

Hi and welcome to our second e-newsletter – we're sorry we haven't been in touch for a little while with the second edition of our e-newsletter but we have been pretty busy, and it's taken longer than anticipated to put together this bumper issue for you! Although it's a bit later than planned, we hope you find it full of useful and interesting information. All you need to do is click on the link on the links below for more information:

### **Presenting the Petition**

On 23 January 2008, we delivered our Petition to No 10, which over 11,000 people had signed. GBSS supporters, representatives from Pregnancy & Birth, MPs Nicholas Soames, Theresa May, Nia Griffith, Philip Hollobone, Jeffrey Donaldson and Alasdair McDonnell and celebrity Doctor Chris Steele from TV's This Morning all went to Downing Street to present the petition to the Prime Minister. Thanks to everyone who signed the petition and. You can see the responses (two of them!) to the petition on our website by [clicking here](#).

If you're as disappointed with the response as we are, please do make your views know – please write to your MP and tell them what you believe should be happening, and ask for his/her support. You can find out how to do this by clicking [this link](#).

### **Reception at Stormont**

On 25 February 25, a reception and information event was held at Stormont for Irish MPs and medical professionals. Northern Ireland's new junior minister, Mr Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA and Dr Alasdair McDonnell MP MLA, hosted the event. The charity's founder and chairman, Jane Plumb attended along with Professor Philip Steer, the chairman of the charity's medical advisory panel. Mr Donaldson said, "Northern Ireland has the highest rate of GBS infection in babies in the UK. We in Northern Ireland have the opportunity to lead the way in the UK by raising awareness of GBS and introducing screening to protect our babies from this devastating and preventable infection." Our very grateful thanks go to GBSS member and supporter Susan Kyle who organised the event. Read more about it by clicking [this link](#).

### **WI Resolution**

Each year the WI adopts a Resolution put forward by a member. Last year a member tabled a resolution to support offering testing to all pregnant women for GBS. All the resolutions put forward were then debated by the WI groups - the GBS resolution got to the final 6 but unfortunately was not been selected (you can see those selected by clicking [this link](#)). Thank you to all WI members who voted for and supported the GBS resolution. If any WI members would like to put forward a GBS resolution for the future, we'd love to hear from you - please contact Lindsay Norris at [lnorris@gbss.org.uk](mailto:lnorris@gbss.org.uk) or on 01444 416176.

### **Fundraisers for GBSS**

We recently had three runners in the Flora London Marathon; we have two supporters doing a Coast-to-Coast and one supporter running the Great North Run. Our chairman and our head of fundraising have also been running to raise funds for GBSS. Check them all out on our website by [clicking here](#). If you'd like to, you can donate online via their donations page.

**Our core activities** Each year we update, print and distribute thousands of leaflets and posters to pregnant women, antenatal clinics, maternity hospitals, midwives, SCBUs, doctors and NCT teachers. We don't charge for doing this because the aim of the charity is to raise awareness about GBS and save babies' lives. But it's costly – and, in 2007, including our December GBS Awareness Week, we spent almost £60,000 on awareness raising activities: a huge sum for a small charity with no Government funding. And, of course, we want to continue to offer this service *and* increase the pressure on relevant bodies to improve the care of women whose babies are at risk of GBS infection. Despite the wonderful efforts of so many to raise money for GBSS, our income was significantly lower than anticipated last year and, unfortunately, it's looking as though the same will be true this year.

Could you raise money for us? Could you organise a fundraising event? Does your employer operate a “matched-giving” for any money you raise or give to us? If you give regularly, have you Gift Aided this money? Gift Aiding will increase your gift by almost one third at no extra cost to you. (If you want us to claim Gift Aid on your giving, please e-mail us at [info@gbss.org.uk](mailto:info@gbss.org.uk) with your name, address, postcode saying “GBSS can claim Gift Aid on any money I’ve donated since 6 April 2000 **and all donations I make from the date of this email until I notify you otherwise.**” You must pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that we reclaim on your gift in the appropriate tax year, which is currently 28p for each £1 you give.)

Please help us to continue to help pregnant women and their medical professionals have access to high quality, up to date and accurate information to minimize the risk of GBS infection in newborn babies.

And, if there is a GBS or GBSS related event we have not covered, do let us know. We can include it in our e-newsletter and in our next edition of the printed GBSS Newsletter, which we send to members (the next edition is due around the end of June 2008.)

**If you have time and you haven’t already ...** please check out our new website at [www.gbss.org.uk](http://www.gbss.org.uk). And please complete our two online surveys – one is to rate the new site, and the other to measure levels of awareness of group B Strep amongst visitors to the site.

Did you know you can send e-cards from our website? Click [here](#) for a variety of cards suitable for most occasions; they’re free to send (though we’d welcome donations!), and they’re a great way of raising awareness of GBSS at the same time as sending a card. If you’d like to create an e-card for us to use, please send your ideas to [info@gbss.org.uk](mailto:info@gbss.org.uk).

We would be delighted to hear any comments and suggestions to improve what we do – please contact us. Until next time, with our best wishes,

The GBSS Team

*If you’d prefer not to receive e-mails such as this from us, please just let us know by e-mail at [info@gbss.org.uk](mailto:info@gbss.org.uk) or by post (address at the bottom of the page) or phone on 01444 416176.*