

Hand*in*Hand

Real stories • Real advice

Issue 34

Mus

“Being a heating engineer, staying active at work was crucial. Surprisingly, many couldn't believe I had a stoma bag because I was open to discussing it, even showing it when asked.”

Mus's story

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- Your Choice, Your Confidence, Your Aura Plus
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- Breathing and Movements

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Dear Reader,

It gives me real pleasure to welcome you to this edition of Hand in Hand and have the opportunity to briefly introduce myself.

Back in February 2006, I embarked on a rewarding adventure with CliniMed & SecuriCare as a Nurse Advisor for Scotland. Little did I know that this path would lead me to where I am today: Head of Clinical Governance & Regulatory Affairs. It's a role that constantly challenges me, keeps me on my toes, and fuels my passion for patient safety and product excellence. My clinical experience in stoma, continence, urology, and skincare have been instrumental in shaping my approach, and I'm excited to continue navigating the ever-evolving landscape of regulations and best practices alongside a dedicated team.

Combining my clinical nursing expertise with ensuring patient and product safety has always been my passion. At CliniMed

& SecuriCare, we prioritise safety with our CQC-regulated Clinical Nursing Service, where I proudly act as Registered Manager. Working alongside our Director of Clinical & Patient Services, we oversee the delivery of the highest standards of safe and compassionate care. Since our last edition, our teams have filled this issue with valuable content designed to support everyone living with a stoma or continence challenge. We're particularly excited about our new "Breathing & Movements" programme, a helpful resource for anyone, regardless of age, ability, or condition.

Finally, thank you for reading. Your questions and feedback are always welcome. Our patient services and clinical nurse team are here to offer support and answer anything you might have on your mind, or if you would like to share your own story, or a potential topic for the next issue, please contact us at editor@securicaremedical.co.uk

Enjoy, and happy reading!

Pamela

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A week in the life of Community Clinical Support Worker,

Sarah Brown

By Sarah Brown

Monday

I start the week off with a patient support meeting. I've been working with this group for a long time, and it's been great to see the group grow in size, and people grow in confidence. After setting up the room, and providing warm drinks and biscuits for everyone, we make a start. Today we're discussing travelling with a stoma and nutrition. I check that none of the attendees need a stoma nurse review this month, and then remind everyone of the date of the next meeting.

After a quick stop for lunch, and to check the answerphone messages. I spend the afternoon catching up on mandatory training.

Tuesday

I head into the office first thing to restock my car boot and bag ready for my patient visits. My colleagues are there too so we have a catch up about the patients we're due to see this week, and any planned discharges from our local hospitals. I've got three patients today, they're quite spread out, so I'm keen to get on the road, stopping to refill my travel mug with coffee first!

My first patient is someone who's had their stoma for a while and requested an appointment to remeasure their stoma. We have a chat about how they're doing, and I take a copy of their cutting template, ready to send to Patient Services for their next order.

My second patient has only had their stoma for a few weeks, and this is their second home visit. They've previously been a keen golfer, so we spend time discussing how to get back to this, and any modifications they may need to make. Having reviewed their stoma, I reassure the patient that everything looks great and they're doing a good job.

My last patient is closer to home and is someone I've seen before. They'd had some issues with leaks and have been trying the new Aura Plus Soft Convex (having been assessed by the Community Stoma Nurse). The patient is really pleased to tell me that the new pouch is working well, and they've not had any leaks! I love this part of my job, and it's really satisfying to solve patients' issues.

I head back to my home office to write the notes from my visits and send a letter to the last patient's GP asking for their pouch prescription to be updated.

Wednesday

I head straight out on my visits this morning. One of my colleagues has asked me to drop off some seals to a patient who has been having leaks; their house is on my way, and it saves them waiting for the post to arrive!

My first patient was due to go to a family member's wedding last week – their first formal outing since having their surgery, and I'm excited to hear how it went. They are really happy to tell me that they had a great time and show me photos of them in their fancy clothes! So much of my role is helping people to get back to living with a stoma and helping to fit the stoma into their life not the other way around.

I arrive at my next patient's house as their carer is leaving. I recognise the carer from stoma care training that I delivered to their agency, so it's nice to see the training being put into practice! I remeasure the patient's stoma, updating their cutting template, and explain that they should be ready for pre-cut pouches by my next visit. I cut some of their remaining pouches to the new template.

I make it back in time for our team meeting, which is being held virtually today. Working in the community we don't see each other every day, so it's good to be able to catch up and share best practice from our caseloads.

Thursday

I've got some phone calls to make this morning. I like to follow up patients a few weeks after their last home visit to check how they're getting on and answer any new questions they might have. Patients are never discharged from our service whilst they have a stoma, so it's nice to remind them that they can still contact us even if we don't have an appointment booked in.

I've got two patient visits today; both are patients that I've met before. I measure their stomas, updating their cutting templates. I discuss diet with my first patient. It can be tricky for people to understand what foods they can eat with an ileostomy, so I make sure that she has a copy of the Diet and Nutrition leaflet, as this has some great hints and tips and is handy to be able to refer to.



Find it here!



Friday

I've got another patient group today! It's a lovely way to end the week. We're talking about exercise and hernias and the need of wearing a hernia support belt in this session, and it generates some lively discussions amongst the group. At the end of the session, I do a question and answer session, this gives the patients an opportunity to discuss anything they want to raise.

One patient asks for a stoma nurse review so I make a note of their details, I will be calling them next week to book a clinic appointment.

After a busy week I'm ready for the weekend and a lie in tomorrow!

“ You don't know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have ”

By Mustafa Dervish

Hello, I'm Mus, I am 37 years old and my journey with Crohn's Disease began in 2007 when I experienced unsettling symptoms. The persistent urgency to use the toilet, coupled with blood in my stool, weakness, abdominal cramps, weight loss, and daily vomiting prompted medical investigation. A series of tests—an endoscopy and colonoscopy—confirmed my diagnosis of Crohn's Disease.

Over the years, I underwent operations in 2010 and 2012, entering a remission phase that lasted eight years. However, complications led me to experience a blockage in December 2020, following two closely spaced operations, I found myself with an open wound on the abdomen and discharging fistulas, prompting recommendations for an ileostomy from my surgical and gastro consultants—an unexpected turn in my health journey! The decision to have a stoma bag was a significant surprise, and its necessity for allowing my bowel to rest and heal was explained. Despite concerns, the operation swiftly took place in May 2021, even amidst the backdrop of an ongoing pandemic.

The operation was successful although adapting to life with a stoma bag was initially overwhelming. Simple tasks like cleaning and changing seemed daunting, but with the invaluable support of the SecuriCare Nursing team, I quickly became proficient. Showering without the bag became a refreshing routine, ensuring cleanliness and better adhesion to my skin. I even gave my stoma a name, 'Bubbles,' due to its playful nocturnal activities—a tradition, I later learned, among many who have a stoma bag!

The guidance and care from the SecuriCare team were instrumental in managing my stoma. Through their advice, dietary adjustments, and a medication regimen including loperamide, I gained control and normalcy in my life. Incorporating small, frequent meals—jelly babies and marshmallows became my allies—I found a balance that worked well.

With time, I began to appreciate the newfound freedom the stoma bag afforded me. No longer constrained by the constant pain I had endured previously; I could relish foods that were once off-limits. Engaging in everyday activities, hitting the gym, lifting weights, and even cherishing moments with my little niece—all became possible, thanks to the decision to embrace the stoma bag.

Undoubtedly, amidst the journey, there were tough days. Enjoying a hearty meal or having an extra drink sometimes caused my bag to fill up and, on occasion, leak. Managing this outside home was a challenge, but I kept things organised, always carrying a spare bag.



Photo Credit: Sinan Tuvan

My top tip: invest in a waterproof mattress protector for unforeseen accidents. To minimise issues, I made it a habit to empty my bag before bedtime and avoided eating after 7 PM. Understanding that it becomes active around two hours after eating, I adjusted my eating schedule to ensure a good night's sleep.

Being a heating engineer, staying active at work was crucial. Surprisingly, many couldn't believe I had a stoma bag because I was open to discussing it, even showing it when asked. Life continued normally because I allowed it to. Wearing a support belt and choosing my clothing carefully, I ensured that my bag remained discreet. Regular checks helped me manage its fill level, making sure it didn't exceed half before emptying.

Both mentally and physically, I faced challenges that nearly led me into a bout of depression. However, my inherent strength pulled me through. Comparing my situation to others made me realise how much better off I was, and I remained immensely grateful for the bag.

In June 2023, I had the option for a reversal, which I took. While I still habitually check my stomach, the bag was an integral part of my life that I'll never forget. Currently stable and in remission, if ever faced with the need to reconnect with 'Bubbles,' I'm ready—more determined and resilient than before.

Sharing this deeply personal part of my life, particularly the image, was a significant decision, carefully contemplated. It represents my vulnerabilities and insecurities, encapsulating a condensed yet arduous 16-year journey—both physically and emotionally scarring. I chose to share this for my own acceptance and closure. This is me now and will define my future. My resilience propels me forward with determination for what lies ahead.

Story:

Picture this: stuck in a traffic jam at the Dartford Crossing due to an accident. My friend and I were stationary for 45 minutes, and my stoma bag was reaching its limit. The situation felt risky, as if any sudden movement might trigger an unwelcome situation.

Summoning up the courage, I sought help. I approached a police officer, explaining my predicament with an ileostomy bag and the urgency to empty it. The officer, understanding, suggested I seek assistance from the ambulance crew.

Walking past the onlookers, I marched with determination, all eyes on me, wondering where I was headed. My singular mission was to find a solution to this pressing issue. Knocking on the ambulance door, I disclosed my situation. The ambulance crew, empathetic and considerate, provided me with privacy in their vehicle to address my immediate need. Not only that, but they also even offered to dispose of the contents at the hospital—an act of kindness I'll forever be grateful for!

Their compassion and willingness to assist were a testament to the understanding and support that people may hesitate to seek out of embarrassment or reluctance. Their response made a world of difference in a moment of urgency.

Managing Urinary Incontinence:

Your Questions Answered

Urinary incontinence and bladder conditions often require using catheters or continence appliances. While adjusting to catheters or urinary sheaths takes time, many people are able to effectively manage incontinence using these devices.

Following your clinician's instructions, practicing proper self-care hygiene, and asking questions if issues arise are key to successfully living with your prescribed treatment.

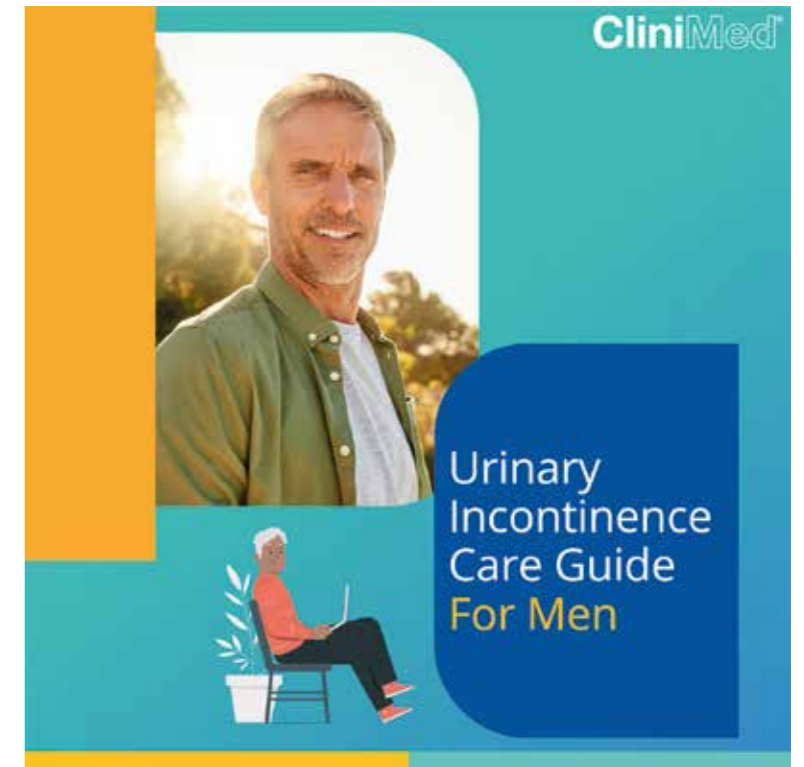
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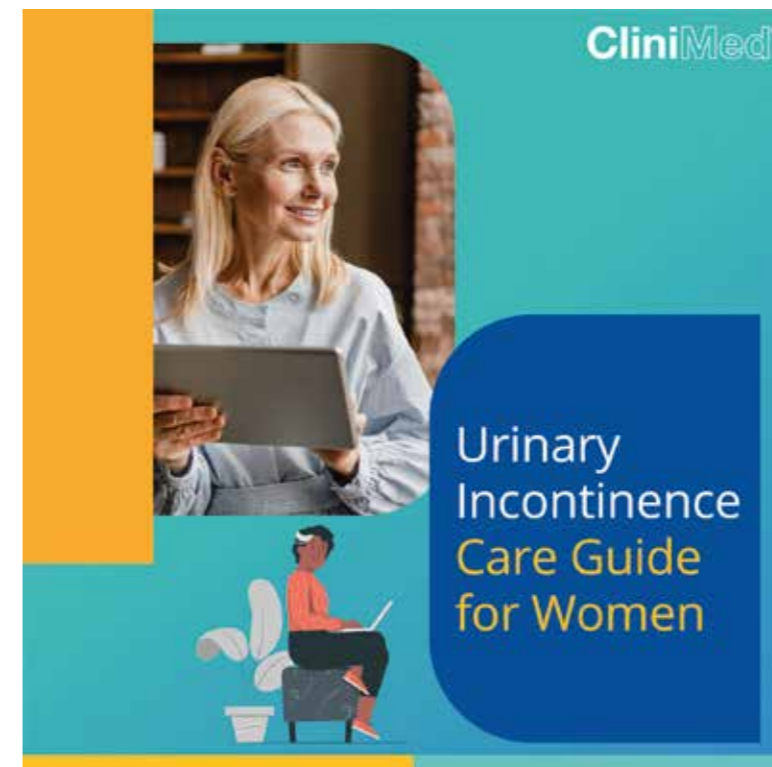


What's included in the guide?

In this guide, we look at what solutions are available and discuss how they work, including indwelling catheters, inserted into the urethra or through the abdomen to drain urine continuously into a bag, intermittent catheters (ICs) that are inserted periodically to empty the bladder when needed, and urinary sheaths which are external catheters for males.

The guide will also provide information on:

- Self-care techniques to maintain hygiene and help prevent infection.
- Advice for minimising discomfort and fitting issues.
- Tips to stay active with travel, exercise, intimacy, and bathing.
- Signs of potential complications and when to seek medical help.



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Happier, Healthier, and Sleeping Well.

When Caroline first met Louise, a stoma care nurse from SecuriCare, she felt desperate and defeated after nearly a decade of severe ostomy issues. But thanks to Louise's compassionate support, Caroline now says her life has been absolutely changed.

Caroline has endured numerous ostomy-related complications for the past nine years. She has both a colostomy and urostomy that contributed to repeated, serious infections around her stomas. For three years leading up to meeting Louise, Caroline described her life as dominated by infection. She required regular IV antibiotics and oral steroids, yet still suffered from sore skin, weeping wounds that wouldn't heal and frequent leaks, having to change her pouch multiple times a day.

Louise set out to change Caroline's quality of life. When she first reviewed Caroline's ostomy issues, she provided something Caroline never expected – hope. Louise listened intently as Caroline opened up about years of unresolved pain and embarrassment. She asked thoughtful questions and conducted a thorough inspection to identify contributing factors.

As Louise shares, "When I looked at the stoma for the first time, thinking 'Wow that's such a big area of sore, weeping skin,' Caroline mentioned it had been like that for years." Louise knew implementing solutions would require learning new habits and trying new products. But Caroline felt understood and supported enough to make vulnerable changes.

Louise educated Caroline on optimal skin care while evaluating appliances to find an optimal fit.

The addition of the Aura Plus Soft Convex stoma bags was a key factor in Caroline's improvement, recommended by Louise for its gentle support, plus-shaped design, and Manuka honey.

Within a week, Caroline's skin showed notable improvement, and the leaks, once a daily occurrence, completely vanished. She gave Caroline a list of recommendations to restore skin integrity, manage leaks, and boost comfort. She also highlighted SecuriCare's extensive clinical support and nursing service and delivery options to facilitate independence.

With her son's wedding approaching, Caroline faced the fear of potential mishaps in public places. She was frightened and thought about not attending. Thankfully, she did, and to her joy, the event went off without a hitch.

"Since seeing Louise, I've had no antibiotics, no steroids, and the difference is amazing, I don't think I've ever seen it like that."

Working with Louise made her feel comfortable and gave her "the arena to spill the whole lot out" to get to the root of why she had suffered for so long. Thanks to Louise's dedication, within a remarkably short time, Caroline saw absolutely amazing improvements.

"Because of the difference it's made to me, I would implore people out there to contact SecuriCare, the help is absolutely out there, and it's absolutely changed my life. Please take the care that's there, it's ongoing, you get everything you need, and you can contact them at any time, it doesn't matter how big or small you think the problem is. I just want to say thank you, SecuriCare."

Caroline's life has been revolutionised, she goes out a lot more and she feels like a different person as she's gained her confidence back that she lost,

"I've gone from somebody who was housebound, to almost a social butterfly"

Louise has come across a lot of patients in her nursing career that have not reached out for a stoma review because they feel the support is not out there or they're not aware of the support that's available to them. She would urge anybody to reach out to their local Stoma Care Nurse. Alternatively, SecuriCare have Stoma Care Nurses in the community who may be able to support you with any problems that you might be having such as leakages and sore skin. 'You don't need to put up with them and I would always recommend anybody keep up with a regular stoma review'

SecuriCare have one of the largest teams of independent Specialist Stoma Care Nurses in the UK. We can arrange a review with you over the telephone, online, in person at a clinic, or in your home. If you would like to find out more about the SecuriCare nursing service or the home delivery service, please visit our website for more information.

www.securicaremedical.co.uk





Personalised Care, Profound Impact:

A tribute to Louise Harrison

By Wendy Salter

How fortunate am I to have crossed paths with Louise Harrison, a compassionate and knowledgeable community stoma nurse specialist from SecuriCare.

My journey began in 2007 when I was rushed to the local hospital due to a severe case of peritonitis, requiring a Hartmann's procedure resulting in the formation of colostomy. Years of enduring the effects of worsening diverticular disease culminated in this critical operation.

Post-surgery, I found myself grappling with an overwhelming loss of confidence as I adjusted to life with a colostomy bag. I constantly worried about how visible my situation might be to others and lived in fear of potential leaks, resulting in a tendency to withdraw and isolate myself at home. Even with some improvements over the subsequent 15 years, I remained haunted by these anxieties.

Despite the option of a reversal operation, I am immensely grateful for not pursuing it and choosing to remain as I am.

In the latter part of 2022, a call changed the trajectory of my experience. Louise, the community stoma nurse from SecuriCare, reached out to offer support. Although I was receiving regular supplies from another

company and initially hesitant to change, I welcomed Louise for a visit and conversation. That day marks a pivotal turning point in my life. I promptly registered with SecuriCare and arranged another visit from Louise. Her one-on-one professional guidance has been a revelation, unlike any support I've received before. With a long-standing hernia, Louise ensured I had a perfectly fitting hernia belt. Addressing my skin problems, she meticulously selected colostomy bags tailored to suit my skin, provided precisely cut sizes, and offered balms and sprays for a more comfortable bag removal process.

Our discussions, whether over the phone or in person, delved into the mental challenges I faced, particularly regarding my lack of self-confidence. Louise's guidance transformed my perspective, illuminating a new way of living, unburdened by the weight of insecurity.

Thank you, Louise, for your unwavering support. I only wish our paths had crossed sooner. You are truly a star!



The Importance of Talking Openly with Children about Health Conditions

As a mother living with interstitial cystitis and Fowler's syndrome, I understand first-hand the difficulties of explaining health issues to a child. My close relationship with my son Oscar allows us to discuss these matters honestly.

As a single parent, it's just Oscar and me at home so I occasionally rely on him for support with my conditions. When I was diagnosed seven years ago, I knew I had to inform Oscar, then aged seven, in a way that was open yet not frightening.

It can be a delicate balance, ensuring children have appropriate awareness without causing undue distress. However, as parents we understand our children best, so it is our judgment call how transparent to be. Personally, I believe complete openness paved the way for Oscar's thoughtful assistance.

By answering all Oscar's questions no matter how trivial and addressing any of his worries, he better comprehends my conditions, realising when I need help. As Oscar provides daily assistance like catheter care, understanding my health helps him determine if emergency intervention is ever needed. He knows what each individual catheter supply is and what it's for, which he finds

fascinating, and I'm so proud of him for taking everything in his stride.

Even if you have another adult in the home that helps you, I always encourage people to talk to their children about their health openly. A simple conversation or answering a few questions can really put a child's mind at ease. Detailing my symptoms and treatments enables Oscar to fully grasp my capabilities and limitations on difficult days, meaning that we can still enjoy family time, in the way of movie nights or doing puzzles in bed.

If I were to offer any advice about how to go about speaking to children about your health, it would be to remember that they are more resilient than you think. Communication is the key to any strong relationship and that includes our little ones! I have so much appreciation for Oscar and how he's willing to learn as much as he can.

If you're unsure how to start the conversation, I would suggest asking your child if they have any questions. This way you're able to gauge what they already know and how much more you would like them to know.

Parenting necessitates constant tweaking, but transparency lays the groundwork for supportive family relationships. Oscar courageously handles my health conditions, making me extremely proud. Open communication, without pressure or judgment, empowers children to become compassionate advocates.

By Tayla Collison-Childs



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Breathing and Movements:

Reducing the Risk of Parastomal Hernias

CliniMed and SecuriCare's Breathing and Movements programme is designed to help individuals of all ages and abilities reduce the risk of developing a parastomal hernia, and to assist those already managing a hernia to improve comfort and reduce the risk of any further complications.

The programme has been developed by Andy, a Pilates instructor who underwent stoma surgery in 2020, in collaboration with a team of stoma care nurses. It's designed to help individuals establish a strong foundation for safe movement in their daily lives and during exercise. It focuses on developing the muscles throughout the body and teaches how to engage them effectively, ultimately reducing the risk of developing a parastomal hernia.

Why Parastomal Hernia Prevention Matters

Parastomal hernias are a common complication associated with stoma surgery, making prevention essential. Breathing and movements are fundamental aspects of this preventative strategy.

By learning how to move safely and reduce pressure on the abdominal area, you can reduce the risk of parastomal hernia development whilst also promoting general health and wellbeing. The Breathing and Movements programme provides comprehensive, step-by-step instructions and guidance to help you build confidence in these essential areas. However, if you have any questions or concerns about parastomal hernias, it's always advisable to seek advice from a stoma care nurse or healthcare professional.



Download the **FREE Breathing and Movements eBook** at www.clinimed.co.uk/breathing-and-movements-guide

Video demonstrations of the Breathing and Movements programme are also available at the same location.

The Breathing and Movements programme is structured around four key areas:

1. Breathing

Proper breathing techniques can help to reduce the risk of parastomal hernia development. This programme will help you understand how to breathe effectively, breathing in a way which ensures you don't put unnecessary pressure on the abdominal muscles.

2. Core Connection

Your core muscles are your body's support system and using them to support movement can help to reduce the risk of developing a parastomal hernia. The Breathing and Movements programme will guide you in identifying and engaging these crucial muscles, providing added protection to the area around your stoma.

3. Stability

Achieving stability and aligning the body is a key element in reducing the risk of parastomal hernias, particularly during activities that involve lifting or any strenuous efforts. This program will teach you how to keep your body stable, reducing the likelihood of injury and hernia development.

4. Strength

Building muscular strength is not only essential for overall fitness but also plays a vital role in preventing parastomal hernias. By following the Breathing and Movements programme, you'll develop strength in the right areas, further reducing the risk of hernia development by supporting the important muscles around your stoma.



Bon Voyage!



An ostomate's advice for people travelling with a stoma.

By Sue Jones

Before you Fly:

- ✓ Contact your GP practice and get a copy of your prescription. It can be helpful to have these details to hand. It is important to comply with current liquid restrictions; make sure all of your aerosols and bottles are in transparent plastic bags.
- ✓ Contact your supplier and order all of your supplies, allowing plenty of time.
- As an example, I would make sure you have enough bags for every day that you are away, then double that number e.g. if you are going away for 7 days, take 7 bags plus 7 additional bags (in case of leaks or a tummy upset which can always be a possibility when travelling), bringing you to 14 bags in total. I find it easier to use zip lock bags rather than the original boxes.
- I would also bring your usual stoma routine equipment which might include flange extenders, adhesive remover, barrier wipes, dry wipes, cleansing wipes, disposable waste bags, odour eliminating sprays or drops and spare outfits & underwear just to be prepared and reduce any anxiety you might be feeling. Additionally, disposable bed protectors are useful to lay all your changing items on if there is no surface to use!

On the 29th of June 2019, I was rushed into hospital, straight into an operating theatre and underwent emergency surgery to remove my sigmoid colon. Unfortunately, things did not go to plan; the surgeons realised that they could not perform the planned surgery as everything was distended. Infection was present, the ureters from my kidneys and my small intestine were stuck to my large colon so a loop colostomy was performed, and a stoma that I named "Vesuvius" was formed. It was meant to be temporary, but post-op scans revealed that my entire colon was affected by diverticular pouches, so a successful reversal was not going to be possible.

I made my husband promise that if I survived the surgery we would return to South Africa for a holiday, having lived there for four years. Six months post-surgery we boarded the plane bound for Cape Town!

Reading several posts from fellow ostomates on social media sites asking "how to travel stress free overseas with a stoma" prompted me to write this article to help reassure ostomates.

- It is easier on board the plane to have a small bag with essential changing items in to take into the toilet with you as toilets on planes can be very cramped. You can put this under the seat in front of you to avoid having to get all your changing items out of the overhead locker.
- ✓ Ask your supplier if they have a travel information pack.
- Check to see if the travel pack has a travel certificate. SecuriCare have produced one which explains that you have a stoma and need to wear a stoma pouch (bag) and that you need to carry essential prescribed medical products on board. The travel certificate is translated into different languages which really helps.
- ✓ Contact customer services of the airline you are travelling with (well in advance) and ask if you may carry an extra bag on board containing essential medical supplies free of charge. Also, ask if you may have an aisle seat near the toilet so that you don't disturb other passengers. Some airlines will give you a seat free of charge.

At the Airport:

- ✓ Empty your pouch prior to going through security. You may be less likely to be searched if your bag is empty.
- ✓ If you have an ileostomy, you may wish to take your prescribed dose of Loperamide before you board as this will thicken and reduce your output, so you will not have to empty your bag on board quite as much and this can also help to prevent your bag from inflating. If this should happen just pop to the toilet and let the air out and reseal your bag
- ✓ When you go through the x-ray scanner, hand your travel certificate to the member of staff prior to going through.
- ✓ If you are chosen to be searched, you can request that this happens in a private room with a medically trained member of staff present.
- ✓ Carry a copy of your prescription(s) as it can be a handy reference if you need it.

Happy Travels!

Bringing Joy and Support to Patients in the Holiday Season

SecuriCare held a festive patient support group at our Loudwater site on December 4th, 2023, spearheaded by Community Clinical Support Worker, Sarah Brown. The event brought together patients, clinical staff, and company leadership for a day of education, connection, and holiday cheer.

Managing Director, Ben Miles, kicked off the event with an insightful speech on SecuriCare's commitment to patient support and care. Patient Services Manager, Sarah Welch, and Patient & Clinical Services Director Caroline Rudoni also gave talks highlighting their roles and addressing attendee questions.

"We wanted to provide our patients an inside look at SecuriCare while also creating a fun and communal atmosphere. Judging by the smiles and laughter throughout the day, I'd say we achieved our goal." – Sarah Brown.



Representatives from Welland Medical also attended to educate patients on different stoma pouch products and gather feedback to inform future designs and alterations.

Patients received a tour of one of the SecuriCare warehouses. As music jingled overhead, they witnessed first-hand the tireless efforts that go into processing and shipping thousands of ostomy, urology and wound care supply orders daily.



Patients were invited to try the stoma pouch cutting machine used for custom fittings. Under staff supervision, several patients placed pouches into the cutter, pressed a button, and watched as the pouches were precisely trimmed in seconds based on their unique needs. Whilst on the tour, the group discussed order accuracy, product tracking and even new innovations coming down the pipeline.

Attendees also enjoyed a catered holiday themed lunch, Christmas quiz, and cracker pulling to boost the festivities. One clever team even dubbed themselves "Stomas R Us" during the quiz. Goody bags were provided at the end of the day, filled with practical items like charging cables and hand sanitisers, as well as other things like mugs and notebooks.

While education and insight into the company were key parts of the event, community and connection took centre stage. Patients connected with staff members about not just ostomy-related issues but their wider lives and experiences. They also bonded with fellow ostomates over shared challenges and victories.



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Mr D



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Tel: 01628 850100 Fax: 01628 527312
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- Contains a healthcare grade silicone
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 or visit: clinimed.info/clinishield-hih

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 ADVANCE

SPRAY
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YOUR CONFIDENCE,
 YOUR
Aura[®] Plus

Tired of feeling like your stoma pouch is holding you back? Leaks, discomfort and frequent changing and adjusting can be frustrating. If this sounds familiar, find your perfect fit with Aura Plus and order a sample box today.

Aura Plus is the stoma pouch range designed to embrace your individuality. No two stomas are the same, everybody has a different body shape, and everybody has different preferences on how they'd like to manage their stoma pouch routine. Aura Plus caters to your unique needs with two flexible flanges and pouches available in a range of sizes and colours.



Aura Plus – providing comfortable, flexible, and reliable adhesion with a flat, plus-shaped flange

For those with stomas that rise above the surface of the skin without any challenging creases or skin folds. Aura Plus is designed to stick gently to your skin and to remain conformable throughout wear time, providing a comfortable pouch wearing experience and giving you the confidence to take on anything.

Aura Plus Soft Convex – providing gentle support and protecting from leaks

For those with flush, recessed or retracted stomas or with creases, folds or uneven skin around their stoma. Aura Plus Soft Convex helps to bring the stoma out into the pouch and to conform around any uneven areas around the stoma, meaning you can tackle any event without worrying about leaks.



A wide range of sizes and colours to suit your preferences and lifestyle

Aura Plus comes in three sizes, Mini, Midi, and Maxi, providing a choice of pouches with different profiles and capacities. No matter your size needs, Aura Plus has the perfect pouch to fit your requirements.



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MIDI

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MAXI

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“It felt light in weight and fitted more comfortably and felt more secure”

Mr S, North West



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Mrs M, North East

“I felt more confident wearing it”

Mr S, North East

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Paediatric Stoma Group Day Out

By Michelle Hill

Following conversations with parents of the children I care for with stomas, my colleague Felicity Nutting and I decided to organise a support group where these children and parents could connect with one another and provide mutual support.

We formed the group in 2018, meeting three to four times per year, often in a hired hall. Our sessions featured activities like football coaching sessions, interactions with reptiles, and celebratory parties around themes like Halloween and Christmas.

When COVID struck in 2020, we unfortunately had to postpone meetings. But in late 2023, we were eager to restart engagement for these families. Our first event back consisted of bowling, which was well-attended with six to eight lively children per lane. It proved entertaining but quite busy to monitor! Still, the joy and involvement the young ones displayed heartened us tremendously.

With our usual hired hall fully booked around Christmas, I contacted management for the Leicester Riders basketball organisation to arrange a special outing. We brought the children and parents to a match between the hometown Leicester Riders and the visiting Caledonia Gladiators. Arriving at Morningside Arena, we relished front row seats for all to get a great view of the action up close.

During the game, there was lots of shouting, foot-stomping, and cheering as our Riders fought hard to eventually claim victory. Some of the children brought basketballs that were signed by smiling players, which the children really appreciated. Feedback after this trip has been overwhelmingly positive, with many families calling it the most amazing and enjoyable time yet.

I'm now in the process of scheduling another basketball outing night as an encore to this resounding success. My thanks go to all the terrific children, dedicated parents, and accommodating Leicester Riders representatives for such an incredible group memory.

Katie her son Jay

My son Jay and I have been attending stoma events for quite a few years. There have been so many different exciting events including bowling, Christmas parties, animal/reptile parties and the most recent being the Leicester

Riders basketball game which we enjoyed so much we have been back twice since!

It is so nice for Jay to be around a whole group of people that have stomas as he doesn't come across that in everyday life and he can feel quite different at times! Michelle and the team are so lovely and welcoming, and we can't thank them enough for the wonderful events that they put on for the children!

Muntazir and his son Muhammad

We both really enjoyed it; Muhammad wants to play wheelchair basketball when he's older. The players were friendly and humble and arena staff were very helpful and friendly- they put us at the front which made it very convenient for us to get to the disabled toilets to do Muhammad's care.

Muhammad said he was excited and happy to go and watch the game and he thought it was interesting and so much fun! He had a clear view from where he was seated and got a chance to meet the players. He had a lot of questions during the game and was asking me as it was his first time watching a basketball game. He was so excited about getting pictures and signatures from the players and couldn't stop telling us how happy he was that evening.

Joanne and her son Cash

My son said "It was cool, I enjoyed it and Leicester won! It was fun to go somewhere different with other kids"

It's amazing that time is taken to arrange outings, particularly this one where Cash got to experience his first live basketball game. We both had a great time. It's reassuring and important to me that Cash realises he is not alone and there are other children out there just like him. Thank you for arranging such a fun and entertaining activity, you are all amazing and provide so much support in many different ways.

Gemma and her daughter Maddison

Michelle recently organised for us to attend a basketball game. We've never been before, and we were so grateful to have the opportunity to attend. My two children and I attended, and we all had the best time! We really loved watching Leicester Riders play, they won, and it was a great game. The atmosphere was great, and my two young girls loved making lots of noise, shouting "defence!" and watching the talented players win an awesome match! We were on the edge of our seats. Leicester Riders have gained a few new supporters as we'd love to go and see another one of their games.

Thank you so much Michelle, we're incredibly grateful. We love meeting up with all the other families and doing so whilst having fun is amazing! My daughter is 5, and these sessions organised by Michelle are the only time she gets to meet other people with stomas. She loves this aspect and really enjoys talking about "Stomy" and making "bag buddies". The entire family adores Michelle, and my daughter truly loves home visits and spending time with her. This is a testament to how wonderful a nurse Michelle is, she's a "friend" first with the added bonus of being a stoma expert. Thank you so much Michelle!

John Doe (pseudonym)

I really enjoyed going to Morningside arena, I had an extraordinary time (as did my family) and I appreciate Michelle for organising this amazing event. I always look forward to future events like this. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to buy a basketball and get the signatures of the amazing players who inspire me to work hard. Another big thank you for Michelle and her team.

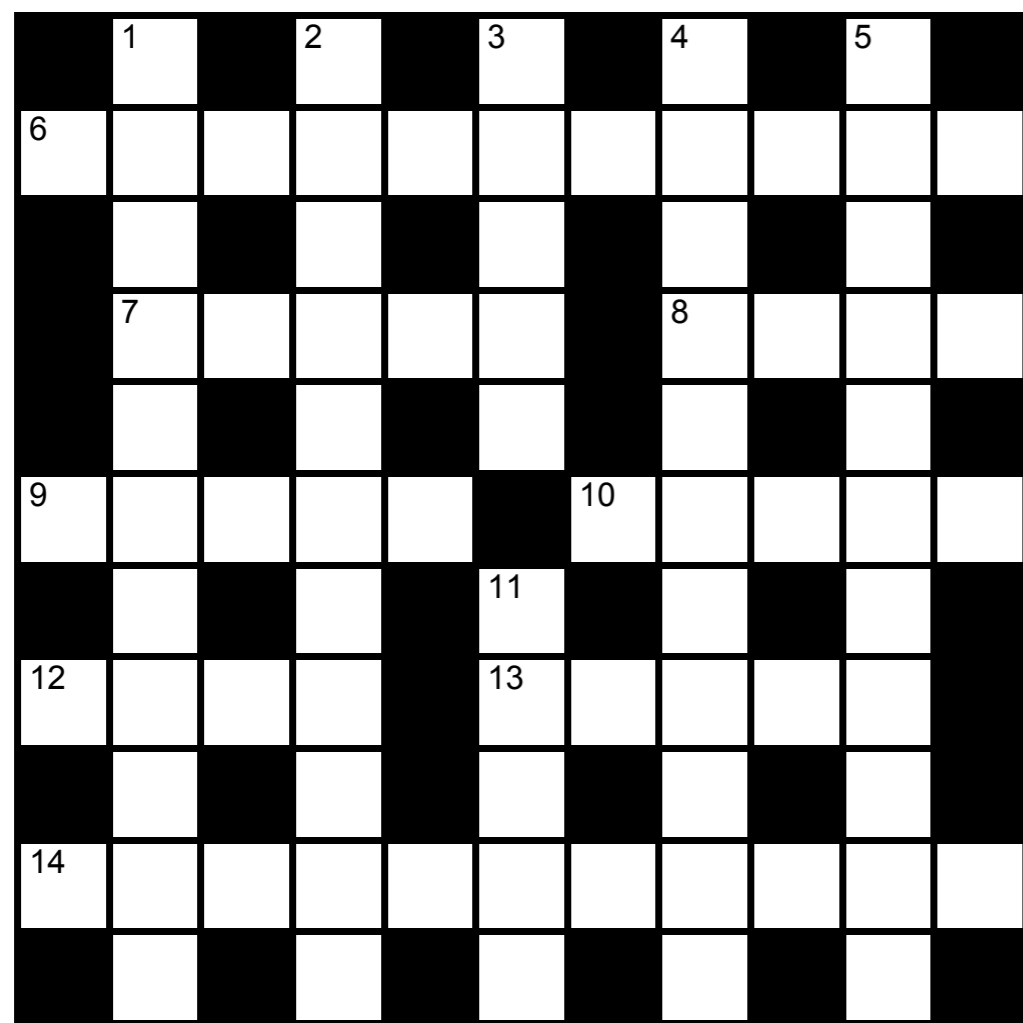
Sayed

The experience of watching the Leicester Riders play at the arena was amazing. The feeling and the atmosphere of the basketball match from the introduction of the players to the actual gameplay. Very grateful to have experienced that.



Puzzles

CROSSWORD



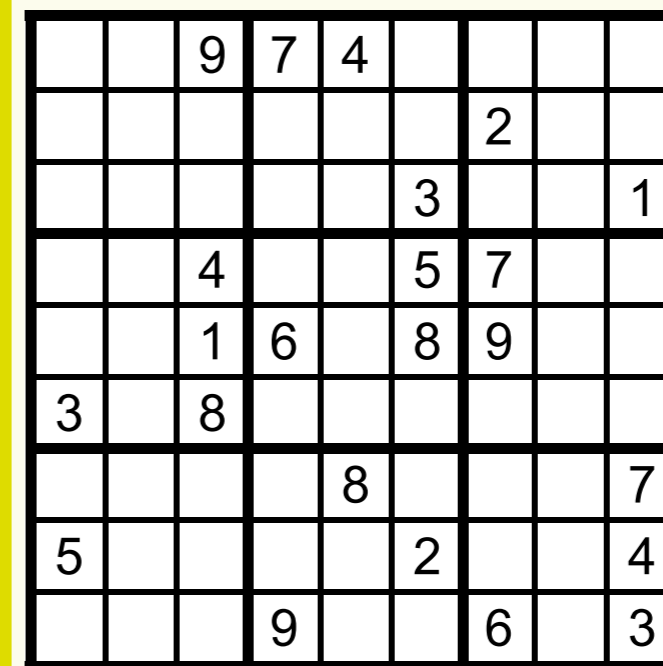
Across

- 6 One above the basement? (6,5)
- 7 Sum (5)
- 8 Small, thick carpets (4)
- 9 Foe (5)
- 10 Musical set in Argentina (5)
- 12 Monarch (4)
- 13 Like simple switches (2-3)
- 14 Facing a more numerous enemy (11)

Down

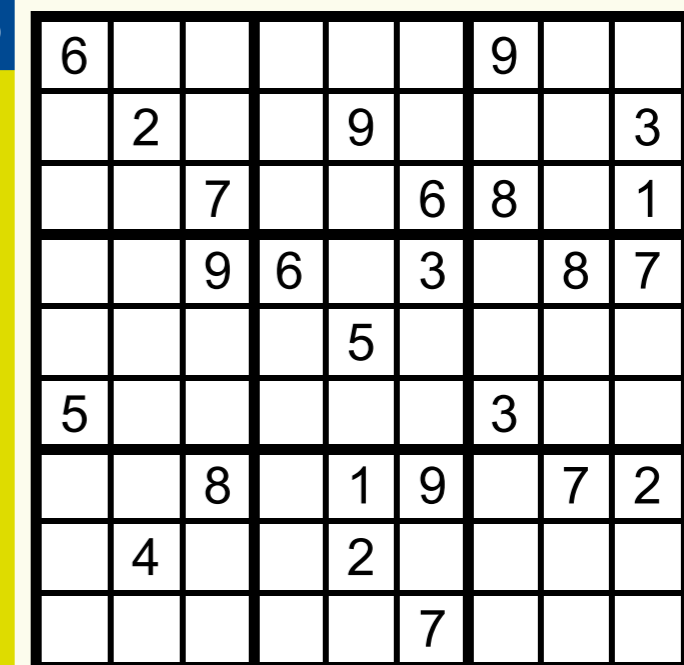
- 1 Kitschy (11)
- 2 Dreamer's words (4,7)
- 3 Charming romantic episode (5)
- 4 Beyond the visible spectrum (11)
- 5 Much in demand (6-5)
- 11 Common bait (5)

SUDOKU



EASY

HARD



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Answers

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Across

- 6 One above the basement?
- 7 Sum
- 8 Small, thick carpets
- 9 Foe
- 10 Musical set in Argentina
- 12 Monarch
- 13 Like simple switches
- 14 Facing a more numerous enemy

Down

- 1 Kitschy
- 2 Dreamer's words
- 3 Charming romantic episode
- 4 Beyond the visible spectrum
- 5 Much in demand
- 11 Common bait

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SUDOKU

EASY

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9	3	6	5	8	4	1	2	7
5	1	7	3	6	2	8	9	4
4	8	2	9	1	7	6	5	3

HARD

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3	6	8	5	1	9	4	7	2
7	4	1	3	2	8	6	9	5
9	5	2	4	6	7	1	3	8

Stoma support groups near you

Ayrshire & Arran Stoma Support Group

First Saturday of every other month (October, December, February...) 2pm – 4pm.
Ferguson Day Unit, Biggart Hospital, Biggart Road, Prestwick KA9 2HQ.
For further information contact Jim on 01292 220945 or 07729 771350 or email jimkraz@virginmedia.com
Or contact Hugh Strathearn T: 07837 464 376.

Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland

Meets every 3rd Thursday of each month at 10-12am in The William Elder Building, 56-58 Castlegate, Berwick, TD15 1JT. All welcome from both sides of the border as are partners. For further information please contact Bobbie 07714479320

Bishop Auckland Stoma Care Group

Every other Thursday at 1pm. St Mary's Church, Vart Road, Woodhouse Close Estate, Bishop Auckland DL14 6PQ.
For further information contact Mrs Maureen Davison T: 01388 818267
E: rdavison816@gmail.com

Carlisle

Every 2 months (October, December, February...) 11am – 12.30pm.
Harraby Community Centre, Edgehill Road, Carlisle CA1 3SN
Please contact stoma nurses 01228 814179 for dates

Cumbrian Bellies

Search 'Cumbrian Bellies' on Facebook and Instagram!
For information about the next meet-up please email Nicola on rowson.nicola@yahoo.co.uk

Darlington Stoma Support Group

3rd Wednesday of the month between 6pm – 7.30pm.
Harrowgate Club and Institute, Salters Lane North, Darlington DL1 3DT.
For further information contact Sister Jacqui Atkinson on 01325 743005

Dartford Ostomy Support Group (DOGS)

3rd Wednesday of the month. St Anselms Parish Centre, West Hill, Dartford DA1 2HJ.
For further information please contact Susan Norris on 07779 155 846
E: dogs-uk@hotmail.com

Durham and Wearside Crohn's & Colitis Support Group

For further information please email dw@networks.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk
www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/DW

Durham Stoma Support Group

First Monday of every month between 4pm – 6pm.
Old Trust Headquarters, University Hospital of North Durham, North Road, Durham DH1 5TW.
For further information contact Sister Katie Sewell on 0191 3332184

High Wycombe Stoma Support Group

Wrights Meadow Centre
Wrights Meadow Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1SQ.
For further information call 0800 318965

Horden Stoma Support Group

First Monday of every month between 10am – 12pm.
Horden Youth & Community Centre, Eden Street, Horden Peterlee, Co. Durham SR8 4LH.
For further information contact Claire on 0191 5863520

Inside Out Stoma Support Group

Zoom 'Coffee Morning' meetings every two weeks
St. Mark's Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow HA1 3UJ.
For further information please email Barry Caplan on abmc23@virginmedia.com or call 07811 084 514
E: info@iossg.org.uk

Leicestershire Kirby Ostomy Support Group

Once a month on a Saturday from 10.30am – 12.30pm
For further information please contact Janet on 01162392844 or 07464957982 Email: kosg2013@btinternet.com

Mercia Inside Out Support Group, South Derbyshire/ East Staffordshire

Bimonthly afternoon meetings from 1.30- 3.30
Stanton Village Hall, Burton upon Trent, DE15 9TJ
For more information contact Sally Chester on 07500441442, or Gary on 0779218245 alternatively you can email merciasgroup@gmail.com

Nuneaton Stoma Support Group

3rd Wednesday, every other month, (September, November, January...) 7pm – 9pm.
Manor Court Baptist Church, Manor Court Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5HU.
For further information contact Bob Burrell on 07564 680803 or email nuneatonstoma@aol.com

Penrith

Every 3 months (April, July, October...) 11am – 12pm.
Temple Sowerby Medical Practice, Linden Park, Temple Sowerby, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 1RW.
For further information, contact one of the Stoma Care Nurses: Jill Coulthard, Gillian Harker, Emma Ludi, Nikki Armstrong, Ruth Hetherington on 01228 814179

Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month 2pm – 4pm.
Stanground Community Centre, Whittlesey Road, Peterborough PE2 8QS.
For information contact Pat on 01733 247135/07721189813, Maria on 01778 702237 or Allan on 01354 653290/07836 661102

The Shropshire B.O.Ts (Bums on Tums)

2nd Thursday of each month, at 2pm.
Hope Church Room 1, Market Gate, Oswestry SY11 2NR
For further information call: Irene Constable - 01691 238357 or Carole O'Ryan - 01691 671624
Alternatively email: ireneconstable@phonecoop.coop

S.O.S Solent Ostomates Support

Last Wednesday of the month (Excluding August and December.) 2pm – 4pm.
Kings Community Church, Upper Northam Road, Hedge End, Southampton SO3 4BB.
For further information call 07527 707069 or email solentostomates@hotmail.co.uk

Stevenage Ostomistics

Last Saturday morning of each month 10.30am – 1pm.
Oval Community Centre, Vardon Road, Stevenage SG1 5RD.
For information contact Judy Colston on 01438 354018 or 07957754237 or email neilcolston@btinternet.com (each session is ended with chair yoga!)

Wing Stoma Support Group

Every 2 months, 11am – 12.30pm.
Wing Hall, 71 Leighton Road, Wing, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 0NN.
For information call 0800 036011

Workington

Every 2 months (October, December, February...) 2pm – 4pm.
Workington Infirmary, Park Lane, Workington CA14 2RW.

You are not alone, Chesham Support Group

Last Monday of the month, 10.30am – 12.30pm.
The Kings Church Chesham Offices, Unit 11 Chess Business Park, Moor Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 1SD.
For further details please contact Carla Wright 07846 354918
carla_wright@sky.com

Calling all support groups!

Ostomates and continence patients often call our Careline asking for advice and support. So, whether you're a stoma or continence support group, we'd love to share your details.

If you'd like to share the details of a group to include in future editions of Hand in Hand please email info@securicaremedical.co.uk.

Help is a phone call away

Whether you are placing your next order with SecuriCare, in need of a friendly chat or advice about your stoma or continence care, help is closer than you think.



Useful phone numbers

SecuriCare Careline

0800 585 125

Colostomy UK

0800 328 4257

Urostomy Association

01889 563 191

Ileostomy & Internal Pouch Association

0800 018 4724

Bladder & Bowel Foundation

01926 357 220

Bladder and Bowel UK (PromoCon)

0161 607 8219

SecuriCare Orderline

0800 318 965

Junior Ostomy Support Helpline

0800 328 4257

Multiple Sclerosis Society

0808 800 8000

Spinal Injuries Association

0800 980 0501

Back Up

020 8875 1805

Mental wellbeing support

Mind

0300 123 3393

Samaritans

116 123

CALM

0800 58 58 58

Childline

0800 1111

Young Minds

0808 802 5544

The Silver Line

0800 4 70 80 90

Age UK

0800 678 1602

Cruse Bereavement Care

0808 808 1677

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