

## **Informative Osteoarthritis event held in Mullingar**

160 people attended the information night on osteoarthritis and joint pain last Thursday May 12th in the Greville Arms Hotel in Mullingar. The Westmeath Branch of Arthritis Ireland would like to thank all who attended and thank Eamonn Brady from Whelehans Pharmacy for organising and sponsoring the event. There were a number of speakers on the night; Dr David Cogley, orthopaedic Surgeon from Midland Regional Hospital in Tullamore, Pharmacist Eamonn Brady, Chartered physiotherapist Kevin Conneely from HealthStep Physio at Whelehans pharmacy and Nutritionist Aisling Murray from Whelehans Pharmacy. Chairperson of the Westmeath Branch of Arthritis Ireland, Margaret Egerton discussed the work of the local branch.

### **Pioneering Hip Surgery Techniques**

Surgeon David Cogley's main message on the night was "the best way to help prevent and manage osteoarthritis is being informed about the condition and attending information events like this". He said "you must discuss the condition with your GP, pharmacist or physiotherapist". Dr Cogley described the anatomy of osteoarthritis and discussed the treatment options. When asked how best to manage the condition, he said "keeping active, keeping weight down and maintaining a healthy balanced diet is the best way to manage the condition". Dr Cogley's speciality is hips and is a pioneer in hip replacement surgery techniques which are less invasive meaning less pain around the time of surgery and much faster recovery. Dr Cogley has introduced a ground breaking minimally-invasive surgery (MIS) approach to hip surgery which aims to reduce the trauma of soft tissue entry. The surgery involves smaller incisions with a quicker recovery time. The surgery is a technically demanding procedure but has the advantage in that patients recover and are out of hospital quicker and there is lower risk of complications and less soft tissue trauma.

Dr Cogley described how Tullamore Hospital and the Irish Health Service in general has a shortage of Orthopaedic surgeons and Rheumatologists. In Tullamore, Dr Cogley sees approximately 120 patients per week and that surgery is just one part of his role. In Tullamore, Dr Cogley's team have introduced new smarter referral techniques which allow them to see more patients. Dr Cogley explains for those showing early signs of joint pain, stiffness and arthritis, it is paramount you get referred early to the likes of Tullamore Hospital by your GP as while there can be a waiting time to be seen initially, once you are in the system your treatment and subsequent appointments will be alot quicker.

### **Upcoming Aqua Aerobics Classes for those living with Arthritis**

Successful Aqua Aerobics classes organised by Arthritis Ireland Westmeath Branch are being held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the Bloomfield Arms Hotel. People with arthritis or other disabilities that can't perform land exercise use water to improve fitness and range of motion and to relieve pain and stiffness; aqua aerobics fulfills all these needs.

Age and physical condition are not issues in the water. Seniors who rely on a walker or wheelchair on land can stand in water with the help of flotation belts and water's buoyancy. Water exercises provide less stress on the bodies for those living with arthritic symptoms like stiffness and pain. If you would like more information on the local aqua aerobics classes especially designed to benefit arthritic conditions, call 087 9809729 for more information or to book.

If you missed the event, call into Whelehans pharmacy for information from the night. You can contact Arthritis Ireland at 1890 252 846 for detailed information on any type of arthritis or check [www.arthritisireland.ie](http://www.arthritisireland.ie). Keep an eye out in local media for more arthritis events with Whelehans and Arthritis Ireland in Mullingar later in the year.