

PRESS RELEASE

We are delighted to announce the prestigious "2009 Robin Tavistock Award" has been awarded to our chairman Dr Jenny A Dautlich.

The award was presented by the chairman of the Tavistock Trust for Aphasia, Henrietta, Duchess of Bedford, at a ceremony at the 'British Aphasiology Society' conference in Sheffield on 9 September:

The Duchess of Bedford said, "*Jenny's determination and single mindedness has achieved so much in such a short space of time, both personally and for so many. She is an inspiration to many people and so deserves this award.*"

This award, named after Robin Tavistock, the 14th Duke of Bedford who founded the TTA, is presented annually to a **person or group who has made a significant contribution in the field of aphasia**. This year, for the first time, the award went to someone who, like the Duke of Bedford, has overcome their own aphasia and gone on to help improve the lives of others.

Originally from Ecuador, Jenny was working as a doctor in public health in Yorkshire when her life changed suddenly and dramatically. Jenny suffered a massive heart attack and multiple strokes whilst visiting New York in December 1998. She was in a coma for two weeks and when she came out of it she was told that she would never walk nor speak again.

In 1999 Jenny and her husband Wilfried moved from Yorkshire to **Stroud**, but unfortunately Jenny could find no aphasia support in the county. Jenny worked hard to overcome her aphasia, which was made more difficult as English is Jenny's second language. She attended specialist aphasia courses, adult education and college courses in order to improve her communication skills and rebuild her confidence.

In early 2001, with the support of Prof. Chris Code and Speakability, Jenny, together with Mary Bracewell, started a self-help group for people with aphasia, which became 'Glos-Speak'. It took Jenny & Mary months of hard work to set up, and the result is a vibrant active group that offers long term support to people living with aphasia.

Jenny, however, had a wider vision – encouraged and supported by her husband, she wanted to find a way to make it possible for people with aphasia to be accepted by society and contribute to the communities where they belonged. She wanted, also, to reach more people with aphasia. In 2005, again after much research and planning, Jenny launched her ground breaking aphasia-friendly website AphasiaNow.

AphasiaNow is a forum run by, and established for, people living with aphasia. It is a place where people can find useful information, interesting articles and vital encouragement. It is a place where people, wherever they are, can share experience and pass on expertise. The website has not only grown into one of the best websites about aphasia, it has also enabled a virtual community to evolve.

In 2007, AphasiaNow hosted its own national two-day conference in Cirencester.

Aphasia is an acquired language disorder [partial or total loss of verbal or written communication] resulting from neurological damage. An estimated 3,000 people in Gloucestershire suffer a•pha+si•a.

www.aphasiatavistocktrust.org - www.aphasianow.org -

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