

Family & Friends Newsletter May 2020

Welcome to our latest edition of the Family & Friends Newsletter for the Forensic and Specialist Care Group

If you would like support, advice and/or information, please contact **Karen Tweedie**, Family Engagement and Liaison Lead:

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to think creatively on how to hold carer engagement forums. While we are not able to carry out engagement events in the ways we traditionally have, we are trying to make sure that we continue to offer carers the opportunity to engage with us. One way is 'virtually', which will involve the use of your mobile phone, tablet or computer. Join us during **Carers Week** for our first virtual carers forum- **9th May 2020 at 2pm** (please see attached your invitation with login details). You can dial in at any time between 2-3pm, you don't have to stay for the full hour, we appreciate how busy life can be.

If you do not have the facility to join in virtually, I am always happy to talk to you over the phone with a cuppa!

Care Group Update:

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust would like to offer you some reassurance. We (the Trust) are continually reviewing how we deliver care and support to you and the person being cared for during this difficult time

Following the Government guidance and taking into account the restrictions in place, we will need to look at more creative ways to deliver that care while ensuring we help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

We have made the difficult decision to stop visitors to our inpatient wards. We are following Government guidance on when we can start reintroducing visits with family & friends. We know family and loves ones are important and we will do all we can to help you stay in touch. Please contact the ward manager, family engagement & liaison lead, social worker or nominated carer champions to discuss the best way of doing this. We have recently had the patients laptop software updated, which will allow the patients to use Skype or Lifesize as a virtual visit. This will need to be book at least 24 hours in advanced with a member of ward staff.

We know the restrictions caused by COVID-19 may be causing additional stress. We understand that this may be a worrying time and you may find staying at home and having limited contact frustrating. Stay safe and thank you for your co-operation during this difficult time.



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Carer Champions:

Earlier in this newsletter I mentioned 'carer champions', you might be thinking what or who are carer champions. There are carer champions in every team in KMPT. The role of the carer champion is to support their teams to support carers. They undertake this role in addition to their usual responsibilities as they have expressed a particular empathy with and recognition of the value of carers.

This includes promoting carer awareness to their colleagues as well as being a designated point of contact for carers. They will try to keep carers in mind and champion the carers' voice.

Carers Involvement strategy

We are developing a Carers involvement strategy for the Forensic Services. The strategy aims to ensure that the Carer Involvement initiatives developed are embedded into everyday practice within the secure and community forensic services in KMPT. If you would like to be involved in putting the strategy together or giving feedback on the strategy please contact Karen Tweedie.

From 20 May 2020 the law around organ donation in England changed

Every day, someone in the UK dies in need of an organ, because not enough organs are available for transplant. But only 1% of people die in circumstances that would allow them to donate. Organ donation in England has moved to an 'opt out' system. This means that all adults in England will be considered to have agreed to be an organ donor when they die unless they have recorded a decision not to donate or are in one of the excluded groups.

What do I have to do?

As the law around organ donation has changed in England from 20 May 2020. If you **do** want to be an organ donor, you can register to be a donor on the NHS Organ Donor Register.

If you **do not** want to be an organ donor, you can opt out by registering a 'refuse to donate' decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register.

www.organdonation.nhs.uk

Help the environment

As a Trust we are always looking for ideas on how we can support the changes with the environment.

Do you use email? If the answer is yes, would you be happy to share your email address with me? I can get information sent out to you electronically, which will be a quicker process & better for the environment.

Can you please send me an email karen.tweedie@nhs.net with your details on.

If you do not use email, we can still send any information out to through the post.

Mental Health Support during the Covid-19 pandemic West Kent

- **Release the Pressure** – 24 hour helpline call 0800 107 0160
- **Text support** – 24 hours mental health crisis support Text "Kent" to 85258
- **Adult Urgent Mental health support** Kent & Medway 24 hour helpline for urgent mental health support, advice and guidance. Provided by Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) - 0300 222 0123
- **Maidstone Safe Haven** Kent & Medway - The emphasis of the service is on reducing immediate distress, and supporting people to access services and opportunities available to them in the wider community. Available 6pm – 11pm 365 days per year - call 07484061684 Email: Maidstone.mhm@nhs.net
- **Live Well Kent** - Live Well Kent can help you improve your mental and physical health and wellbeing - Call: 0800 567 7699 Email: info@livewellkent.org.uk www.livewellkent.org.uk
- **Involve Carers Support West Kent** - Providing phone support for carers Call: 03000 810005 Email: office@involvekent.org.uk www.involvekent.org.uk/carers

A carers story during Covid-19

I feel excited & privileged to be able to share a families account on how they have managed to spend their time during the current climate. The family member expressed that they wanted to give something back to the NHS. As a family they have used the services on more than one occasion, across different departments within the NHS. Like everyone else, they faced all the barriers with self isolation. But this is what they have done & are continuing with. Please enjoy reading their experience.

Congratulations to the family for the money you have raised for the NHS.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please get in touch. We would love to hear your experiences.

The park life group keeps to strict guidelines of social distancing

It started after the first clap for Carers, 7 weeks ago..somebody said do you fancy keep fit starting tomorrow to raise money for NHS? Yes we all said enthusiastically. Then tomorrow came and 10 am was near, doubts set in, will she or won't she ? and yes you guessed it 50 consecutive days later, will are still doing it !

We have had various 'theme' challenges. Starting with Rainbow week when each day represents a different colour complimented by colour matching gym clothes, orange was quite hard as some say it looks pink and others orange (eyes are not what they used to be)

Second challenge came and it was 'Lockdown Holiday Destinations' England , Spain , France , Egypt, Jamaica ,Hawaii, and America all in fancy dress of course bearing in mind we are in lockdown with only online shopping once a week so having to be creative with costumes and making do. The challenge brought out new talents of creativity and certainly raised a few eyebrows for the occasional onlooker!

So everyday so far keep fit, so now it was decided to go farther afield within our retirement Park

area; we decided on a 'Social distance Walk' around our grounds one lap equalling half a mile. Combined all 10 of us we achieved the equivalent of four and a half marathons. For that we are all purchasing a medal (proceeds to the NHS). By now then we have raised nearly £900 for the NHS and are starting to feel a little fitter!

Two other challenges have been, 'Favourite Film ' day. I chose 'The most exotic Marigold Hotel' quite apt owing to our ages, and most recently a James Bond day where us ladies were obviously having to be more inventive therefore 'Jane Bond 007:5' 'Goldfinger' (literally) and the very lovely Ursula Andrews 'to name a few.

To mark our 50th day we are hoping to complete another Marathon walk around the Park and maybe a jog, wish us luck! The clapping may have stopped but we haven't as we are still isolating and raising money for the NHS.

So who are we? We are all over 55 on a retirement Park men women and disabled some fighting fit and others waiting for serious operations with one thing in common all having achieved our very best in lockdown.

What have we achieved? Routine, reason, comaraldery, laughter, revealing unknown talents for creativity.

What message can we give? Even in the face of adversity there is always a light and it just takes tiny steps towards it to achieve something positive , and we are not alone.

Written by Annonymous carer