

Parkinson's charity collaborate with Scottish Ambulance Service

As part of a campaign to get medication to people with Parkinson's in a timely manner, the Parkinson's UK Scotland charity has teamed up with Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS).

Ahead of World Parkinson's Day on Tuesday the charity has supplied SAS with a guide setting out advice for ambulance crews to follow when they are taking anyone with Parkinson's to hospital.

Timing is crucial for those with Parkinson's, and it is vital that they take medication within 30 minutes of the prescribed time. Even a slight delay might have serious implications. Further delays can cause long lasting harm.

The factsheet supplied to people working on ambulance teams will ensure that medication is not overlooked during a journey to hospital.

Diane Mitchell from Irvine, Ayrshire, who lives with Parkinson's, discovered first-hand the importance of an ambulance crew looking after her medication requirements, when she fell and fractured her shoulder in 2022.

When the paramedic found out that she had Parkinson's, he made sure she brought her medication so she could take it on time

while awaiting transfer into A&E.

Without his intervention, Diane would have been very unwell by the time she was admitted into hospital several hours later.

“I was lucky, the paramedic who attended the call had a family connection to Parkinson’s and, once he knew I had the condition, made sure I had my medication,” explained Diane.

“I was fortunately conscious when the ambulance came to get me and was able to tell the paramedic about the condition and my symptoms. He might not have been aware if I was unconscious and there was no carer around.

“It’s so important people with Parkinson’s get their medication on time as the difference is unbelievable, before and after, it’s like day and night.”

James Jopling, Scotland Director for Parkinson’s UK, presented the factsheet to Laura Scott-Stewart, Paramedic Clinical Team Leader with the Scottish Ambulance Service, last week in Edinburgh.

Parkinson’s is the fastest growing neurological condition in the world and affects an estimated 12,500 people in Scotland.

James said: “We work with professionals in different settings, across the country, to help people with Parkinson’s get their medication on time, every time.

“It’s been great collaborating with the Scottish Ambulance Service on this initiative, which we hope will support timely access to medication when people with Parkinson’s are being transported to hospital. This is more important than ever, with the health service under great pressure and reports of longer waiting times at A&E departments.

“We’re looking forward to working further with the Scottish Ambulance Service and other agencies to improve support and services for everyone living with Parkinson’s in Scotland.”

Pauline Howie, Chief Executive of the Scottish Ambulance Service, said: “We’re pleased to team up with Parkinsons UK to ensure all our scheduled care and emergency crews can help patients with Parkinsons to take their medications on time.

“With an estimated 12,500 people in Scotland with Parkinsons, this campaign is also a vital reminder to those with a diagnosis, and their families, that it is imperative to take medications at the right time. We’ll be sharing the guidelines across the organisation, as well as highlighting the vital work of Parkinsons UK.”



Parkinson’s UK Scotland James Jopling (Parkinson’s UK Scotland Director) and Laura Stewart (Paramedic Clinical Team Leader) pictured with new Parkinson’s UK documentation for treating patients.PHOTO Greg Macvean