decided to become a Volunteer Speaker. The Society gave me hope. It's wonderful to be useful still at 90 and give help and support."

Angie Nicholas Volunteer Programme Manager at the Macular Society nominated Nancie for "her tireless efforts as a volunteer".

"She is an active speaker delivering more than 14 inspiring talks across Scotland. Her passion and commitment to raising awareness of macular disease and the work of the Macular

Society is second to none. She actively campaigns for better support in eye clinics and has created great links with RNIB. Receiving the Chairman's award would be a fitting recognition to all that Nancie has done to raise awareness, improve services and most importantly, offer a listening ear to anyone who needs it. She is truly a force to be reckoned with."

Mrs Swan's nomination will now be handed over to the judges, who will decide on the overall winners and present them with their awards at the Society's annual London conference on 27 September.

The 'Chairman's award for volunteering' is one of four honours presented by the charity. There are also awards for 'Clinical service of the year', 'Support and community rehabilitation professional of the year' and 'Optometrist or optician of the year.'

Tony Rucinski, Chief Executive of the Macular Society, said: "Nancie has done exceptionally well to be nominated for this award, and we're very grateful to her for the fantastic work carried out in Edinburgh.

"It's always heartening to hear how people have made such a difference to the lives of others. There are some really inspiring people working within the sector and volunteering within the local community for people with visual impairments. I'm proud that we can honour her in this way."

The Macular Society's annual award scheme has been made possible because of the generous sponsorship of Dolphin Computer Access.

For information, advice or support concerning macular degeneration, contact the Macular Society's helpline on 0300 3030 111 or email help@macularsociety.org