



Our Wellbeing patients getting creative and exchanging ideas on zoom.

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Hospice patients take a snapshot of lockdown life

Meeting up to exchange ideas and offer support has always been at the heart of our services. But sadly, Covid restrictions have had a huge impact on wellbeing groups for patients and their families.

Determined to keep our Living Well patients in contact, our Wellbeing Team have been encouraging them to get creative at home through a project called *Snapshot – Exploring lockdown with photography.*

Instead of patients gathering in a group, they are meeting via video calls, exchanging ideas and then examining their lockdown lives through a camera lens.

Living Well patient Patricia Reedman said: “I think the Snapshot photography group is very interesting. I’ve not done many of the photos myself because I shake a lot so my husband has been helping me. But I think it’s a good way to remember Lockdown”.

We have always had a holistic approach. So, our Wellbeing team was keen to join forces with *Snapshot* for this pilot project, which started on January 30 and runs for four weeks.

Thirteen of our patients, split into two groups, meet once a week via video call. They discuss a new theme or topic then spend the rest of the week taking photos with a disposable camera sent to them specifically for the project.

Our Head of Wellbeing, Andrew Lowden said: “The team have worked incredibly hard to continue to provide as many of our services as possible despite not seeing our patients face-to-face, which led to us delivering a variety of groups using video calls with high levels of success. Indeed, once our patients (and of course us too) had become comfortable with this different way of engaging, we explored exciting opportunities to try out new things. The introduction of the Snapshot project has shown us that despite everything, people are adaptable and as a hospice we can be too.”

Snapshot covers four topics – Finding joy at home; Loved ones, objects, animals, each other; Food; and lastly a Photo Diary. At the end of the project, the groups will meet via Zoom one last time to discuss their experiences, the photos they have taken and what the pictures have revealed about their lives in lockdown. The cameras will be mailed back, and a combination of comments from creative sessions and images will be compiled into a booklet or “zine”, with a copy sent to each participant.

Professional photographer Sorcha Bridge, who pioneered *Snapshot* with Marykate McGrath, Cultural Events organiser, said: “The essential key to this project is its accessibility, so ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability,

needs or access to materials can get involved.

“We hope that this process and its final products will give our participants a creative space to think about their time this year and the spaces, people, objects and feelings that can become inspiration for creative reflections.”

Sorcha and Marykate, who are giving their time free of charge, hope the workshops will provide a creative, open space where patients can think about the unprecedented times they are living in and offer each other support. The venture is being rolled out at here and at St Christopher’s Hospice in London, but the pair hope to involve other hospices, healthcare associations and communities most affected by cuts to the arts.

If you would like to find out more about the Snapshot project, or involve your community group, please email: snapshotukproject@gmail.com

We are **ellenor**, a charity funded by the generosity of our local community, offering the best care and support to families facing terminal illness in Kent. We are the **only** charity in the county that provides hospice care for people of all ages – babies, children and adults - and their families. This includes pain and symptom relief, end of life care, respite, bereavement support and emotional and spiritual care.

Our Children’s Hospice Care, formerly known as chYps, is provided in the comfort of the family home and spans across North and West Kent and the London Borough of Bexley. Adults living in Gravesham, Dartford and Swanley, receive care in their place of choice, including their own homes, at our Hospice in Gravesend and in local care homes.

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