



# Patient Voices

## THE NEWSLETTER

Issue 6, January 2010

### New Year, new beginnings

After the bumper harvest of the last issue, we welcome you to the slim, first Patient Voices newsletter of the new decade – and we want to share with you some good news. In the middle of December, we were delighted receive a letter telling us that we had been shortlisted for the prestigious BMJ group awards in the *Health Communicator of the Year* category.

To our even greater delight, in the last post before Christmas, another letter arrived telling us of our shortlisting in a second category: *Excellence in Healthcare Education*. Please see the release (attached and on the website) for more details. We look forward with eager anticipation to the awards ceremony on 10th March and would be thrilled to see any of you who are able to attend the gala dinner in London (<http://groupawards.bmj.com>)

### Patient Voices workshops and stories

The ever-changing tides of Patient Voices work carried us, for the most part, away from storytelling workshops in the last few months of 2009, steering us instead towards consolidation and conferences... However, Pip did travel to San Jose, California, to co-facilitate, with Joe Lambert of the Center for Digital Storytelling, a workshop to create stories about air medical transport for the Center for Medical Transport Research. The stories are already being used in training for the emergency services as well as medical transport personnel – they can be seen at [www.tcmtr.org](http://www.tcmtr.org) and they will soon be on the Patient Voices website. The workshop continues the ongoing thread of our work with Dr Cathy Jaynes of the University of Colorado, focused on creating and using stories to help to create a culture of safety in healthcare.

We have been delighted to participate in several successful and well-attended launches of stories created earlier in the year.

The University of Liverpool's *Get involved 4 the Future* stories were launched in September at a celebratory evening



event at the university. Excellent food and music were

enjoyed by all before Eileen Thornton, head of the school of healthcare, introduced the stories. Storytellers received certificates in recognition of the important role they play in the education of the health professionals of the future. You can see the stories at [www.patientvoices.org.uk/ul.htm](http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/ul.htm)

October saw the launch of the NHS Leeds *Patient Involvement* stories at a PPI networking event in the Community Centre in Pudsey. Feedback on the day was really positive and the stories are now being used in induction and staff training. You can see the stories at



[www.patientvoices.org.uk/leedspect.htm](http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/leedspect.htm)

A slightly different flavour characterised the launch of the Sheffield City Council *Carers' Voices* stories and accompanying DVD at the Riverside Public House in Sheffield on a sunny October afternoon. An introductory presentation by Professor Paul Stanton of the University of Northumbria set the tone for the event, attended by about 75 storytellers, social workers and clinicians, many of whom wrote very moving responses to the stories. Please see [www.patientvoices.org.uk/sheffcc.htm](http://www.patientvoices.org.uk/sheffcc.htm)

### Out and about

September saw what has become an annual appearance at the NET conference in Cambridge, where a workshop looking at the Effective, Affective and Reflective nature of the Patient Voices stories was well attended and generated good discussions around using the stories.

In November, the Authenticity to Action workshop in the Lake District was the venue for a presentation about the Liverpool stories, entitled *Going digital but staying personal!*. One of the storytellers was there to tell her side of the story... and there was scarcely a dry eye in the room.

In November, a presentation at the University of Nottingham's *Interprofessional Learning Day* provided an opportunity to highlight the potential for using the Patient Voices stories in interprofessional education.

The last presentation of the year was at the University of East London's *Mindfulness and Well-being* conference, where the mindful elements of our Patient Voices work were highlighted in the context of wider interest in mindfulness-based approaches to coping with mental health issues and chronic conditions.

### Introduction to Digital Storytelling workshops

The last two workshops in Cambridge were well-attended and we were especially pleased to welcome three colleagues from Denmark, who went away enthused about the possibilities offered by the facilitative model that characterises our workshops. The schedule for workshops in 2010 is now on the website and we look forward to seeing any of you who would like to experience the process of creating a digital story at first-hand.

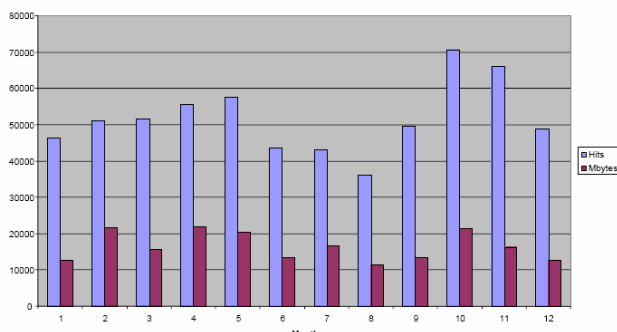
### Research

We are pleased to feel that we are in the forefront of a quiet movement to ensure that care is careful, healing is holistic and individuals are enabled to live their lives as fully and as mindfully as possible for as long as possible. But we are also interested in finding out more about the impact of the storytelling process and of the stories themselves on viewers. To that end, Pip has started a PhD at Cardiff University to carry out a qualitative study of *Mindfulness-influenced digital storytelling in health and social care* – a long journey no doubt, but one that it feels good to have begun. If anyone else's research is following a similar path, it would be great to have some company on the way – please get in touch.

### The website and discussion group

Lots of people have been visiting the website and viewing stories – there were over 600,000 hits on the site in 2009.

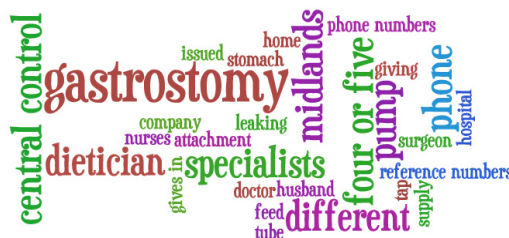
Patient Voices | website hits and data served per month (2009)



We've welcomed a bit of a lull in workshop bookings as it's allowed us to review the website and user feedback. Recent visitors in recent weeks may have noticed some improvements, part of a plan to refresh and restructure Patient Voices' online presence over the next few months. To make the stories more easily playable by users of Macintosh computers, we have moved to Flash format for

the stories, although this has resulted in a nearly three-fold increase in site storage space and bandwidth.

Each story now has its own individual page, so linking to individual stories becomes easier. Eventually, each story page will contain a 'wordle' that provides a simple, quick, and easy-to-assimilate graphical representation of the main themes in the story.



The website now has a Google custom search (accessed from the 'Search' tab at the top of the page). We hope this will help those searching for particular stories or themes. We have also moved to using Google Analytics tracking code to follow website access and story usage.

In the next few months we will review the Yahoo group, look at ways of providing a simpler feed of Patient Voices Programme news, and try to lighten the appearance of the website and reduce the amount of text on some pages.

### Looking ahead

We are eagerly looking forward to the publication in late January of the next edition of *Capturing Lives, Creating Community* by Joe Lambert, Founding Director of the California-based Center for Digital Storytelling ([www.storycenter.org.uk](http://www.storycenter.org.uk)). We contributed a chapter about the Patient Voices Programme – the first published attempt to describe what we do and why we do it.

### Settling in

After a few teething troubles with broadband and phone suppliers, we are happily settled into the new office at:  
The Barn, 1 Corbett Street  
Cottenham  
Cambridge CB24 8QX

Our new phone number is: +44 1954 202158

Due to the very small number of faxes we receive, we've given up our fax line. Our mobile phone numbers and email addresses have not changed, so please do get in touch with us – we always enjoy hearing from you.

Pip Hardy:

+44 7721 751784

[pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk](mailto:pip@pilgrimprojects.co.uk)

Tony Sumner:

+44 7979 818652

[tony@pilgrimprojects.co.uk](mailto:tony@pilgrimprojects.co.uk)