

Moving Forward & Living Well.

Winter 2014

Issue 5

The Hunts Community Cancer Network held its 3rd patient conference in November. Record numbers attended, over 100 people, making it both our busiest and most successful conference to date.

Once again we attracted excellent speakers who stimulated lots of questions. A recurring theme of which was:

'What is cancer'? and **'Why do people with the same cancer seem to receive different treatments?'**

Approximately one in three people will be affected by cancer at some stage in their lives. Cancer is not one disease, but many. As well as having some similar features, each cancer will have a distinctive character, which varies according to its type and location.

The human body is made up of millions of cells, which grow and divide to replace old tissue and maintain the body. Each part of your body is composed of cells, which are shaped and designed for that area. Usually cells in the body are replaced by identical new ones when they wear out.

When things go wrong, some of the new cells are different. They begin to multiply and form a tumour or lump. This lump could be benign or malignant. Benign tumours are usually harmless and sometimes do not need treatment. Malignant tumours are cancerous.

In some cancers, the abnormal or uncontrolled growth of cells occurs in the bone marrow where blood cells are made. These cancers do not always produce a tumour or lump.

What causes cancer and how quickly the cells grow and spread, is different from person to person. Rarely are two cancers the same and for this reason you may be treated differently.

There are different types of treatment for cancer, depending on the stage and type of cancer you have and your general health. Because advances in cancer care and treatment are being made all the time, what you, your family or friends think now may not be correct or up to date. Check with your doctor or nurse if you are unsure about something you have heard or read about.

Every Friday

**Holiday Inn, Brampton
Race Course.**

In the Coffee Lounge

10am-12md

**Come along & meet us.
Relaxing atmosphere, free
yoga session,
Confidential &
professional advice.**



**Our next Patient
Conference**

Living with Cancer

April 16th 2015

Free to patients & carers

**Lunch & refreshments
included**

There is a future after finding out you have cancer, and every case is different. As time passes, most people find the initial shock and effects of the treatment pass and they can think once again about things other than cancer. Although there is always a chance that cancer will recur, many people become entirely free of the disease. Many more live for years without problems associated with cancer.

The message that we really want people to hear though is that there are things that you can do to support your body in fighting cancer.

Research, unquestionably, shows that people who exercise daily have less risk of developing cancer. But, as importantly, exercise can increase survival and even prevent a cancer from returning (along with diet & weight control) Just 30 minutes of exercise a day along with a healthy diet can make a huge difference.

In the next issue we will talk about some of the foods that have been identified as having a benefit to people with cancer.

Alongside the conference we have a range of enjoyable but focused activities to help you develop healthy habits whether it's exercising in a safe environment, or finding out more about a healthy diet or creating quiet time to be kind to yourself emotionally.

The Drop in and yoga sessions continue on Friday mornings and we have our regular meditation & Pilates classes. These are aimed at those people who are newly diagnosed and starting out on their treatment. We also encourage those living with cancer and aiming to continue with a full and active life,

In the New Year we are re offering our Art class. We have a young & enthusiastic tutor who would like some volunteers to help shape the class. This is a class for beginners and improvers so don't be put off from trying it.

For new readers with a diagnosis of breast, prostate or lung cancer you may not be aware of our on-going campaign. Please ask your nurse or doctor about signs of spinal cord compression. We will continue to raise awareness about Spinal Cord Compression. This can often be diagnosed late and patients fail to report symptoms.

Managing Your Cancer Responsibly Workshop

We cannot of course insist you come BUT, experience and the feedback we receive tells us that these workshops are invaluable to understanding how to play a full part in managing your cancer. This workshop is just as important as the pre chemotherapy chat. We understand that you may feel that you have seen enough of the hospital BUT there is a great deal of information that you need to have. Information that you most likely don't even know that you need to know! Such as;

Are there any late effects of cancer treatment that I should be prepared for?

How can I know if my cancer is returning? What can I do to spot it early?

Does research say that I can help my cancer stay in remission? Can good nutrition & exercise help?

Who should I call if I need advice?

How soon will I be able to go back to work?

If you have not attended a workshop and would like to it's not too late, just let us know.

HCCN the charity

The Charity was established earlier this year and works with the Hunts Community Cancer Network to improve & support cancer care and to provide funds for education & information.

The charity has a face book page called **Hunts Community Cancer Network**, which you can access from your browser. I encourage you to take a look and see the terrific support and fundraising activities that are taking place by patients and their families and friends and by people out in the community who support our work. The web page will also soon be going live.

The charity is building up a range of fun fund raising activities for next year so do keep in touch with the Facebook page.

Simon Atack of Ace Tech has adopted our charity as their charity for 2015. We met Simon at the Huntingdon Business Awards which his company was sponsoring. We were there as the guest of Judy Duddridge, St Neots Community Learning Manager who won the Judges special award for Passion. Judy funds & coordinates our patients' lifestyle activities such as Pilates, yoga & cooking.

So have you seen the absolutely fabulous mural on the back wall of Barretts Department Store in St Neots? This was done by Jonnie Barton who is a local and world famous graffiti artist, he has produced many works of art around St Neots & Eynesbury, in areas that are neglected or to cover where there has been less 'tasteful' graffiti sprayed. Jonnie has taken this White Rabbit from the wall mural and produced an original canvas. He has offered the canvas to Barretts to use to raise funds for their charity of choice. At the moment you can view this amazing artwork in the store but we plan to auction it in the lead up to Christmas, with the support of the Hunts Post, So please keep a look out and help us help more local people living with a cancer diagnosis.

The community cancer nursing team have also gained further recognition after being nominated for & winning the 2014 Innovation Award for Hinchingbrooke Hospital.

Finally at the end of another very busy but rewarding year we wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

As ever contact details are on this page for everything that we have talked about.

The easiest way is to email virginiamelesi@nhs.net .but please feel free to call any of the telephone numbers.

If you would like to offer your talents or fundraise for us this would also be welcomed.

If you wish to be notified of future events such as the patient conference then let us know now and we will be sure to contact you nearer the time.

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