

## PRESS RELEASE



10<sup>th</sup> February 2020

### Supporting people with smell loss on Anosmia Awareness Day

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February is **Anosmia Awareness Day** which helps to raise awareness of all forms of smell loss and the support that is available to help those with this 'invisible disability'.

Smell loss can have a profound effect on people's lives. Sufferers can feel anxious about the dangers of being unable to smell gas or smoke, isolated due to a loss of intimacy with close family members, and feel diminished social ties.

Smell loss also affects a person's ability to experience flavour, which can alter their relationship with food and lead to weight cycling. Anosmia is also an important biomarker for a number of neurodegenerative diseases, such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

It's estimated that up to 5% of the UK population (over 3 million people) could be suffering from:

- anosmia - a complete lack of smell
- parosmia - a distortion of smells
- phantosmia - phantom smells
- hyposmia - reduced smell

[AbScent](#) was founded by Chrissi Kelly, who lost her sense of smell in 2012. After finding that there was little support available, or research into the condition, she started a support group on social media. This grew to become AbScent, which now provides a range of services including instruction in smell training, online seminars and Facebook Live events.

*Chrissi says; "Smell loss changed my life, my personality and my view of the world. It is a unique bereavement, impossible to put into words. Now, AbScent, along with some of the most important names in olfactory research, is working to raise public awareness of smell loss and make a difference to those who have this life-changing condition.*

Denise Stanton, 40, from Archway, London lost her sense of smell in 2017 after a severe sinus infection and it has had a huge impact on her life. She says: *"I have a little girl and one day we were at home and one of the gas hob rings had blown out and the whole place was filled with gas and I didn't know. That really upset me."*

Although Denise's condition has improved she still doesn't get the same sensory experience as others. She says: *"I feel really disconnected when people talk about smells and it makes me anxious when I can't smell them. I can't help feeling a little resentful."*

Smell training has been shown to amplify recovery where there is damage to the olfactory nerve, by stimulating this nerve and encouraging it to regenerate. The original protocol uses the essential oils of rose, lemon, clove and eucalyptus which are smelled twice a day for a minimum of four months.

AbScent launched the Snif app to support people with their smell training.

## ENDS

### For interviews and enquiries please contact:

Caroline Sharp

Sharp Content Communications

[caroline@sharp-content.co.uk](mailto:caroline@sharp-content.co.uk) / 07979 756440

LOGOS AND PHOTOS CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT:

[https://abscent.org/download\\_file/255/0](https://abscent.org/download_file/255/0)

### Notes to editors:

- [AbScent](#) is a UK registered charity No. 1183468 started in 2018 to help people who are experiencing the distressing effects of smell loss.
- The Sense of Smell Project will be overseen by an international expert on smell disorders, [Prof. Thomas Hummel](#) of the University of Dresden in Germany and data analyst in olfactory studies [Robert Pellegrino](#), of the University of Tennessee.
- For more information on the latest available research into smell loss visit: <https://abscent.org/learn-us/latest-research>
- AbScent's vision is a world where smell loss is recognised by the general population as a challenging condition, where patients are fully supported by the medical community and their care circles, and where healing strategies are explored, funded and made available to the world-wide population.
- The effects of smell loss can be complex and therefore support is necessary from several areas to suit the biopsychosocial needs of the community.
- [Smell training](#) is a supportive technique for people who have suffered smell loss and has been demonstrated in over a dozen scientific studies to be of benefit for people who have lost their sense of smell after a virus or injury.
- [Smell training](#) is not a cure, but a way of amplifying natural recovery. Every time it is done it stimulates the olfactory nerves and this encourages the nerve to regenerate. It can be likened to physiotherapy for the nose.
- AbScent consists of Founder Chrissi Kelly, Trustees Miriam Block and ENT Simon Gane of the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital in London, and an advisory board detailed on the website.

[www.abscent.org](http://www.abscent.org)