

PRESCRIPTION TO OCEAN – BY PROF. JAMIE HAYES

For their August meeting Sully u3a were delighted to welcome Prof. Jamie Hayes who has a career within the health profession spanning over 35yrs. He presented a light-hearted look at the ways prescribed medications were commonly mis-used.

Over a billion pounds is spent in Wales on prescribed medication within the NHS, mostly within our communities through our GP's and repeat prescriptions. A staggering amount of which, for one reason or another, were never taken as intended.

He talked about the complex issue of polypharmacy, where a medication prescribed for an initial ailment produces a secondary condition which requires another prescription to deal with it which in turn develops a third condition requiring yet another medication and so on with the patient ending up on upwards of six or more different medications. He talked of the consequences of over prescribing both for people and for the planet.

He spoke of a leaning towards shared decision making and a need to ask questions at our next medical review based on the BRAN acronym.

B what are the benefits of taking this medication?

R what are the risks that will come with taking it?

A what are the alternatives available to me? And lastly

N What happens if I choose to do nothing?

He talked about the need for greater health literacy to be able to assimilate the information given to us.

Throughout the talk he interspersed stories of patients gathered throughout his professional career, like the chap that thought he was correctly interpreting "avoid alcohol" as meaning not walking down that aisle in his local supermarket rather than by not consuming it with his medication.

His talk ended with a plea to not flush unwanted medication down the toilet or place it in bin bags but to take it to any pharmacy that was nearby to dispose of properly. He warned that our water system was already showing signs of being polluted with toxins from the medication that came directly from the waste our bodies generated without us adding to it.

The thought-provoking talk was much appreciated by the Sully u3a audience and led to much discussion afterwards when Prof. Hayes answered their questions. **SH**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swCLNaAG5qY>