



# TAKE HEART



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## New Cardiomyopathy Support Group Launch



*"... now I enjoy new hobbies. I have taken up archery, photography and jewellery making. Life is for living and I have had to adapt to suit."*

**A LOTHIAN WOMAN**, who has the heart muscle disease cardiomyopathy, recently started a local support group for those affected by the condition in South-east Scotland. Cardiomyopathy is one of the conditions which can lead to a diagnosis of heart failure.

Around 20 people heard Robert Hall, Chief Executive of the Cardiomyopathy Association give an overview of the different types of cardiomyopathy, diagnosis and treatment.

People shared their experiences and asked questions over a cup of tea/coffee. A hot topic seemed issues around obtaining a diagnosis. Many attendees said how good it was to speak to others in the same situation as themselves. The next meeting is planned for the end of May and will look at genetics and cardiomyopathy.

Cardiomyopathy affects people of all ages, including babies and is usually inherited. It is the biggest cause of sudden death in those under 35 but with appropriate treatment, most affected people can live a long and full life.

The meeting was organised by Jackie Shaw from Linlithgow. Jackie was diagnosed with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy in 2009. It causes the heart muscle to thicken and can cause problems with heart rhythm and its ability to pump blood round the body. Jackie's twin brother died suddenly in

2000 aged 38. Because doctors thought he might have had an inherited heart disease, Jackie underwent tests at that time. She was told she had an abnormal ECG but nothing else was found. Over the next few years Jackie suffered fatigue, breathlessness, chest pain and decreasing exercise capacity. She was finally diagnosed from an MRI scan.

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For more information about the support group, contact Jackie at: **Jacqueline.shaw1@nhs.net**

or Sarah Dennis at the Cardiomyopathy Association on

**Freephone 0800 0181 024.**

**Web: [www.cardiomyopathy.org](http://www.cardiomyopathy.org)**