

HUG MAGAZINE



December 2012

(issued on 2nd or 3rd Thursday of alternate months on meeting days)

For HAEMATOLOGY and ONCOLOGY patients, their families and friends being treated in Cancer Services areas or under review



Happy Christmas from HUG

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H.U.G. Swindon Get-Togethers at the GWH

We are currently considering changing get-together arrangements, so contact us to make sure that we are meeting as stated.

The meeting rooms are in the Academy and we meet between 10:00 am and 12:30 pm unless otherwise stated

17th January 2013	-	Seminar Room 4
14th February 2013	-	Seminar Room 4
21st March 2013	-	Seminar Room 6

(The Academy is reached from the front of the Hospital through the double doors at the back of the atrium, going right and following the signs for the Brunel Centre, which first appear at the end of the corridor. Exit the Brunel Centre on the lower ground floor, at the Starbucks café. There are also disabled car parking spaces at the back of the hospital, cross the road and head back towards the entry road. The Academy entrance is about half way along, in the main building. The small parking area just outside the Academy is for staff.)

What do we do?

HUG offers tea, sympathy, sharing of ideas and information and much more, to patients and their families or carers, including:

- Organising monthly get-togethers at the Hospital, Coffee Mornings (contact us for details of the next one, usually around the end of each month) and Craft Sessions (as new stock for sale is required) away from the Hospital
- Suggesting how and where to access professional help, where appropriate
- Attending Cancer Services User Involvement Meetings on behalf of patients and carers and discussing or raising and following up on issues of importance to them
 - ✓ Items currently under discussion include End of Treatment Care, Car Parking and Bus Access and Radiotherapy for Swindon
- Fund-raising to provide practical help with purchases including thermometers, travel bands, mugs, slippers, gel bags and heat pads, when suggested by clinical staff, patients or carers
- Maintaining a website and making leaflets available to promote the group and advertise our activities
- Producing the HUG Magazine bi-monthly and leaving copies in Cancer Services areas, providing direct to members and posting on the website

Items for sale at any time: chemo hats made of a silk/wool mix in a choice of colours and styles and our personalised mugs and teddy bears. Contact us for more details.

INTERESTING HEALTH-RELATED NEWS

Breast cancer detection aids

A breast self-examination glove has recently been launched in the UK. Breast cancer charity Breakthrough's Senior Policy Officer states that the charity does not advocate the use of these gloves and would like to reassure women that there is no need to spend money on products like these.

Another product to hit the market place recently is a torch-like light which is said to be able to detect early signs of breast cancer. Breakthrough's Public Health Manager says that there is no evidence to support this.

Both ladies state that the best way for women to be breast aware is to know and check their own breasts. For guidance on how to do this, refer to the Breakthrough website at breakthrough.org.uk/tlc.

Healthy recipes

The World Cancer Research Fund, based in London, has been highlighting the need for a healthy diet as one of the means of protection ourselves against cancer. They have a series of suitable recipes on their website, under the categories breakfasts, soups, mains, salads, sides and deserts. Find out more at:

www.wcrf-uk.org/cancer_prevention/healthy_recipes/index.php

Report on radiotherapy

The Department of Health has produced a report called Radiotherapy Services in England 2012 providing updated information to enable services to see at a glance how they are progressing against a number of metrics. The Operating Framework for 2011-2012 had concluded that commissioners should ensure that access rates and the use of advanced radiotherapy techniques, such as Intensity Modulated Radiotherapy, are appropriate for their populations.

The update may be of interest to some readers and can be found at

www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/11/radiotherapy-2012/

The Cancer Survivors Club

The Cancer Survivors Club is a collection of inspirational survival stories aimed at helping, encouraging and inspiring people touched by cancer. In addition it provides current patients with a distraction from the worries of treatment, by encouraging them to think about life afterwards.

The collection of stories is available from Amazon and will soon be available from Waterstone and Tesco also. The Amazon price is £8.99.

Possible Changes to Food Arrangements on Dove Ward

In October two HUG members, M and Y took part in a food tasting session on Dove Ward, where patients undergoing intensive chemotherapy are treated. The background to this was that previous HUG members had campaigned for changes to the meals for patients back in 2004/5. That resulted in a change of supplier as the outcome after much discussion. An informal "audit" was subsequently carried out by HUG to see how the food was stored, heated and delivered to patients. Staff thought that HUG might be interested in further involvement and giving opinions, with the possibility of changing suppliers again for Dove Ward and one or two other areas of the GWH only.

Patients on Dove are often there for several weeks and may be really poorly for part of their stay. They may need to be built up but often the smell of food is off-putting. In addition they may not necessarily fancy eating at the normal meal times.

Proposed new arrangements would mean:

- Meal choices could be made at short notice, just half an hour before eating.
- There would be more variety to choose from, although the entire range would not necessarily be available, based on popularity with patients.
- Patients could eat outside normal meal times if necessary.

In addition sandwiches are being introduced throughout the hospital for one meal a day, to replace one of the cooked meals.

Food would be supplied via Carillion hospital services as usual, but from the Apetito CarteChoix range of plated meals and stored in a specially designed rack freezer in the kitchen on the ward. (Apetito brands include Wiltshire Farm Foods, which are delivered direct to home.) Although the food would be a little more expensive than that provided by Tillery Valley, this would be offset by reduced waste. This is because orders would not be taken the day before and more up to date information would be available on patients requiring meals. The meals are already in use in some areas of other hospitals including Cheltenham, Bath Royal, Torquay and Torbay and Musgrove Park.

When chosen meals are taken from the freezer, their barcode is scanned by the supplied microwave, which determines the cooking time for that particular meal. Two meals can be cooked at a time and the next two can be cooking while patients are served. The choice of main course or pudding would each be on a single deep plate, which is covered with the serving plate. Examples of menu possibilities include the following:

- Fruity chicken curry with yellow rice, red peppers and peas
- Cauliflower and broccoli bake with cheesy sauce and parsley dressed potatoes
- Lamb hotpot in sauce with sauté potatoes, mashed potatoes and a mix of peas, swede and carrots

- Jacket potato with a choice of fillings
- Bread and butter pudding with custard
- Lemon sponge and custard
- Rice pudding

When the cooking time is up, a probe which is attached to the microwave, is stuck into the centre of food to check whether it has reached the required temperature. The next plated meal cannot be cooked in the microwave, if the required temperature has not been reached. The food is then turned onto the heated plate is then tidied up of any splashes before delivery, covered by the deep plate that it came in.

Our intrepid tasters were particularly keen to check out whether there was any smell of food seeping from the kitchen through to the ward. They tried the roast beef dinner and enjoyed the meat and the carrots and sprouts which looked and tasted good. They felt that the roast potatoes were a bit disappointing, however. They also tried a cheese and tomato omelette and thought that the egg was very moist and had a lovely flavour. The mixed vegetable accompaniment was nice and colourful and tasted good, but the diced potato was less popular with them.

For afters the HUG ladies tested sticky toffee pudding with custard and really enjoyed it. In normal use, all the main courses would be cooked and served and then the puddings would be served, and delivered separately. The existing system means that everything is delivered to patients at the same time, with the result that some food has cooled before it can be eaten. Separate deliveries between courses would allow a short break for patients and even allow a change of mind about having another course.

Overall our tasters thought that the food looked and tasted good and there was minimal smell, even in the kitchen. The different serving method meant that it was piping hot, and had no time to cool or congeal. The roast and diced potatoes were the only foods which our tasters were not so keen on and that may have been partly personal preference.

A Dietician and a Food Hygiene expert were also involved in the tastings to assess nutritional value and health and safety aspects.

Equipment for this system will cost around £5,000 for the special racked freezer, and 2 microwave ovens, complete with scanner and probe system to check the temperature of meals. We know that patients and their families are often frustrated in their attempts to give something back to the hospital as a thank you for their treatment, so this may be a suitable project.

Any donations towards the cost would be gratefully received by Dove Ward Charitable Funds, specifying that you wish the donation to be used as a contribution towards the cost of the equipment required for Apetito meals. We really feel that the introduction of these new food arrangements would benefit patients in Dove.

Complementary Therapies for Cancer Patients

A question from a HUG member leads us to confirm that there is not a problem with using small amounts of fresh or dried herbs in cooking and enables a reduction in the use of salt. The aromatherapy oils to be avoided, as discussed in the last issue are very concentrated and hence much stronger.

Target Ovarian Cancer

Two of us from HUG attended the first Target Ovarian Cancer charity's "Being Together Day" to be held in the South West area, in Bristol, after one of the CNS's told a member about it. The organisation of the event had been carried out by Target Ovarian Cancer staff with the advice and assistance of Bristol CNS's.

The day consisted of two short plenary sessions for everyone and four workshop sessions, where we split into groups. The workshops, for which first and second choices were requested in advance were called:

- Whole Person Approach & Taking Time for Yourself
- Relaxation & Stress Management
(both of the above led by Penny Brohn Cancer Care personnel)
- Let's Talk
(with a Target Ovarian Cancer facilitator)
- Arts & Crafts
(making brooches with scraps of fabric with the help of a Crafts teacher)

The first aim of the day was clearly to come up with coping mechanisms and sharing ideas with other patients and their carers. Between us we managed to cover all four sessions, since attendees could pick one workshop for the morning and one for the afternoon. Attendees benefited from the open discussions in manageably small groups. The second aim was to collect ideas from attendees for ways to increase awareness of ovarian cancer, to be used in the national awareness campaign in March. It was interesting that a craft session was included, fitting in very well with a recent newspaper article indicating that repetitive craft interests like knitting or cross-stitch can be very therapeutic and relaxing.

It was a tiring but worthwhile day at the Marriot Hotel in the city centre, with a superb lunch provided. It will be followed by a "Let's Talk Awareness Day" on Thursday 31st January 2013 at the same location. For further information or to book contact Sharon Tate on 020 7923 5470 or email state@targetovarian.org.uk, with the email subject Let's Talk Bristol.

Christmas Crackers

As usual at this time of year, we include a few corny Christmas cracker jokes, to cheer up the festivities. See if the family can guess the answers.

Which tree has the best food? A pantry	Where should a dressmaker build her house? On the outskirts
What does the word minimum mean? A very small mother.	Why did the child study in the aeroplane? He wanted a higher education.
Why was Santa's little helped depressed? Because he had low elf esteem.	How do you make milk shake? Give it a good scare
What's the best thing to put in a Christmas cake? Your teeth	How did the human cannonball lose his job? He got fired.
Did you hear about the cowboy who wore paper trousers? He was arrested for rustling.	How did Frankenstein's monster eat his lunch? He bolted it down
What table has not a leg to stand on? The multiplication table	What kind of sausages do vampires like best? Fang-furters
What do you get when you cross an archer with a gift wrapper? Ribbon Hood	Why didn't the skeleton go to the New Year's Eve Party? He had no body to go with.
Why is St Paul's Cathedral like a bird's nest? Because it was built by a wren	How do snails keep their shells shiny? They use snail varnish.
What is a parrot stuffed with? Polyfilla.	When does a horse have six legs? When it's got a rider on its back.

Well, that should be enough corn to be going on with!





HUG

Fridge magnet

fun



Sometimes apathy is the sensible solution.

Glory is fleeting but obscurity is for ever.



Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.
Confucius

Live well, laugh often and love lots!



What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a new job afterwards.

You know you're living in the 21st Century if your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have email addresses.



H.U.G. News – read all about it

- Get-togethers took place at the Great Western Hospital around the middle of October and November.
- Coffee mornings continued at the Blunsdon Arms at the end of October and at a new venue at the beginning of December.
- Craft sessions are not happening at the moment but will recommence when our stocks are running low.

1. Get-Togethers

We have been having discussions about whether we should continue to hold get-togethers for patients, families and friends at the Great Western. It is noticeable that we have more attendees when we meet away from the hospital, with some people definitely avoiding going to the site, unless they have to – which we fully understand! For this reason we are testing out an alternative venue, where we could have a room to ourselves, very reasonably priced refreshments and a buffet or full lunch, as we wish. Our first visit was not totally successful, but we'll give it another chance.

2. Income and Expenditure

We are desperately keen to raise quite a lot more money in the next couple of months. Not only do we wish to contribute to the Dove Ward Charitable Funds for the Apetito meals project, but the stock of thermometers is again running out. We have provided these for giving away to chemotherapy patients for the last 3 years, so that they can check their temperatures for signs of infection. Recently all new patients have been receiving them, with the result that stocks have gone down quickly. Next year we hope to take it in turns to attend group patient talks, handing out thermometers personally and collecting donations towards the cost of the next batch.

We again had a stall at the Christ Church Christmas Fair. Unfortunately the weather was pretty awful on the day and customers were thin on the ground. Our tombola and craft sales table did make a profit of £57.60.

Our December hospital sales table raised another £134. Thanks to C for all her work on cake making and to M and Y for helping on the day. The acquisition of a sack truck made it a lot easier to load and unload our stock at sales locations and will come in handy at future events.

Lambourn Chimers, the handbell ringing group, to which I belongs, played before and during the Great Western Hospital Christmas tree lighting ceremony and Santa visit for the nursery children. They collected £11.30 in their bucket and £46.50 with cake and sweet sales at the Lambourn Christmas Fair for HUG projects.

Another small Ebay sale has raised £2.99. We won't attempt any more internet sales until the Christmas rush is over.

3. Other Activities

The next visit to the Penny Brohn Centre in Bristol for another taster session has been postponed due to the unavailability of the new members who were to attend. We hope to re-arrange soon.

Our outing to Avebury Manor in October was greatly enjoyed by those able to attend, despite poor weather – something of a theme this year. Our picture on the front shows some of our party enjoying lunch at a local hostelry afterwards.

Mobile Chemotherapy HOPE bus

The HOPE chemotherapy bus has been tested outside the hospital in Salisbury and was launched on 10th December to operate for a few weeks outside the GWH to check for any teething problems and provide additional nurse training. It will then provide chemo on Thursdays and Fridays at Savernak (Marlborough) and Malmesbury from March onwards, as well as in the Salisbury area.

We repeat that this community chemotherapy will not be suitable for everyone, but will allow some patients to receive treatment closer to home.

New Chief Nurse appointed

Hilary Walker, currently interim Chief Nurse has been appointed to the role of Chief Nurse. Hilary will take up her permanent appointment on 1 Jan 2013. The GWH Chief Executive Nerissa Hughes is said to be particularly pleased that the work on developing the Nursing Strategy and skill mix review will continue. These are important pieces of work and demonstrate how we want to engage with staff to agree a new way forward."

Hilary Walker is reported as being truly delighted to be staying with the organisation as Chief Nurse and feels very excited about working to build on achievements to date. She values the warmth with which she has been welcomed and the pride she sees amongst GWH teams.

Some of her key roles will be to provide professional and clinical leadership throughout the Trust to all nursing, midwifery, allied health professionals and healthcare scientists, work jointly with the Medical Director on the risk, patient safety, patient experience and governance agenda, develop a culture of high quality customer care, take a key role in shaping the policies and strategies for developing improvements in clinical practice and services throughout the Trust, in order to ensure high quality, safe health care services for patients.

Award for AK

Congratulation to A, Lead Cancer Nurse and Modern Matron, Diagnostics and Outpatients who has just heard about her award of £15,000 from the Florence Nightingale Foundation to pay for leadership training. She had to present her ideas before a Board of representatives from the Foundation. We already know how enthusiastically she can do that at Cancer Services User Involvement Group meetings. Recipients of the Scholarship undertake a bespoke programme geared to individual needs based on current performance assessment. The scholarships comprise the main areas of personal leadership, career development and a project which improves patient/client care. We look forward to hearing more details from A for the next issue.

