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ellenor given top marks for food standards ten years running

Here at ellenor we take our kitchen cleanliness very seriously. So, the catering team was overjoyed to receive the highest accolade from Food Safety and Hygiene inspectors – for the tenth year in a row. Hospitality manager.

Dan Parzefall said: “The Level Five certificate is recognised by everyone nationwide. This 5 rating means that every aspect of food safety has been taken care of in our kitchen. From the storing of all food correctly, to how you thaw food safely. Preparing different food types in the right location and with the right colour coded equipment is essential, then onto cooking foods at the

right temperature to ensure it is safe to eat – everything is tightly regulated, checked, and recorded. We also must make sure we are wearing the right clothes, that we have removed jewellery and wear hairnets. Nothing is left to chance. The inspection is like our kitchen and its processes having an MOT, the paintwork may very well be spectacular, but we also need to keep abreast of the daily operational activities and requirements of the hospice.

“This top rating guarantees we have done all we are expected to do with food to ensure everyone it is safe to eat. And, although the quality of the meals served is not part of the inspection, **ellenor** serves stonking great food as well. Once our doors are open again, I invite anyone to drop by for some lunch or some freshly made cakes with a cuppa”.

“I’m immensely proud of my team. I oversee things on the front line, but they are effectively in the trenches. They operate almost autonomously and know what they are doing. They achieve this rating year after year and really do deserve recognition for it.”

In a hospice setting it is vitally important that all the food served is safe and hygienic. Our cooks at the hospice in Northfleet normally prepare and cook food for patients and their families, and for the staff, but due to the pandemic, it is just our patients and staff for now.

Dan said: “We are all doing everything we possibly can to make sure no risk or harm comes to anyone. In any situation or setting, something like salmonella poisoning is to be avoided at all costs. Here at **ellenor** we don’t want people who are already unwell to face any unnecessary additional suffering.”

Dan, who started his career first as a chef, then moved to a personal trainer role, understands how important good nutrition and food safety are for everyone involved with the charity, which supports people with life-limiting illnesses and their families.

He said: “There have been fewer people coming into the hospice throughout the pandemic, but we have adjusted to the fluctuating Covid rules and how they affect family and visitor numbers.”

The lighter footfall at Café Verde, where meals are served to just staff, has

given Dan an opportunity to modernise it and change the menu, therefore making way for when hospitality opens nationwide again, and the public are once again welcomed back inside to eat. Dan says “I would love everyone in our community to come to know and love our ellenor café as “the” place to eat something different and amazing and that only we do”.

He said: “We now have an electronic ordering system linking the café to the kitchen. And the new menu with the new table numbering system means that once the public come back, they will be able to enjoy some high-quality meals with us.

“My catering team are also looking forward to having face-to-face communication again with the patients on the ward. As well as concentrating on food safety we also like to ensure the food we serve patients is suitable for their pallets and/or medical conditions.

“It’s always rewarding to be able to find out what sort of food they would really like to eat. Sometimes their taste buds have completely changed due to their illness or treatment. It’s lovely to be able to respond to their cravings and special requests for certain dishes, or food they remember from their childhood. When it comes to our patients in the ward, we don’t really have a set menu, we like to give them what they desire if we can”.

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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