

# Whole School Allergy Awareness

Whole School Allergy Awareness and Practical Management Workshop



On February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015 a group of experts in allergy, education and health education came together to discuss the current issues around food allergies in school and collaborate on a supportive approach to enable schools to review their policy and practice around allergy. Hosted at Highgate School, London, the workshop was a unique opportunity to focus on key practical issues for schools. Short presentations from the perspective of a nurse, teacher, clinical expert, psychologist, educationalist, and allergy sufferers led onto an afternoon open discussion.

A summary of the presentations is available as a separate download on the Allergy UK.

## > Jennette Higgs - Why we are here and where do we want to be?

Get a little more acquainted with the project and watch Jennette, the driving force, introduce the project which has been in her scope now for many years. She uses the opportunity to reveal results from school survey work that highlighted many concerning results and talks about the current situation with allergy management in schools. Introducing the idea of a whole school approach to tackle food allergy, she shares her vision for the future.

Jennette is a registered dietitian, with over 30 years' experience of working in the food industry, hospitals and the community. As director of Food To Fit Ltd. Nutrition Consultancy she works with food industry clients on strategic planning and nutrition communications; and is committed to promoting effective practices around school food and nutrition issues, in particular school allergy policies.

## > Joe Harvey - From SNAG to SAAG – a proven process for delivering effective health and wellbeing policy in schools

Joe discusses his experiences working with policies and regulations in the past as well as the current problems faced by many schools. He explains the basis for a good policy and introduces the School Allergy Awareness Group (SAAG). This adopts the proven SNAG process within food policy development which is transferable to food allergy for schools.

Joe is the director at the Health Education Trust and a founder member of the Food for Life Partnership project. Joe has a background in teaching and management of secondary schools, and a wealth of experience in policy, planning and training across a wide range of children's health issues, including the Management of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions. He has a strong belief in the power of pupil engagement in decision making and inclusion of essential life skills in the school curriculum.

## > Dr Audrey Dunn Galvin - A brief overview of the issue and anxieties for young people with food allergy, in particular around school life, as revealed through validated QoL research

Dr Galvin discusses the psychological effects of chronic disease, from experience to coping. She explains that school is vital in the developmental process, playing an important role in shaping and determining physical and psychological health.

Using current allergy statistics, she discusses the effect allergies can have on the allergic pupil, parents and peers too.

Audrey is a psychologist and biostatistician at the University College Cork and an Honorary Research Fellow for the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, at Cork University Hospital, Ireland. As a member of EACCI / AAAAI, PSI / BPS, EuroPrevall, HealTrain / Leonardo, FAARP, MoniQa NHS Foundation Trust, Royal College of Paediatrics, Anaphylaxis Ireland

RAMAS, and with more than 70 publications/in press, 5 book chapters, and more than 100 oral presentations, Audrey brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this project.

> **Lindsey McManus** - About Allergy UK and why there is concern about schools. Making it easier for schools via an interactive training and support website.

Lindsey introduces Allergy UK and their work with schools, parents and children over the past 23 years. Recognising that allergy is particularly stressful for young people, and the huge impact it has on lives, Allergy UK is a firm supporter of the project.

Lindsey is the deputy CEO at Allergy UK, joining in 2003 as a Helpline Advisor for the charity's national helpline. Lindsey holds an Allergy Diploma and during six years on the frontline, has gained specialist knowledge and experience in allergy and food intolerance. Lindsey provides specialist training on food allergy and intolerance to multinational organisations. She also speaks at support groups and healthcare events across the UK to raise awareness on all aspects of allergies.

> **Amena Warner** - Allergy assessment and risk management; the importance of health and education for safe environments.

Amena explains what allergy is and discusses the importance of understanding the wide variation of signs and symptoms. She explains the more practical side of allergy and the necessity for simple practices such as hand washing. Amena is a registered Nurse & School Nurse as well as the Nurse Specialist Advisor in Allergy for Allergy UK. Having trained in the 70s and continuing her professional development, some previous roles have included, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Immunology and Allergy for the NHS and currently holding position of President of the International Nurses Group in Immunodeficiencies, past chair and founder of the National UK Nurses in Allergy group, and part of the BSACI. Having been involved and co-authored many published papers and research studies in Allergy, Amena brings another valued specialism to this project.

> **Andrew Craig** - About the American Peanut Council's role and commitment to supporting research and progress in treating peanut allergy?

Andrew discusses the American Peanut Councils unconditional support for this project. Dr Craig also talks about American Peanut Councils long standing relationship with the allergy world and the need to show people what policy means. Andrew is a health promotion and policy consultant for the American Peanut Council (APC) and a partner at the Millar Adamson Craig Partnership LLP. Consulting for APC for nearly 30 years, he advises on global health and trade issues, with a particular focus on nutritional research and food allergy. Dr Craig's career has included holding public appointments on NHS boards and executive committees in London for 25 years, consultancy activities with private and public sector clients span food and health issues, physical activity, long term neurological conditions, and patient and public involvement.

> **Todd Lindsey** - Why Highgate School wants to improve its allergy management policies and practices and its vision for the future

Todd talks frankly about a situation that could occur at any school, which prompted Highgate to seek expert guidance. While they thought they had sound policies in place, Highgate experienced what could have been a potentially fatal incident which rocked the school and their confidence. He discusses the many changes they have already implemented as a result and the ongoing plans and participation of the project.

Todd is the Principal Deputy Head at Highgate School, joining in 2006, also teaching History. Teaching history and politics since 1993 he was previously the Head of Sixth Form at Whitgift School, Croydon, where he taught since 1997. With Todd's years of experience and expertise in the education field, and Highgate's commitment to this project, Todd is a much valued contributor to the project.

## > **Lynne Regent** - About Anaphylaxis Campaign and its plans as relevant to schools and young people. How can Anaphylaxis Campaign help?

Lynne introduces the Anaphylaxis Campaign as the only UK charity that focuses solely on anaphylaxis and the work they have been carrying out for the last 20 years. She talks about their resources as well as past and present key campaigns. Lynne joined the Anaphylaxis Campaign as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in October 2008 ensuring that the charity achieves its objective to support people with severe allergies. Prior to this role she spent nearly 30 years working in the NHS. During 2013-2017 Lynne is leading the UK patient group involvement in iFAAM, the largest ever European-wide study of the severely allergic population to be undertaken, and is examining an integrated approach to food allergens and allergy risk management

## > **Ruth Holroydd** - Experiences of growing up with serious food allergies – why schools need to do it better.

Ruth discusses in a light hearted manner her very serious experiences of allergy at school through the 70s and 80s. She explains that allergies affect all aspects of life and shows her continued support for this project. Listen first hand to a lifetime allergy sufferer who continues on her allergic march.

Ruth is a marketing specialist and copywriter for RH Marketing as well as a leading allergy blogger. Born with eczema, developing a nut allergy as a small child and multiple further allergies in her teens, she has first-hand experience of what it is like living with allergies and anaphylaxis. Her blog is a tremendous success, reaching thousands and Ruth is also a regular judge for the FreeFrom Food, Eating out and Skincare Awards, speaks at events such as The Allergy Show, the BSACI conference and industry events, and offers continued support to The Anaphylaxis Campaign and Allergy UK.

## > **Hazel Gowland** - An insight into day to day food allergy management principles, problems and practices, as relevant to young people and school caterers.

Hazel talks frankly from personal experience and a career spent involved in food allergy. She highlights the many challenges faced by allergy sufferers in varying surroundings from nurseries to leaving home. Hazel also pinpoints what she believes to be the three life skills essential for people with allergies; food handling, consumer advocacy, and the understanding to manage emergencies.

Hazel Gowland is well-known as a food allergic champion consumer, patient representative, researcher and trainer, working for and with the Anaphylaxis Campaign since 1994, and as an independent expert adviser for Allergy Action since 2000. Her work continues to investigate fatal and 'near miss' reactions, contributing to improved understanding of allergy risks and how they can be reduced and controlled, both in those people at risk and by those managing their environments and their food.