

HUNTS COMMUNITY CANCER NETWORK

Moving Forward & Living Well

Summer 2018

Issue 19

Welcome to the summer newsletter from the Hunts Community Cancer Network

Summer has arrived and it seems that the time has gone very quickly since I wrote my last contribution for the spring newsletter. I might even be a little late this month but I will blame the pressure of work and I have been busy doing my virtual miles.....

We are currently looking after approximately 320 people and their families. My team of 8 nurses have been working very hard and communication is vital between them all as they cover days off and annual leave. Our team have various holidays planned this summer, including St Lucia, Thailand, Cornwall, Devon and Chester to name a few destinations. I am sure you will agree that as they work so hard, they really deserve these breaks with their families.

The team continue to give their time freely to support the charity too, which enables them to support us. You will see more in Susan's report. This support from the charity has funded the following to take place:

- Our acupuncture clinic is now extremely active and helping patients each week.
- Teenage and young adult cancer course attended at Addenbrookes Hospital.
- Blood analysis training course.
- Continued development of the Get Active Scheme.
- Continued development of yoga classes and Tai Chi.
- More counselling support offered when necessary to patients and family members.

I have mentioned my virtual miles above, some of you may have seen the nurses' virtual walk on Facebook. We are visiting Paris, via Land's End and back to Hinchingbrooke Hospital. They have been walking, running, indoor and outdoor cycling and even a trip in a kayak. We have been asking for sponsorship for this mission and you can find us on the HCCN Facebook page and if you would like to donate to us, the mission finishes on 18 July 2018. We are using Just Giving and the link is <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/hccnursesvirtualjourney>

OFFICE NUMBER 01480 416410

EMAIL: aburridge@nhs.net

I have mentioned our team having their summer holidays and of course the team will work alongside their colleagues to cover all patients. Your help would be appreciated to make sure that together we plan your care and holidays for the next few months and please liaise with your usual nurse to book in your regular support visits. The nurses will hold their colleagues' phone but may I kindly ask you don't leave any urgent messages or send any urgent texts without checking if your nurse is working. You can ring the office to check or leave a non-urgent message with Amanda.

Wishing you a lovely summer and I hope you too will be able to have a break.

From me and the team, Karen

Charity News

I thought for this newsletter we might talk a bit about the work and purpose of the charity.

The charity was begun to help people avoid that feeling of falling off a cliff that can happen at the end of treatment, where one minute life is taken over completely by visits to the hospital, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, blood tests and the next? Nothing..... "We'll see you in 3 months for a scan".

Yet that is the time when a very different kind of support can be needed.

All those suppressed emotions, all that anxiety and all those new questions arise: "How best to take care of myself? What should I eat? What is true in all those things I read about life after cancer"?

Working with the nursing team, we seek to address those concerns particularly in the areas of exercise, nutrition and emotional well being. Why these areas? Well these are the areas that the research is strong and clear.

You may be well acquainted with our exercise classes, yoga, Tai Chi and the Get Active programme. Our drop-ins where you can chat to nurses or others managing themselves through cancer. Or our colour courses, or acupuncture clinic.

But we also carry out research into more difficult areas, bringing you speakers to conference or designing purpose built programmes. We are currently working on a new programme called from Patient to Person

OFFICE NUMBER 01480 416410

EMAIL: aburridge@nhs.net

- how to move on emotionally. Being diagnosed with cancer brings up lots of questions, can make us examine how we are currently living our lives and can leave us living with fear.

The whole purpose of this programme is to help people find their way forward. A way to manage fears and address and make changes. Of course the groups are small, no more than eight. People will be encouraged to work with a partner and can share, or not share, feelings with the larger group. We know that change takes time and so the programme runs over 6 months. There are three attended group meetings and in between each person will be supported individually as they seek to implement their plans, supported both with calls from the class leaders and direct support from their chosen buddy or buddies made on the course. If you think you could benefit from this programme please contact Amanda on 01480 416410 or email aburridge@nhs.net. We set no time limits on when you can join this programme because we know that we all react differently. If you think this programme could be of valuable for you then please make contact.

We have recognised other needs that exist and are working hard to obtain grants to fund them, even going on a course to learn how to write successful bids!

We are always keen to hear your views about what you think might be helpful. Please contact any of us if you have a suggestion to make or feedback to give. Our email addresses are at the bottom.

What is most important for you to remember is that the charity is there to support you as long as you need support.

The charity also supports our nursing service with their training needs and we play a full part in the Steering Committee which seeks to support the HCCN nursing team develop their service, maintain their resource levels and generally solve the problems that can face a community based nursing team.

If you have thoughts or questions or want to join our growing team of wonderful volunteers then please make contact.

“All our forthcoming events will be posted on our Facebook page - follow us to see where we are and where you can come and see us”.

The Trustees

Susan Moore susan@hccnthecharity.org Mob 07738208831

Jan Davis jan@hccnthecharity.org

Amanda Orchard amanda@hccnthecharity.org

Karen Moseley karen.moseley@nhs.net

SUSAN

OFFICE NUMBER 01480 416410

EMAIL: aburridge@nhs.net

mobile 07738 208831

REGULAR REMINDER

Blood Tests - Can you help us please? If you are expecting a blood test and you haven't seen your nurse by midday (or had a telephone call to confirm the visit), would you please ring and check that we are on our way? Ring your nurse or Amanda in the office.

Hunts Community Cancer Network

Call Amanda on 01480 416410

Email: aburridge@nhs.net

www.hccn.org.uk

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