LIFE AFTER LARY Community News

Volume 2 — 01 September 2026

In this Edition

- Jon Organ - RCSLT Nomination
- Holiday Tips from one of our own
- Press Release in Charity Today
- And so much more..

No lary will ever feel alone

www.lifeafterlary.co.uk

Contents:

Sponsored By:

RCSLT Awards 2026 – A Recognition Built on Years of Service, Advocacy and Lived Experience

We are thrilled to share that Jono Organ from Life After Lary has been shortlisted for the RCSLT Award for Championing the Value and Impact of Speech and Language Therapy. This nomination is not only a celebration of Jono and the charity's work, it reflects the depth of experience, leadership and commitment that has shaped our mission from the very beginning.

Jono Organ's nomination acknowledges far more than his lived experience of laryngectomy. It recognises decades of service across health, equality, education and patient advocacy. Jon's work as CEO and Founder of Life After Lary, combined with his roles across the NHS, genomics, cancer research, EDI leadership and national patient representation, has created a unique platform for change.

His contributions span:

- Chairing and co-chairing major genomic medicine programmes at Great Ormond Street and North Thames, ensuring patient voices shape the future of personalised healthcare.
- Serving as an elected Governor at The Royal Marsden, and supporting precision therapeutics, clinical trials and cancer pathway improvement.
- Advising on robotic-assisted surgery for NICE, bringing lived experience directly into national decision-making.
- Leading EDI education for over 35 years, championing inclusion in schools, hospitals and professional communities.
- Collaborating closely with Speech and Language Therapists, including work with St George's Hospital, to strengthen training, awareness and patient-centred practice.
- Representing patients across multiple advisory boards, ensuring that recovery, dignity and communication remain central to care.

All of these roles, every meeting, every presentation, every conversation with clinicians, families and policymakers, have shaped the ethos of Life After Lary: that recovery is not just clinical, but human; that communication is not just speech, but confidence, identity and connection.

This nomination is therefore not an individual accolade. It is a reflection of the collective effort of our volunteers, clinicians, supporters, partners and the thousands of patients and families who make up our community. It honours the belief that lived experience, when combined with professional collaboration, can transform care.
On 19 November, Jono will join fellow nominees at London Zoo for the RCSLT Awards, a celebration of the extraordinary impact of speech and language therapy across the UK.
Whatever the outcome, this recognition belongs to all of us.
Thank you for being part of this journey.
This award is for our whole community.

RCSLT

Press Release

Cancer Doesn't End When Treatment Ends: Life After Lary Calls for Honest Awareness of Survivorship and Laryngectomy Realities

Life After Lary, a registered charity supporting people living with a laryngectomy, is raising urgent awareness about a truth rarely spoken aloud: cancer does not end when treatment ends. For thousands of head-and-neck cancer survivors, especially those living with a permanent neck stoma, the challenges continue long after the final hospital appointment.

Cancer treatment is often described as a "journey," with a clear beginning and end. But for those who have undergone a laryngectomy, the end of treatment is not a return to normality. It is the start of a new, permanent, medically complex life.

A laryngectomy removes the voice box and separates the airway from the mouth and nose. Breathing happens through a neck stoma. Speaking requires specialised equipment. Eating, drinking, sleeping, showering, travelling, and simply stepping outside in hot or cold weather all become tasks that require planning, equipment, and vigilance.

Yet the moment treatment finishes, many survivors hear the same line:
"You're all better now."
But they are not. And they will never be the person they were before cancer.

The Reality Survivors Live With

- Permanent medical changes — A neck stoma is not temporary. It requires lifelong care, cleaning, protection, and monitoring.
- Breathing challenges — Weather, pollution, infection, mucus thickness, and humidity can all affect airflow through the stoma.
- Communication barriers — Speaking may rely on a voice prosthesis, electrolarynx, or alternative methods, each with its own limitations.
- Ongoing treatments — Nebulisers, oxygen, steroid inhalers, suctioning, humidification, and stoma care become part of daily life.
- Psychological impact — Fear of recurrence, trauma from treatment, and the loss of a former identity do not disappear when treatment ends.
- Social misunderstanding — Survivors are often expected to "bounce back," despite living with permanent anatomical changes.

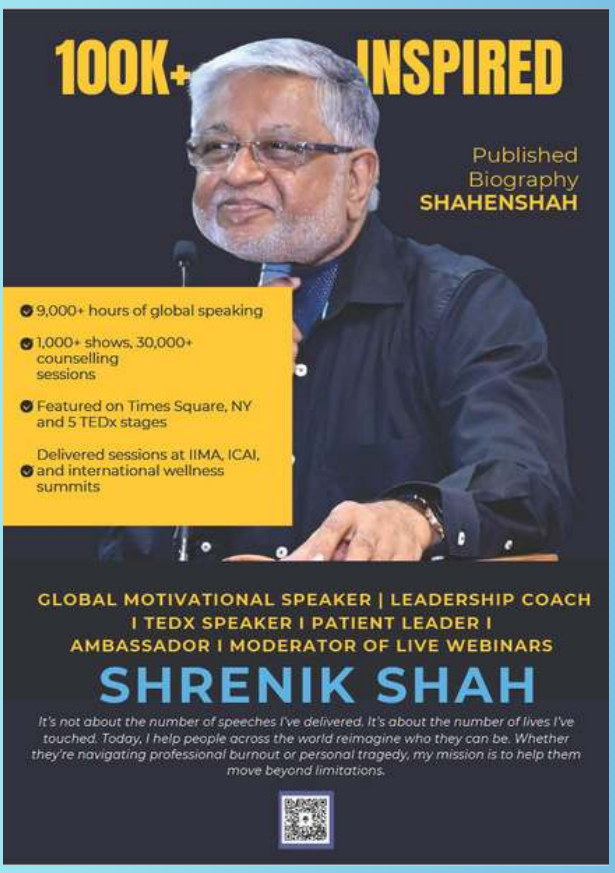
Cancer survivorship is not a finish line. It is a lifelong state, physically, emotionally, and socially.

A Call for Honest Awareness
Life After Lary urges clinicians, support organisations, employers, families, and the public to recognise that survivorship is not recovery. It is adaptation. It is resilience. It is daily management of a body forever changed by cancer and surgery.

The charity emphasises that acknowledging this reality is not negativity, it is truth. And truth is what survivors need in order to be understood, supported, and seen.

charitytoday.co.uk Thursday 3rd September

Shrenik Shah



My name is Shrenik Shah, from Ahmedabad, India, and I am dedicated to offering transformative life experiences through my workshops as a self-taught speaker.

I started my professional career back in 1972 after my graduation as an entrepreneur and international marketer, and travelled more than 200 times globally between 1996 and 1997, and increased sales turnover by 3500% in 11 years with my natural voice, when there were no internet & mobile phones either.

During the 1st half of 1997, my natural voice turned hoarse & then into whispers, loss of weight & during August 1997, I started experiencing acute breathing problems & was unable to sleep on a flat bed & had to sleep in a slanting state only. There was so much restlessness 24x 7 & one morning, I started bleeding in my cough.

Needless to mention, I had never smoked, consumed tobacco in any form, strict vegetarian & non-alcoholic.

My physician in Ahmedabad, India, advised me to consult a young head & neck cancer surgeon & from the initial examination, he found that I had developed advanced-stage vocal cord cancer, and the tumour was blocking the opening of my trachea, which caused me severe breathing problems as if I was drowning in water.

A cancer surgeon told me, you don't have much time left unless vocal cords are removed & you won't be able to speak for your entire life naturally.

For me, survival was more essential than losing my natural voice; I underwent massive surgery in 2 parts. During the 1st surgery, biopsy & tracheostomy were done, & the biopsy report came announcing stage IV cancer. 2nd surgery was done on 5th of September 1997, & it took 9 & a half hours, followed by 30 rounds of radiotherapy, which turned my throat skin like charcoal & but it slowly turned to normal in 3 months.

The first three months between Sept & Dec 1997 were quite frustrating to communicate using pen & paper, & then I was advised to use an Electrolarynx.

There was no SLT available at that time, & I learned myself by practicing in front of a mirror for a week & started speaking. And, I faced the biggest irony when my differently enabled bionic voice was rejected by people, as if I were an alien coming from another planet.

I accepted that rejection of my voice gracefully & continued speaking with courage & confidence & humbled & fortunate to create history by delivering over 10,000 hours of talks globally.

Twenty-eight years ago, I lost my natural voice to advanced laryngeal cancer. Today, I am the world's first TEDx speaker without vocal cords, inspiring over 100,000 people worldwide while advocating for cancer awareness, prevention, and survivor support through innovative technologies and human connection.

Instead of Giving Up, I Reimagined My Life

- I developed innovative voice rehabilitation techniques using bionic voice technology and
- assistive devices.
- I created what I call my "Metaphorical Voice"to connect with people on a deeper level.
- I built a global movement for cancer awareness and survivor empowerment & disrupted
- lifelong speaking disability.
- I have logged over 10,000 hours of speaking experience on prestigious global platforms.

I showed up consistently with courage and confidence, proving that disability does not diminish capacity but clarifies purpose.

Recognition & Credibility

- I have been honoured to share my story on meaningful stages:
- I am the first speaker to take the TEDx stage after surviving vocal cord cancer.
- As a 7x TEDx speaker, one of my talks is among the top 10 most popular globally (February
- 2025).
- I have appeared on a Times Square Billboard in New York twice, signifying my voice's reach.
- I presented at the World Cancer Congress 2022, sharing my journey alongside leading
- oncologists.
- I delivered keynotes at premier institutions in India and published "SHAHENSHAH," chronicling my journey, which received The James Madison Award (March 2025).

These achievements illustrate that a man without vocal cords can still inspire and transform lives.

My Disability as My Greatest Asset

I share my journey not to evoke sympathy but to highlight how my experiences have shaped my approach to struggle and adversity. Zero vocal cords mean zero excuses—just Impact, Impact, and Impact. Every word I speak and every life I touch requires me to work twice as hard.

Zero vocal cords = Zero excuses:
Every word I speak and every life I touch demand that I work harder and think deeper. Without the power of my voice, I connect with people's souls. My bionic voice extends my courage, showcasing how technology and human determination can bridge gaps.
What truly moves me is when I hear from cancer survivors and others saying, "If Shrenik can do it without vocal cords, I can too." That's the force for good I aim to amplify.

My Impact:

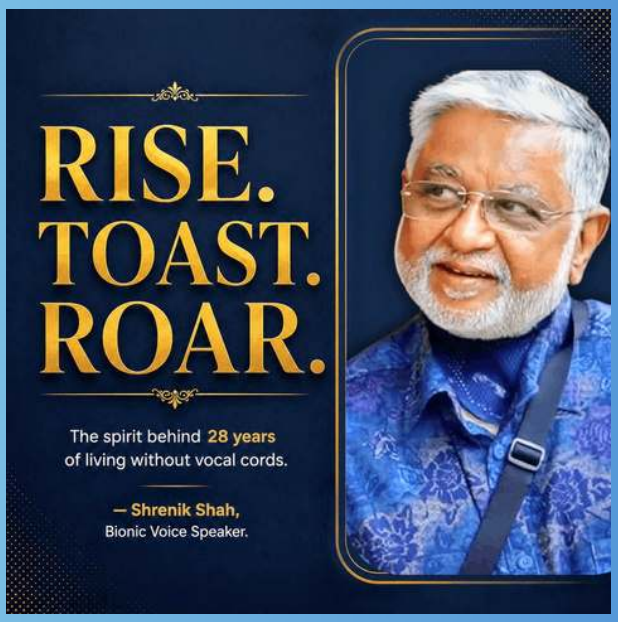
- Inspired over 100,000 lives globally through talks, mentoring, and advocacy.
- Moderated 51 webinars for the Indian Cancer Society, raising awareness and connecting
- survivors and specialists.
- Spoke to 700+ psychology students at AIIMS, Delhi, promoting mental health awareness.
- Featured in major media and ranked among the Top 500 speakers globally.
- These aren't just numbers; they represent real lives and conversations.

My Advocacy:
I focus on critical issues like cancer prevention and disability inclusion. I promote early diagnosis and advocate for mandatory voice rehabilitation for post-laryngectomy patients. I believe in empowering survivors to lead dignified lives and recognising their value.
Through my "Life 2.0" philosophy, I mentor others facing adversity, teaching them that challenges can lead to greatness.

Recognitions include: 297 to date

- Guinness World Record Certificate, 5th TEDx talk recognised among the top 10 on TED YouTube
- Patient Leader Hero Award 2021, The Empowered Man Award 2023, Global Goodwill
- Ambassador, USA, was featured in Times Square, NY, thrice, World Cancer Congress 2022
- Pages 79 to 109 of my biography, “SHAHENSHAH,” include unedited testimonials and over 10,000 compliments from social media.

These accolades affirm my journey and the change I strive for. These honours remind me that my story belongs to everyone fighting in silence and every family facing a diagnosis.



Why I Am the Right Choice as a Life Transformation Influencer, Speaker, and Coach
What I Will Bring to This Platform:
1. **Authentic Heroism:**
2. **Relatable Transformation:**
3. **Actionable Inspiration:**
4. **Unforgettable Presence:**
5. **Multi-Dimensional Impact:**

My Commitment for Good: & My Call to Action for the World:
If given this platform, I commit to:
For Students and Professionals in Crisis:
For Healthcare Workers and Hospitals:
For People with Disabilities:
For Everyone Seeking Purpose:

****WHY THIS MOMENT, WHY NOW**:**
At 74, with over 10,000 speaking hours and the
experience of impacting 100,000+ lives, I am committed to spreading messages of resilience, hope, and purpose.

****THE MOMENT ON STAGE**:**
On stage, I will share my journey of losing and finding my voice again. Through my unique bionic voice, I aim to show the power of the human spirit to overcome adversity.

****MOVING FORWARD:**
I am ready and committed to sharing my insights and energy in my professional workshop.

****THE PROMISE**:**
When you hear my story, it will resonate with you. You will see your challenges differently and understand that your voice can change the world too.

"Life becomes silent without spoken words. Yet, remember, silence can also ROAR."—Shrenik Shah

Contact Information: for my life transformation professional workshops, 1:1 & group mentoring, patient advocacy, etc.

• Email: shrenik.speaker@shrenik-shah.com
• Platform: https://shrenik-shah.com & https://linktr.ee/ShrenikShah
• M: +91 9227205977, Ahmedabad, India
• https://topmate.io/shrenik_shah10/

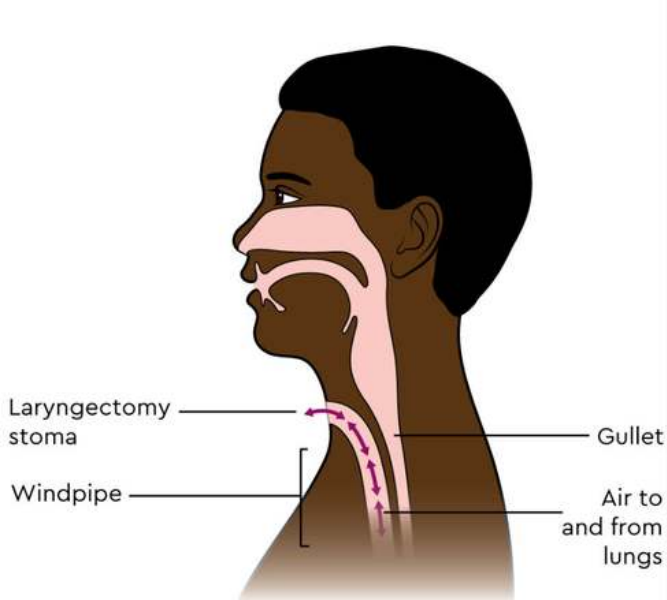
Myth or Fact

Separating fact from fiction about life after a laryngetomy

MYTH

"After a total laryngectomy, you still breathe through your nose and mouth."

It sounds perfectly logical — after all, that's how most of us have breathed for our entire lives.
But after a total laryngectomy, everything changes...



FACT

"After a total laryngectomy, all breathing happens through the stoma in the neck."

During a total laryngectomy, the larynx (voice box) is removed and the airway is permanently separated from the mouth and nose.
The windpipe (trachea) is brought forward to create an opening in the neck called a stoma.
From that point onwards, air travels directly in and out of the lungs through the stoma.

The nose and mouth are no longer connected to the lungs.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

This is much more than an interesting fact about laryngectomy — in an emergency, knowing it could save a life.
A person who has had a total laryngectomy cannot be given oxygen or rescue breaths through their mouth or nose. Their stoma is their only airway, so emergency oxygen and ventilation must be delivered through the stoma.

DID YOU KNOW?

Because air no longer naturally passes through the nose, a laryngectomee's sense of smell can also be affected. Some people learn techniques, such as the polite yawning technique, to draw air through the nose and help them smell again.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your nose normally warms, filters and humidifies the air you breathe. After a total laryngectomy, air bypasses the nose completely — one reason an HME can play such an important role in protecting and supporting lung health.

GOT A MYTH FOR US?

Have you heard something about laryngectomy that simply isn't true — or is there something you've always wondered about?

Share it with us in the Life After Lary Facebook group and we may feature it in a future Myth & Fact.

Holiday Tips from our Fellow Lary Nigel Moss

As a lary, that first holiday abroad is a massive step — and it doesn't come without worries.
I've been lucky enough to travel fairly extensively since my op — across Europe, Asia, Africa and America — with my lary kit in hand. So far, I've never been stopped by airport security or questioned by flight crew, but being prepared means I won't worry when that does happen.
I even lost my FreeHands cassette once on the Paris Metro! No worries — I was carrying a spare.
Here are a few travel tips that might help you plan your trip. If I've forgotten anything, just ask on the LAL site and I'll happily get back to you if I can help.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

- Check your travel insurance. Make sure you have fully declared your health situation and that your cover includes appropriate medical care and potential repatriation. Keep your policy details with you.
- For European destinations, carry your EHIC or GHIC card.
- Some travellers choose to pay for a letter from their GP confirming they are fit to travel. It's a personal choice — I never have, and I've never been asked for one.
- Make sure you have access to details of your medications. I keep mine available through the NHS App on my phone so they're handy if needed.
- Do a little research before you go. Find out where the nearest hospital with a specialist Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) department is. Knowing where to find help if you need it can give you some extra peace of mind.

Google Translate can also be useful for a few important phrases in the local language — for example, explaining that you are a neck breather or that you need to go to ENT. I carry a few, including some jokey comments for suitable occasions!

PACKING YOUR LARY KIT

- Carry a spare valve if appropriate for you. On the basis of "better safe than sorry", I also try to arrange a valve change a week or so before going on holiday, even if I think there's still plenty of life left in the old one.

I even lost my FreeHands cassette once on the Paris Metro! No worries — I was carrying a spare.

- Pack more medication and equipment than you think you'll need, especially baseplates and HMEs. In my experience, I always use more on holiday than I do at home.
- Keep your essential lary equipment and medication in your hand luggage rather than checked baggage. You really don't want the things you rely on disappearing along with a suitcase!

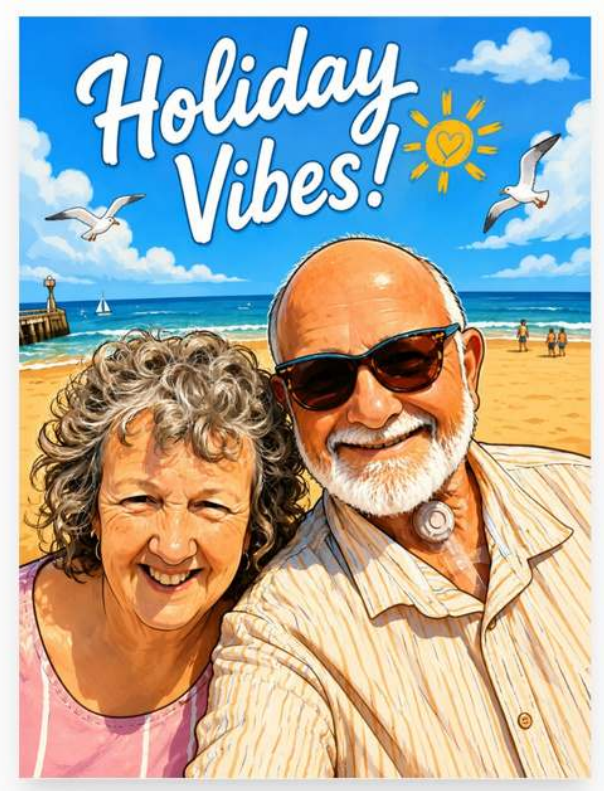
ON THE JOURNEY

- Whether travelling by bus, plane, boat or train, I wear a Protect (or similar) HME throughout the journey, particularly when I'm in close proximity to lots of other travellers.
- If you're nervous about navigating the airport, you can request special assistance from your airline or airport. Whether you choose to use it is entirely up to you.
- Stay hydrated. I always buy a bottle of water once I'm through security and make sure I drink during the journey. Dry cabin air can be uncomfortable and, for me, can contribute to that dreaded uncontrollable cough.

ONE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE

As a neck breather, the standard drop-down oxygen mask on an aircraft cannot provide oxygen through your airway if it is placed over your nose and mouth. I have checked and been informed that all airlines carry a child mask and hand held oxygen bottle

If you have concerns about what would happen in an emergency, speak to the airline before travelling and let cabin crew know about your individual needs if you feel comfortable doing so. Personally I have never felt it necessary to point out my "disability" to air crew.



AND FINALLY...

Preparation matters — but enjoyment matters more!

That first trip can feel daunting, but being prepared can take away some of the worry.

Happy holidays and safe travels!

Life After Lary Fundraising

A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE FOX PUB

Ken Balcombe, his wife Donna, and the whole team at The Fox Pub in Ulceby continue to be incredible supporters of Life After Lary. What began with a fundraising event has grown into ongoing support from the whole community.

Throughout the year, The Fox keeps a Life After Lary collection pot on the bar, with customers generously adding their donations.

Each summer, the pub also hosts Fox Fest — a full day of live music, fun and community spirit. After choosing Life After Lary as their charity last year, Ken, Donna and the team very kindly decided to support us again this year.

And what a result!

£500 RAISED AT FOX FEST 2026

Together with donations collected at the pub, **The Fox has now raised more than £1,700 for Life After Lary over the past two years.**

We're incredibly grateful to Ken, Donna, The Fox team and everyone in their community who has donated and supported Life After Lary. Thank you!

What a summer it's been for Life After Lary!

Our members and supporters across the country have been busy raising funds for Life After Lary in all sorts of ways.

Our Life After Lary **Big Summer Dog Walk** is now drawing to a close, and we're busy collecting donations and adding up the final total. A huge thank you to everyone who took part, sponsored a walker, shared the fundraiser or simply cheered our walkers — and their four-legged companions along!

We've also had several other fantastic fundraising efforts taking place recently, with final donations and totals still making their way back to us.
We'll share all the results — and some very well-deserved thank-yous as soon as the final figures are in.

EVERY PENNY MAKES A DIFFERENCE
Fundraising by our members, families, friends and supporters helps Life After Lary continue providing support and practical resources to people affected by laryngeal cancer.
Whether it's a community event, sponsored challenge, collection pot or your own fundraising idea, every contribution helps us continue what we do.

INSPIRED TO GET INVOLVED?
Thinking about organising your own fundraiser for Life After Lary?
We'd love to hear your ideas and help you get started.

Contact:
fundraising@lifeafterlary.co.uk

COMING SOON — OUR 2027 CALENDAR!
We're delighted to let you know that the Life After Lary 2027 Calendar will soon be available to buy.
It's a great way to support Life After Lary while getting organised for the year ahead, with all proceeds going directly to the charity to help us continue supporting the laryngectomy community.

£10 plus P&P

To order a copy please email —
contact@lifeafterlary.co.uk

Look out for more details soon on the Life After Lary Facebook page!!

Upcoming Meet-Ups

SHROPSHIRE MEET-UP
Our Shropshire group will soon be getting together for a special smell workshop, allowing members to learn more about smell after laryngectomy, practise techniques and share their experiences with others who understand.

COULD YOU HOST A MEET-UP?
We'd love to see more Life After Lary meet-ups happening across the country!

If you'd be interested in bringing laryngectomees together in your local area, get in touch. Life After Lary will help with organising your meet-up, attend where possible and cover the hall and catering costs — you don't have to do it alone.

Regional Patient Event

10.00am – 10.45am COFFEE/REGISTRATION

10:30 -10.45 Welcome, introductions and housekeeping

10.45-11.30 History of laryngectomy and what is involved in the surgery
Lisa Fraser, ENT consultant will give us a history of the surgery and what surgeons do to try and maximise function after surgery

11.30-12.00 Laryngectomy Peer Support: The Cancer Laryngectomee Trust
Roz Oswald trustee of the Cancer Laryngectomee trust will talk about the charity and the legacy of her father Sidney.

12.00- 12.30 Looking after your lungs after surgery
Menna Payne and Claire McAleer (Clinical Specialist SLTs) will talk about changes in breathing after surgery and what this means for your lung health and how you can maximise your lung health

12.30-13.30 LUNCH

13.30-14.00 SevernDIRECT introduction and understanding the role of a DAC
A DAC is a Dispensing Appliance Contractor. Find out more about what a DAC is from Michelle Habgood from RapidCare about how they operate and what SevernDIRECT can offer.

14:00 -15:00 Laryngectomy Peer Support: Life After Lary
Jon and Ian co-founders of Life After Lary will talk about their story and the work of the charity

15:00-15:30 Meeting Close and Feedback

We hope that the event will be a positive experience for you and those who attended with you. We will be asking you to complete some brief feedback so that we can learn from has worked well and gather your thoughts about areas for improvement

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING TODAY AND SUPPORTING THIS EVENT

Venue

Pontyclun Rugby Club

Llantrisant Road,
Pontyclun
CF72 9DQ

Date / Time

Friday 11th September

10:00am – 12:00pm

If you want to find out more about the charity follow this link:
https://www.lifeafterlary.co.uk/

For further information/to register please contact:
Menna Payne
Wales, Clinical Specialist, Speech & Language Therapist
07810 550765 | Menna.Payne@severnhealthcare.com

severn

Reaching more patients and their families through MacMillan

Last week, Jon visited Macmillan teams across hospitals in London and the South, helping to make Life After Lary support more visible and accessible to patients and families.

During the visits, he delivered Life After Lary posters, leaflets and information packs to Macmillan hubs, cancer centres and support teams, giving healthcare professionals resources they can share directly with those who may benefit from our support.

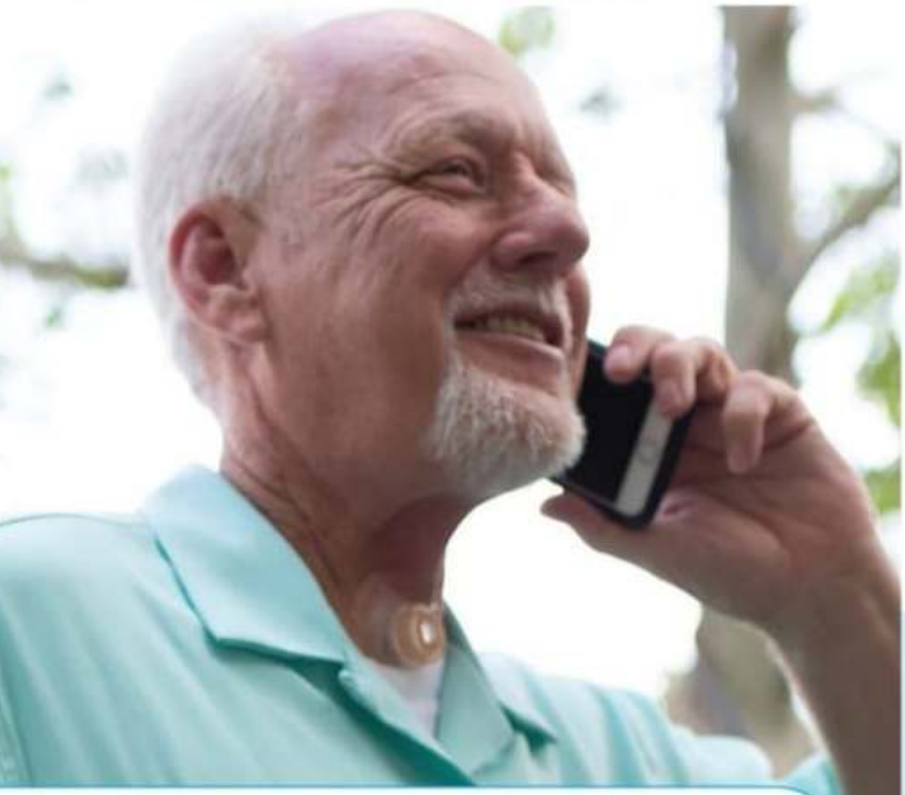
The response from Macmillan staff was incredibly positive, with teams welcoming the opportunity to help more people discover the Life After Lary community and the support available.

WHY THESE CONNECTIONS MATTER
Building relationships with hospitals and cancer support teams helps us reach people earlier in their recovery, when finding others who understand life after laryngectomy can make such a difference.

Every poster displayed and every information pack handed to a patient is another opportunity for someone to discover that support is out there and they don't have to navigate life after laryngectomy alone.

INTRODUCING

Blom-Singer®
SpeakFree™ HME
Hands Free Valve



Register on our Laryngectomy SpeakEasy Forum:
www.severnhealthcare.com/community/forum/11-the-speakeasy/
to watch the SpeakFree™ HME video

Whatever your activity or lifestyle. A simple, disposable hands free HME that fits with your active life

AVAILABLE ON PRESCRIPTION

For more information and to see our extensive range of Blom-Singer® products, please visit our website:

It's simple. Your HME and hands free speaking valve, all in one.

The Blom-Singer® SpeakFree™ HME Hands Free Valve is the first heat and moisture exchange (HME) cartridge with a single-use, fully integrated and adjustable hands free valve.

Features:

- **Choose your flow and go**
  Two simple choices for airflow resistance:
  ClassicFlow® : BE 1090EZ
  EasyFlow® : BE 1090EF
- **Truly innovative**
  One adjustable valve with hands free speech that adjusts from light to extra strong, doing the work of multiple hands free competitor devices
- **Freedom of choice**
  Attaches to Blom-Singer® adhesive housings or a Blom-Singer® StomaSoft® Laryngectomy Tube.

severnhealthcare.com • Telephone: 01635 887640 • Email: service@severnhealthcare.com

SOFT, SIMPLE & SATISFYING
Easy meal inspiration when eating feels difficult

Whether you're recovering from treatment, experiencing swallowing difficulties or simply having a day when softer foods are easier, finding meals that are both manageable and enjoyable can sometimes be a challenge.
The right texture will be different for everyone, so always follow any individual advice you've been given by your SLT or dietitian. But if you're looking for a little inspiration, here are some softer meal ideas to try.

BREAKFAST
Creamy porridge made with full-fat milk and add honey or cream for extra energy.
Or try: well-softened cereal, smooth yoghurt or softly scrambled eggs.

LUNCH
Creamy soup
Try potato & leek, chicken or a smooth vegetable soup, enriched with cream, cheese or milk if you need additional calories.
Or try: soft scrambled eggs, mashed potato with a favourite topping or a fluffy omelette.

DINNER
Fish pie with plenty of sauce.
Soft fish, creamy sauce and smooth mashed potato make a comforting combination that's easy to adapt to your preferred texture.
Or try: macaroni cheese, shepherd's pie with extra gravy, soft pasta dishes or a casserole adapted to suit you.

TOP TIPS

Keep it moist
Gravy, sauces, cream or butter can make dry foods easier and more comfortable to eat.

Watch the acid
Tomatoes, citrus fruits, vinegar and other acidic foods can sting a sore or sensitive mouth. If they're uncomfortable, give them a miss for now.

Turn down the heat
Spicy, salty and very hot foods or drinks may irritate a sore mouth. Cooler or lukewarm options can sometimes be much more comfortable**.**

Soft can still be nutritious
If you need extra calories or protein, enrich foods you can manage with full-fat milk, cheese, cream or butter, following any advice from your dietitian.

SOMETHING SWEET
Custard with soft or stewed fruit
A simple pudding that's easy to adapt — and adding cream or full-fat custard can give it an extra calorie boost.
Or try: mousse, rice pudding, semolina, crème caramel, yoghurt or ice cream.

SOMETHING TO SIP 🥛
A creamy milkshake
Whole milk, ice cream and your favourite flavour can make an easy, energy-rich drink.
Or try: hot chocolate made with full-fat milk or a nutritional supplement recommended by your healthcare team.

NEED A DIFFERENT TEXTURE?

Everyone's swallowing needs are different. You may have been advised by your Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) or dietitian to follow a specific texture-modified diet, such as IDDSI Level 3 (Liquidised) or Level 4 (Puréed). If so, always follow the level recommended specifically for you — and remember that texture-modified food **doesn't have to mean preparing and blending every meal yourself.**

Companies such as **Wiltshire Farm Foods and other specialist meal providers offer ready-made texture-modified meals**, including options prepared to specific IDDSI levels. Meals can be delivered directly to your home and simply heated when needed.
These types of prepared meals are also used within healthcare settings, so they may already be familiar from a hospital stay.

Ask your SLT or dietitian for advice about the right texture for you and suitable meal options available in your area.

Mental Health — Cancer doesn't only affect the body

No one chooses cancer — or for someone they love to have cancer.
And no one wakes up after a diagnosis and chooses to struggle with anxiety, depression, trauma, obsessive thoughts or emotions that can suddenly feel overwhelming.
Cancer can change the way we think, feel and respond to the world around us.
Treatment may end, wounds may heal and appointments may become less frequent — **but our minds don't always recover at the same pace as our bodies**.

WHEN YOUR MIND WON'T SWITCH OFF
A darker freckle becomes a long mental battle.
Something tiny can trigger thoughts of worst-case scenarios.

You struggle to "let things go".
Your mind returns to the same worry again and again, even when there's nothing more you can do about it.

You imagine what might go wrong before anything has happened.

Decisions become exhausting.
Even small choices can feel enormous when you're frightened of getting something wrong.

You can look completely calm while your thoughts are racing.

You worry about things that never actually happen.
But the anxiety you experience while imagining them is very real.

You become mentally exhausted.
Constantly analysing, anticipating and worrying takes energy.

For many people, overthinking feels like carrying a noisy mind that never fully switches off.

WHEN TREATMENT ENDS, THE FEAR DOESN'T ALWAYS END WITH IT
A new pain. A change in your body. An upcoming scan. A hospital letter arriving through the door.
After cancer, seemingly ordinary things can carry a completely different meaning.

You may find yourself checking your body more often, worrying about symptoms you once wouldn't have noticed, or becoming anxious as appointments and scans approach. For some people, reminders of diagnosis or treatment can bring back powerful emotions long after the physical event has passed.

There is no single "right" way to feel after cancer.

WHEN YOU'RE STRUGGLING
Talking about how you're feeling can be an important first step. Support might come from family or friends, your cancer team, GP, a counsellor or psychologist, or simply from speaking to someone who has been through something similar.

You don't have to wait until things become unbearable before asking for support.

WE UNDERSTAND
The Life After Lary community isn't only here for the practical side of living after laryngectomy.

It's also a place to talk about the difficult days, the worries, the frustrations and the things other people might not understand.

NEED SOME SUPPORT?
If you're concerned about your mental health or wellbeing, **please reach out for support.**

Your GP
Contact your GP to talk about how you're feeling and the support available to you.

Samaritans
Call 116 123 free, 24 hours a day.

Shout
Text SHOUT to 85258 for free, confidential 24/7 text support.

If you need urgent mental health help
Call NHS 111 and select the mental health option where available.

In an emergency
If you or someone else is in immediate danger, or you have seriously harmed yourself and need urgent medical attention, call 999 or go to A&E.

Sometimes simply telling someone "I'm not doing OK" is the first step. You don't have to manage everything on your own.

New look
Same reliable products and services

Atos Care is now part of the Coloplast Group, we are now unveiling our new look that reflects our heritage while embracing our journey ahead.

0800 783 1659
www.atos-care.co.uk

Throughout 2026 you will see our new look appear everywhere, from our packaging to all communications with you. Even as our design evolves, what truly matters remains unchanged.

Atos Care → Atos | Care

Now, as part of the Coloplast Group, we are stepping into a new shared identity.

Our look is changing, our purpose is not.

We are still Atos, still fully dedicated to supporting you and our mission remains to help make life easier for people living with a neck stoma.

Atos Care will continue to be an integrated care and distribution service for people with a laryngectomy in the UK.

Welcome to Atos Care

The only integrated care and distribution service for people with a laryngectomy and tracheostomy in the UK.

Atos Care is a comprehensive support service, dedicated to making life easier for people living with a neck stoma. We provide a range of services to patients and the clinicians who care for them, including delivery of prescription products and a rich network of care and support services to help them adjust to life after a laryngectomy or tracheostomy.

The Atos Circle of Care

Best Start: Get off to the best start in life after a laryngectomy.

- Enhanced support for your first six months from our Welcome Team of CQC Registered Nurses
- A welcome pack and a welcome call
- Practical tools and equipment to make life easier, including a complimentary care bag containing a range of helpful items
- Regular liaison with clinicians for joined up care

Inspected and rated Good
Care Quality Commission

Connection hub: Stay connected to those who know and understand.

- A dedicated Customer Care Representative
- Personalised service - you choose how and when you hear from us
- CQC Registered Nurses to support you in your daily routines, in close partnership and communication with clinicians
- Educational events in the community for people with similar experiences
- Atos MyLife app to provide inspiration and information on living well after a laryngectomy

Care delivered: Bringing the right products and care your way.

- Easy and convenient ordering
- Optional convenient monthly reminders
- Electronic Prescription Service
- Rapid, reliable delivery
- Discreet packaging
- Convenience orders by subscription

Call: 0800 783 1659
Text: 0753 7417 928
www.atos-care.co.uk

Atos | Care

NEW LIFE AFTER LARY RESOURCES

We've created two new Life After Lary leaflets to help raise awareness of the charity and the support available to laryngectomees, their families and carers. Look out for them in hospitals, support centres and within the wider laryngectomy community.

Pen Friend Service

A new postal pen friend support service has been launched to help people preparing for, or recovering from, a laryngectomy. To help them feel less isolated and more supported during a life-changing time.
Life After Lary, a registered charity in England and Wales, has introduced The Pen Friend Support Service to connect patients, families and carers with volunteer correspondents who understand the laryngectomy journey through lived experience.
Many people facing laryngectomy surgery experience loneliness and anxiety, particularly those who do not use the internet or social media. The new service offers a simple and personal alternative through written letters, providing encouragement, reassurance, and shared understanding.

The service is open to patients preparing for surgery, people adjusting to life after a laryngectomy and family members or carers who would value one to one support. Participants are matched with a suitable pen friend who can offer steady companionship and practical insight through regular correspondence. A spokesperson for the charity said: "Recovery and adjustment after a laryngectomy can feel overwhelming, especially when someone feels cut off from others who understand what they are going through. Written letters are personal, private and can be reread whenever support is needed. We want people to know they are not alone and that someone is there to listen."

The Pen Friend Support Service is confidential and free to access. It is designed especially for people who prefer traditional written communication or who are not comfortable using online support groups.

It was during my time spent on an ENT ward, where I met my first laryngectomy patient, and recall being astounded by their bravery, following such life changing surgery. I remember being fascinated by the nature of the surgery, and going home after each shift, to research and learn more, so I could support these patients better. Anyone interested in joining the service, either to receive support or to volunteer as a pen friend, can write to:

Life After Lary
90 Brabazon Avenue
Wallington
Surrey
SM6 9ET
United Kingdom

PRACTICAL SUPPORT FROM LIFE AFTER LARY

Life After Lary can provide a range of practical items and resources to support laryngectomees and help make everyday life a little easier.

Our **New Patient Best Start Care Packs are provided free of charge**, helping those at the beginning of their laryngectomy journey with useful information and practical support. **We also provide free Radiotherapy Care Packs**, designed to offer practical support and a few helpful essentials for those going through radiotherapy treatment.

We can also supply a range of other items, including:

- Neck Breather window stickers
- Seat belt covers
- Red wristbands
- Personal alarms
- Non-verbal wallet cards
- Trolley coin keyrings
- Lapel pins
- Posters
- Flyers
- Leaflets

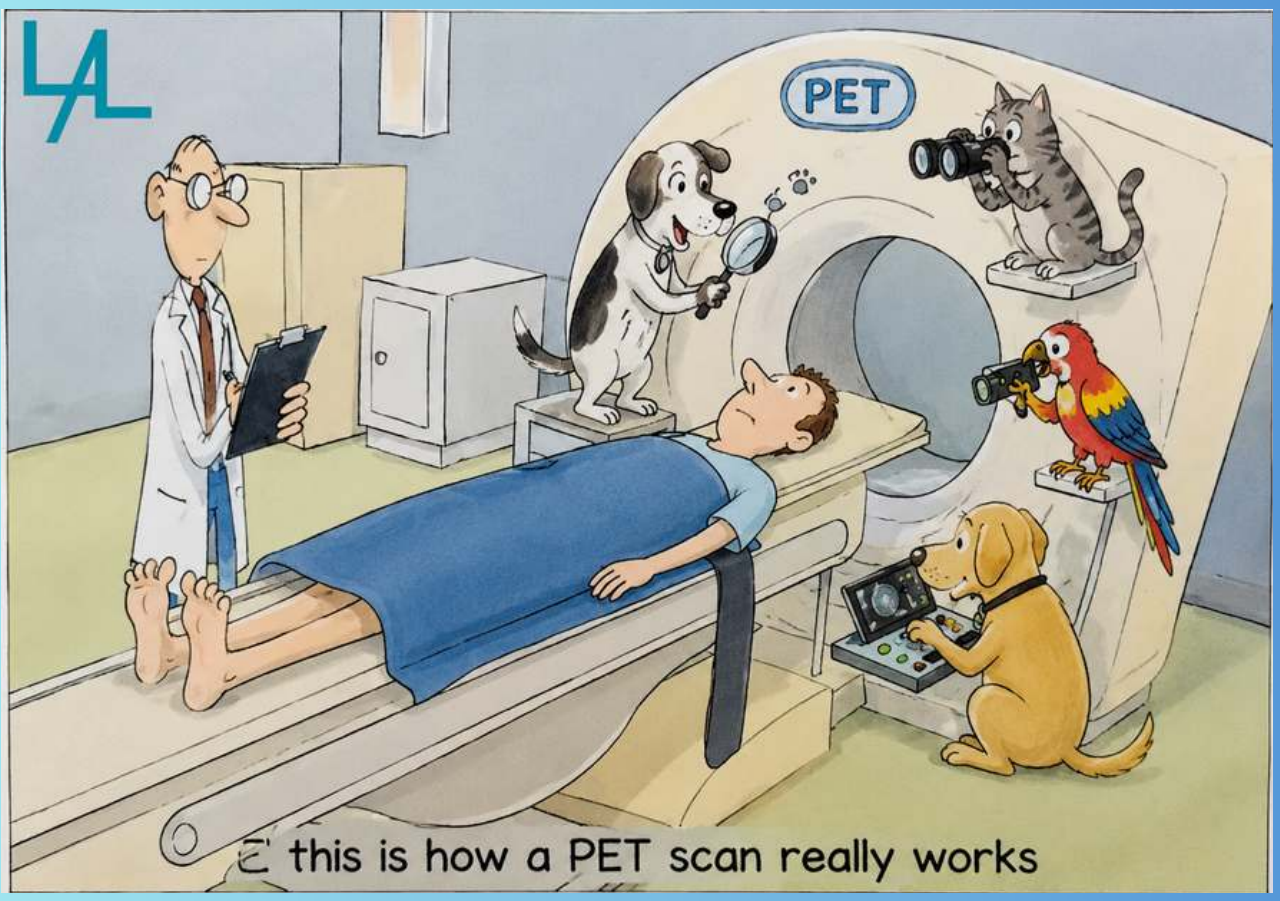
NEED SOMETHING? JUST ASK
For some items, we may ask for a **small donation towards our costs,** helping us continue to provide practical support to as many people as possible.

But most importantly, **we never want cost to prevent someone from getting something they genuinely need**.

If you need an item, would like to find out what's available, or have an idea for something that could help our community, please get in touch. **We'll always do our best to help**.

contact@lifeafterlary.co.uk

A Little Lary Laugh



We have a deal with a holiday park on the **Kent South Coast at New Romney.**

There are 4 beautiful types of accommodation to choose from:

- 2 Lodges with kingsize bedrooms, sleeping 6
- 1 caravan sleeping 8 and
- 1 caravan sleeping 6

Accommodation is dog friendly, the park is across the road from a golden sandy quiet beach with a fishing lake, club house entertai
nment and an indoor pool.
A perfect relaxing break, ideal as a get away to rest after treatments.

Contact Samantha Gilby — samgilby@hotmail.co.uk / 07949 382819
quoting Life After Lary for 10% off!

Autumn is on its Way — A few simple ways to look after yourself as the seasons change

CHANGING AIR, CHANGING NEEDS
As temperatures begin to change, cooler and drier air can sometimes feel different when you breathe directly through a stoma. Your HME helps warm and humidify the air you breathe, while a suitable stoma cover or scarf can offer some extra protection when you need it.

WHEN THE HEATING GOES BACK ON...
For some of us, at least! Central heating can make indoor air particularly dry, which may affect your airway and secretions. Keep hydrated and pay attention to humidification if you notice things becoming drier than usual.

SEASONAL BUGS ARE BACK
Autumn also means the return of coughs, colds, flu and other respiratory infections. Good hand hygiene and avoiding close contact with people who are unwell where possible can help — and remember to follow any individual advice you've been given about seasonal vaccinations.

AUTUMN COMFORTS
Soups, stews, casseroles and other warming dishes start creeping back onto the menu as the evenings draw in. If eating can sometimes be difficult, many autumn favourites are also easy to adapt to suit your preferred texture.

DARKER DAYS
Shorter days and longer evenings can affect mood too. Getting outside in daylight when you can, staying connected and having little things to look forward to can all help as the seasons change.

Wherever you are and whatever the weather, the Life After Lary community is here through every season.

Across the UK and further afield, autumn can look very different — some of us are reaching for the heating while others are still refusing to put the shorts away! Wherever you are, a change of season can bring a few changes for life with a laryngectomy too.

A LITTLE AUTUMN RESET
A change of season can be a lovely excuse for a small reset. Dig out the warmer clothes, clear out that drawer you've been avoiding, stock the freezer with a few favourite meals or simply change up your daily routine.

It doesn't have to mean a huge overhaul — sometimes a few small changes can make a new season feel like a fresh start.

GET OUTSIDE WHILE YOU CAN
Crisp autumn days can be some of the loveliest for getting outdoors. Whether it's a proper walk, a trip to the garden centre, watching the leaves change or simply sitting outside with a cuppa, a little daylight and fresh air can do wonders.
Just remember whatever stoma protection feels right for you as the weather changes.

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO
As summer ends and the nights begin drawing in, it can help to put a few enjoyable things in the diary.
It doesn't need to be anything elaborate — coffee with a friend, a cinema trip, Sunday lunch, a favourite TV series returning or an autumn day out all count. Sometimes anticipation is half the pleasure.

AUTUMN AT HOME
There's something rather lovely about the first evening you close the curtains early and settle in.
Dig out the blankets, find a new box set, light a candle if that's your thing, make something warm to eat and embrace the occasional guilt-free cosy evening.

Life doesn't always have to be productive.

THE GREAT AUTUMN DEBATE
When does the heating go on?

🍂 **The minute September arrives**
🍂 **Not until October**
🍂 **Only when I can see my breath indoors**
🍂 **Heating? I'm still wearing shorts!**

Tell us which camp you're in over in the Life After Lary Facebook group.

Advertise with us

Support Life After Lary's commitment to improving the lives of people affected by laryngectomy while sharing your organisation with our growing community. We offer flexible advertising packages to suit a range of budgets and will work closely with you to ensure your advert complements our publication and reaches the right audience.
To discuss advertising opportunities, please contact: **contact@lifeafterlary.co.uk**

JOIN US THIS MONTH

Upcoming Zooms, contact details and community updates

Volume 2 — 01 September 2026

Monthly Support Zoom

Thursday 3rd September / 6.30pm / General Catch-Up

Oesophageal Speech Zoom

Wednesday 23rd September / 6.30pm Oesophageal Speech with Ian and Sarah

CONTACT US

www.lifeafterlary.co.uk

contact@lifeafterlary.co.uk

Facebook: Life After Lary

Charity No: 1215969

With thanks to S & J Cleaning for their continued support

S & J Cleaning Systems Limited

Industrial Cleaning Equipment Supplies