

NEWSLETTER

North of Scotland Parkinson's Research Interest Group (NoSPRIG)

Compiled by Andrew Grant

Look North – a Retrospective

It hardly seems like yesterday since the 'Look North' event in Aberdeen in June, and it is worth taking a few moments to reflect on what was a wonderful day attended by around 100 delegates in-person and online.



If you would like to watch the entire event, which we would thoroughly recommend, you can do so using the link at the top of the next column, but a summary of the day follows here too!

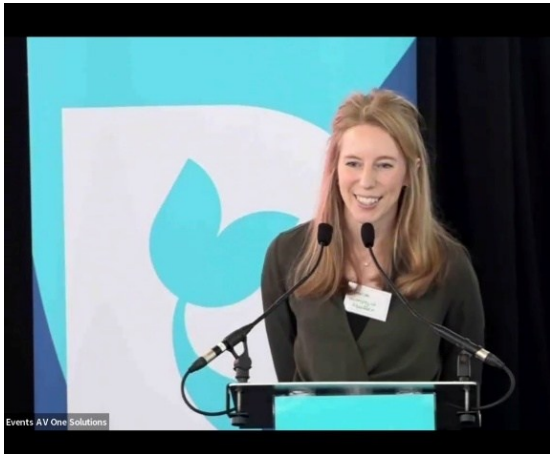
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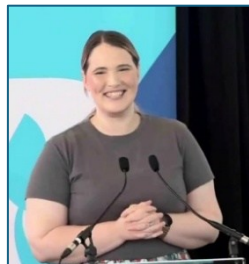
NoSPRIG's **Dr Julie Jones**, who led the day, began with a hearty welcome to everyone!

We were honoured to then have **James Jopling**, Scotland Director for Parkinson's UK with us, to give an update on what the charity are currently involved in throughout the country.

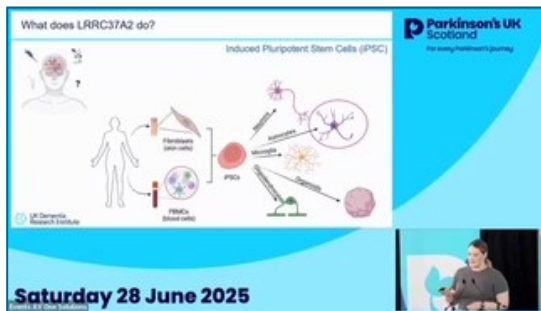




Dr Louise Lawrie a Health Psychologist from Aberdeen University, gave us plenty to think about with her research into building an understanding about the motivations or barriers of exercise for people with Parkinson's. NosPRIG's Helga Macfarlane is one of the research team.



Having featured in one of the North of Scotland Research Podcast episodes it was marvellous to meet in-person **Dr Kathryn Bowles** from the University of Edinburgh, and her remarkable research into a newly discovered gene called LRRC37A2 (or Brian!) which may be protective against Parkinson's.



Hoa Le from Scottish Action for Mental Health rounded off the morning session with a very informative rundown of the services and support they offer people over the age of 16.



Throughout the day the audience made the most of this rare opportunity to ask researchers questions!



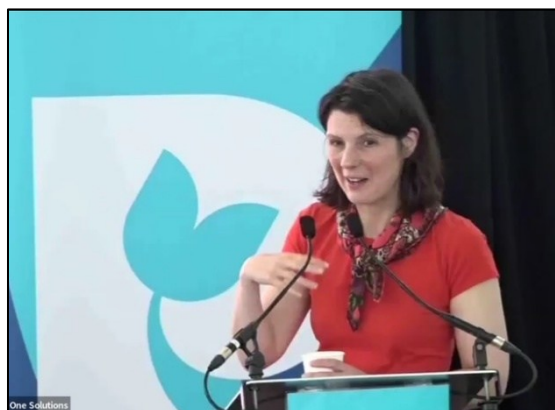
Lunch arrived and with it a chance to chat and visit the stalls from various organisations.



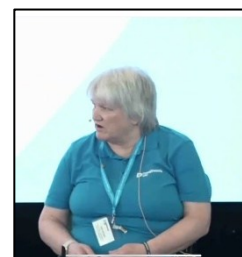
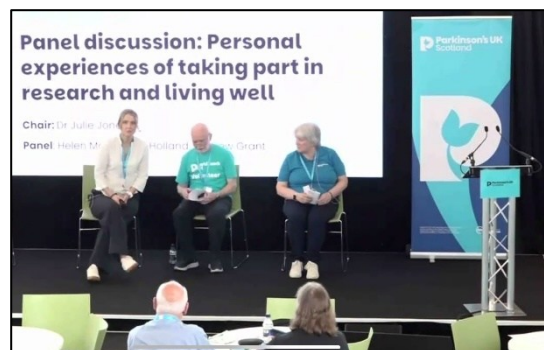
The 'Look North' afternoon session got off to a fabulous rousing start with **Parkinson's Beats**, the hugely popular drumming exercise group devised by NoSPRIG's **Jo Holland** and **Sharon Finlay** of Active Minds Moray.



Dr Isobel Sleeman from the University of Aberdeen closed the presentations for the day with an extremely interesting insight into some of the tremendous amount of research she does. It particularly focused on her work on diet, gut health and Parkinson's. This included some extremely useful tips on the consumption of protein, based on the most up to date findings,



The last formal event of 'Look North' was a discussion that saw NoSPRIG members **Andrew Grant, Helen Morgan and Jo Holland** take to the stage to lead the open-to-all chat, chaired by Julie, about taking part in research.



James Jopling closed the event for us leaving an opportunity for attendees to try Full Body (Nordic) Walking, Parkinson's Beats or a visit to the Gait Lab before heading home! A huge thank you to all the speakers who gave their valuable time for us, and to everyone who attended.

All in all I think we all agreed we'd had a great day!

Here are some of the feedback comments we got:

"What a great event with superb guest speakers. I cannot fail to mention the joy spread across the whole of the room during the Parkinson's Beats session – left me beaming for day"
Anita.

"The event was conducted in a fairly relaxed manner which was fun, welcoming and had a homely feel but also efficient, engaging, informative, scientific, varied, invigorating and uplifting." Alastair.

"I found 'Look North' to be very interesting. The speakers pitched their talks at a perfect level and even I could understand them" Jo (Parkinson's Beats)

The next event is already in the planning – let us know your thoughts on **ELGIN** as the location?

Email: nosprig@gmail.com

Last but definitely not Least!

Just as this newsletter was about to be published, we heard some fabulous news which we had to stop the press to include!

NoSPRIG's **Jo Holland** has been recognised for her fabulous work with **Parkinson's Beats** with a **BBC Make a Difference Award**.



She has won the **Physical Activity category** for her tremendous dedication into making this fun form of exercise available to people with Parkinson's and other neurological conditions.



Parkinson's Beats was devised by Jo and Sharon Finlay in 2022 and its popularity has been rocketing across Scotland and further afield ever since!

Anyone can take part regardless of their ability – it can be done standing or seated, the movements can be gentle or strong, and you can use one arm, two or your whole body. There are in-person and online classes, so you can take part wherever you are.

