

BLF Bulletin

The latest news from the British Lung Foundation autumn 2019



BLF and Asthma UK plan to join forces - and a message from Penny

As a volunteer for your Breathe Easy group and one of our most valued supporters, we wanted you to be one of the first to know that we're proposing a merger between Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation to form the Asthma UK and British Lung Foundation Partnership.



We believe that by bringing together our combined energy and passion to make a difference for people affected by lung disease, we'll become a stronger and more powerful voice for change.

As a charity, we will still bring hope through research, help through information and support through groups like yours and a voice through our campaigning and policy work.

To create the partnership, Asthma UK is now seeking the agreement of its members as it is a membership organisation. If the proposed merger is agreed, we expect it would take effect at the end of this year. We'll be in touch in December to let you know the outcome.

Penny Woods, CEO of the BLF, will step down due to ill health. She said: "I'm really proud to have led the BLF for the past seven years. We have achieved many great things, but there's still so much more to do. As we carry out this process of merging, lung disease continues to have a devastating impact on lives. That is why the BLF still needs your support, now more than ever. We want to reassure you that you'll still be able to make a difference for those affected by lung conditions in the same way you always have so that we can continue to provide hope, help and a voice to those who need us most."

Penny plans to take some time off but to come back, supporting the organisation however she can.

Festive fundraising

If you're looking to fundraise for the BLF this Christmas, our events team are on hand to support you with your plans.

Whether you're holding a mince pie and sherry evening or singing carols with your support group, there are plenty of opportunities to get festive and fight lung disease.

It's not too late to host your own Big Breakfast! Let us know about your fundraising and get your welcome pack by:

- » emailing the team at events@blf.org.uk
- » or visit blf.org.uk/bigbreakfast



Have you spotted our TV advert? It's running until the end of November to raise awareness of leaving a gift to us in your will. To explain how a gift in your will could fund vital research breakthroughs, visit blf.org.uk/legacies

BLF have awarded two grants for **research** into **IPF**

We've recently awarded two grants for research into idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF). This ground-breaking research hopes to improve the lives of those living with IPF.

Dr Nicholas Hannan from the University of Nottingham has been given the BLF-Masonic Charitable Foundation PhD studentship award. Nicholas' research project will create a stem cell model of IPF to understand how lung infection and lung scarring impact the progression of IPF.

Dr William Man from the Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust has been awarded the BLF-Pulmonary Fibrosis Trust Malcolm Weallans pulmonary fibrosis research grant. Breathing tests (that measure how well your lungs are working) require a lot of effort for people with IPF, making them cough or feel very breathless. Impulse oscillometry (iOS) is a new type of breathing test. It uses sound waves to measure the elasticity of the lung. William wants to investigate if the new iOS test can replace current tests.

Find out more about our research at blf.org.uk/research

Get vaccinated and beat flu this winter

It's time to get a flu jab! The jab is free for those with a long-term lung condition, carers and those who are over 65. The earlier you get the jab the better, to ensure you're protected from the very beginning of flu season.

We want to hear why you get the flu jab – share our infographic on social media, tag [@lunguk](https://twitter.com/lunguk) on Twitter and tell us why it's important to you.



An update on the transition process

We're now halfway through the transition process: 119 of the 220 groups have made their decision.

Groups who have opted to be affiliated are taking longer to process as they need to draw up their own constitution and open a group bank account. They remain as part of the BLF family and can access the new online learning hub.

Groups who have become BLF support groups will find very little difference other than formalising the relationship by signing a bond, completing volunteer forms and returning cheque-books to us so that we can become the accounts payable office. Bank accounts

will remain at HSBC and groups need to authorise us to make payments from them.

You might be aware that HSBC is currently updating and confirming details of people who are responsible for operating group bank accounts. This is part of their responsibilities under the Anti Money Laundering regulations (AML). Going forward cheque signatories from groups will need to take part in the process. This will involve either a face-to-face meeting or a phone conversation with HSBC.

As always, we're here to support groups. Get in touch by:

- » emailing the team at blf.supportgroups@blf.org.uk
- » or give us a call on **0300 303 0253**

Did you do anything for World COPD day on Wednesday 20 November? Let us know!

Volunteer learning hub

Our new volunteer learning hub is nearly ready to be launched!

The hub will have online courses for members to complete, induction courses on safeguarding, GDPR and other courses on IT and soft skills. It will also have an online forum where members can catch up on the latest news and share ideas.

We'll be rolling out user IDs and passwords to every BLF support group volunteer and affiliated BE main contact, once a group has completed its transition.

Christmas is coming...

This year, our Christmas appeal highlights how winter can be a difficult time if you have a lung condition. Donations make sure our fantastic helpline and friendly support groups are there to give advice and support during this time. Our appeal runs from 11 November to the new year. Look out for the appeal in your emails and on our social media channels – and don't forget to share it! Head to blf.org.uk/mychristmasgift to find out more and to get involved.

Don't forget to buy your Christmas cards from our online shop! From snowy scenes to skiing nuns, we have cards everyone will love. Plus, use the code FREEPOSTAGE on orders over £25 to get free delivery. Visit shop.blf.org.uk

Remember: our offices (including the helpline) are closed in between Christmas and New Year. This year, the dates are 27 to 31 December.



Happy Christmas from everyone at the BLF!

Working with BAME communities

October was Black History Month, a time to recognise the many achievements and celebrate the UK's diverse culture. It's a chance to have open conversations about any themes and issues that may affect the Black community.

Rachel is leading the Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) insight project, where we're working to identify potential barriers to supporting BAME communities affected by a lung condition.

Feedback from questionnaires, focus groups (in Manchester, Liverpool and Bradford) and case studies will inform future inclusive work. Rachel recently spoke at the Haydock study day to BLF professionals about the project.

If you have yet to have your say on BAME engagement, please complete the questionnaire on surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BLF_BAME_Engagement

Our meso patrons are here for you

Thanks to the generous donations of our mesothelioma patrons we're able to fund pioneering research which provides hope both now and in the future.

Our legal patrons Hodge Jones & Allen, Simpson Millar, GA Solicitors, Leigh Day, Dedicated Accident Solicitors and Humphreys & Co offer specialist legal advice and support to people affected by lung disease.

Our asbestos experts UKATA and Shield Environmental are also leading the way in educating and advising companies on the safe removal of asbestos.

Find out more about our mesothelioma patrons at blf.org.uk/meso-patrons

Volunteer conference

We're excited for our first volunteer conference that's being held on Wednesday 3 June 2020.

We're looking for two volunteers to deliver a short talk on one of the following two areas:

- » how to run a successful group
- » recruiting and keeping hold of members

If you want to nominate yourself, please contact Samantha on **03000 030 555** or samantha.lee@blf.org.uk