

## **“Sharing an experience relieves the feeling of isolation”**

Ever thought of meeting other Sjögren's Syndrome sufferers, there are three very simple ways:

### **Have a coffee morning or afternoon tea**

You choose a date, time and location and the office will send information to members within your area. If you are having the event in a location where there is a charge for room hire the BSSA can assist with the deposit and a nominal charge could be collected when members arrive to cover the costs.

### **Attend or start a small group**

This is very similar to having a coffee morning or afternoon tea but it gives the opportunity for the members to meet up on a semi regular basis, it also gives members who join the BSSA later also to meet fellow sufferers and loose the feeling of isolation that most sufferers have felt. The familiarity of the members within the group often means members tend to relax and talk more leading to many tips and ideas being passed from member to member, also we find that groups can lead to some very firm friendships being made.

What are the benefits of attending a group?

- ◆ The opportunity for you to share experiences and tips with other members, which is incredibly reassuring and helpful.
- ◆ It gives you the chance to establish new friendships and increase your social circle
- ◆ A group can be a vital source of information on Sjögren's Syndrome, whether it is through guest speakers or the talking with other sufferers.
- ◆ Going to a group helps to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness by the way of mutual help and support
- ◆ Speaking to other sufferers can reduce feelings of anxiety or fear

### **Make a friend**

This is a scheme that has been going very well, once you have inform you would like to join the make a friend scheme we will contact several members who live close to you and explain that you are interested in having a chat with someone who near and we will also give them your first name and telephone number, it is as simple as that. Once they have called it is up to you whether you keep in contact by telephone, meet up or leave it there.

Please note we can only include you in the make a friend scheme if you are a member of the BSSA and have returned the completed form overleaf or written to us with your telephone number and confirming that you wish us to contact members on your behalf.

“Make a friend has changed the way I approach Sjögren's Syndrome as now I have spoken to others I realise it does not have to take over my life.”

“Thank you for your Make a friend scheme, it is so nice to talk to someone who fully understands what its like to have Sjögren's Syndrome, family try, but as they do not have it they don't understand.”

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**I am interested in taking part in the following:** (please tick the boxes)

**Holding a coffee morning / afternoon tea**

**Starting a small group in my area**

**Joining a group**

**Joining the ‘Make a friend’ scheme \***

\*By ticking the ‘Make a Friend’ box I am agreeing to my first name and telephone number to be given out to local members so they can contact me as part of the scheme.

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Post Code**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dated**

**Printed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return the form to: BSSA Po Box 15040, Birmingham B31 3DP**