**ENDOCRINOLOGY**

at the Royal Sussex County Hospital

### Support Groups

There are a number of groups which provide support across a wide range of endocrine conditions. These support groups are available to both patients and their families. They offer an opportunity to find out more information and to meet with others to share stories and support.

A number of endocrine support groups are listed here.

#### British Thyroid Foundation
- **Description**: A charity dedicated to supporting people with thyroid disorders and helping their families and people around them understand thyroid conditions.
- **Website**: [btf-thyroid.org](http://btf-thyroid.org)

#### Addison’s Disease Self Help Group
- **Description**: The support group in the UK and Ireland for people with Addison’s disease and adrenal insufficiency and their families.
- **Website**: [addisons.org.uk](http://addisons.org.uk)

#### The Pituitary Foundation
- **Description**: A national organisation for pituitary patients and is the UK’s leading charity providing support to people affected by disorders of the pituitary gland.
- **Website**: [pituitary.org.uk](http://pituitary.org.uk)

#### Verity
- **Description**: A group for women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) run by volunteers supporting thousands of women. It provides support to patients and their families & friends.
- **Website**: [verity-pcos.org.uk](http://verity-pcos.org.uk)

#### The Daisy Network
- **Description**: A large support group and charity for women with Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI). Membership allows access to information, support and the latest research findings on various aspects of POI.
- **Website**: [daisynetwork.org.uk](http://daisynetwork.org.uk)

#### National Osteoporosis Society
- **Description**: Provides information and advice on osteoporosis and bone health. The National Osteoporosis Society run support groups nationwide for sufferers and loved ones to share their stories and support.
- **Website**: [nos.org.uk](http://nos.org.uk)

#### Klinefelter Syndrome Association
- **Description**: Provides information written by medical professionals to those affected by the condition. Meet others affected by Klinefelters and gain access to local social support groups.
- **Website**: [kss-uk.net](http://kss-uk.net)

#### Turner Syndrome Support Society
- **Description**: Offers support, advice and information to people with Turner Syndrome and their families. Join a network for social contact with others affected by Turner Syndrome.
- **Website**: [tss.org.uk](http://tss.org.uk)

#### You and Your Hormones!
- **Description**: A terrific resource that provides accurate information on hormones and hormone-related conditions. It provides an extensive list of patient support groups of many different endocrine conditions. See [yourhormones.info](http://yourhormones.info)

### What is the Endocrine System?

The endocrine system is made up of a group of glands (called endocrine glands) which produce hormones. Hormones are chemical messengers which travel in the blood to affect other parts of the body.

#### PITUITARY GLAND
- **Description**: This is a small gland that sits near the base of the brain. It is often called the ‘Master Gland’ of the endocrine system because it controls many of the functions of the other glands.
- **Function**: Produces a wide variety of hormones.

#### THYROID GLAND
- **Description**: This is a gland in the neck which produces thyroid hormones, which are important for metabolism.
- **Function**: The thyroid can be overactive (hyperthyroidism) or underactive (hypothyroidism).

#### ADRENAL GLANDS
- **Description**: The adrenal glands lie above the kidneys. They are important for making hormones like cortisol, aldosterone and adrenaline.
- **Function**: Addison’s disease is caused by an underactivity of this gland. Overactivity can result in a number of conditions, such as Cushing’s syndrome (high cortisol levels), phaeochromocytoma (high adrenaline levels) and Conn’s syndrome (high aldosterone levels).

#### Who will I see during my appointment?

Our endocrine clinics are run by a number of endocrinologists, including Dr Anna Crown, Dr Ali Chakera, Dr Andrew Smith, Dr Satish Parthasarathy and Dr Fahad Ahmed.

Clinics are also run by our Endocrine Nurse Specialists Fran Kay and Samantha Voss.