



well wishers

Raising funds to make a difference



Walsall Healthcare
NHS Trust

Charity Newsletter Summer 2024 Edition

Welcome to the summer edition of Walsall Healthcare's Well Wishers charity newsletter.

Following a busy few months, this summer has been full of wonderful celebrations, events, fundraisers, donations and opportunities for the charity to make a difference to the people who use its services in the hospital and community, as well as staff and volunteers.

Inside this edition, find out what TV star Alison Hammond thought of our Midwifery-Led Unit and Fundraising Hub, how we have supported community staff with training, fundraisers from both the public and Walsall NHS staff, the new donations we have as well as a special guest appearance from the Mayor of Walsall.

Alison's MLU surprise!

Well Wishers arranged for a special guest to commemorate the opening of our brand new Midwifery-Led Unit.

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Wound service training aids

A Walsall service which helps patients with their wounds has been given a staff training boost.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust's Community Tissue Viability Service has bought three mannequins and a skin board to use during its training sessions and discussions after receiving funding to the value of £3240 from the Well Wishers charity. The service was launched in July 2023 to care for patients with new wounds. These include pressure sores, surgical wounds, trauma between ankle and knee and leg ulcers.

It is designed to apply best practice and ensure that patients get a holistic review including wound assessments and care plans within the first two weeks of referral. This creates a good healing environment and has increased healing rates and improved patients' lives or recovery.

Amy Bevan, Quality Lead for Tissue Viability Community said:

"Having a visual aid when delivering training sessions or discussing a wound has been so helpful. We have already received fabulous feedback.

"We have been able to educate staff which has helped with the understanding of wounds and how they can deteriorate or appear on the skin – it's hard to grasp this on a photo and it's easier for visual learners to press the mannequins.

"With these particular mannequins, there are sections on the limbs to feel the differences between healthy tissue and deteriorating tissue. As we have also been given a skin board we can show the different presentations of wounds on different skin tones as well."

She added: "Honestly, I can't thank the charity enough. Having these mannequins has not only helped within our service but externally with other services. They are always a conversation starter and it allows in depth multidisciplinary discussions which relate to past and present wounds on caseloads and how they were managed. The service is extremely grateful for the donations."

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager said: "We are really pleased to have been able to support the Community Tissue Viability Service with these products. We know how important training is to staff and how the correct tools can help towards best practice which also benefits our patients' experience."



TV's Alison pops into new MLU

Thousands of pounds of wall art has helped to make the MLU a welcoming haven for families as part of a package of charity-funded finishing touches.

Well Wishers has spent just under £7,000 on the colourful designs for the unit's birthing rooms as well as kitting out the parents' kitchen with a microwave, kettle, cups, plates, bowls, glasses and cutlery.

The MLU was previously a standalone centre but it was relocated into Walsall Manor Hospital after feedback shared with Walsall's Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP), as well as via a survey in partnership with the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB), showed that families would prefer an onsite centre.

Moving the MLU next to the hospital's Maternity Unit means that more birth choices can be offered to a greater number of women. Within the previous unit, only low-risk women – with strict criteria – were able to use the service.

These criteria can now be expanded and mean women and babies who may have complications as their labour and birth progress have rapid access to staff who are able to support urgent care.

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager at Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "Our charity gives a lot of support to Maternity Services to help enhance families' experiences while they are under our care and buy items above and beyond what the NHS is able to provide.

"We're proud to have been able to fund the wall art in the unit and thanks to Grosvenor Interiors the relaxing images they have supplied do help to create a calming environment. And access to kitchen facilities is important as the unit prides itself on having a homely feel so that nervous parents to be can feel as comfortable and settled as possible."

Rickell Bailey, MLU Manager, said: "We've had some lovely, positive comments from families and really appreciate the charity support we've been given on our unit. Without the Well Wishers charity this would not have been possible.

"The wall art just makes our birthing rooms even more welcoming – we love it! When the lights are low you can actually visualise being in the lake whilst in the birthing pool. And the kitchen items make the environment cosier and as though we are at home."



And TV star Alison Hammond thrilled staff at the MLU when she popped in for a tour and met the first little girl born there.

The presenter loved seeing the birthing rooms and chatting to new mum Juliana Uhuro and dad Ronny Chambers who welcomed their daughter Xadia on 25 February – the first girl to be born on the unit.

"She's absolutely beautiful and making me feel very broody," said Alison.

"This unit is stunning, it's so homely and such a lovely place to give birth. The staff are amazing too and I've loved visiting and being given such a warm welcome."

Brummie-born Alison also squeezed in a visit to the Fundraising Hub and took away her very own Humphrey Bear charity mascot.



Three is the magic number

It's a Mayoral hat trick for Walsall Healthcare's Well Wishers as the borough's First Citizen has selected the charity to benefit from his fundraising year.



Walsall Mayor Councillor Anthony Harris, and Mayoress Christina, are keen to support projects involving children and young people through the Manor Hospital and its community services and delighted patients and staff when they popped on to the Children's Ward to donate a fantastic fairground-themed cake made by Walsall Council's catering team.

The Mayor said: "Our young grandson contracted meningitis and it was a terribly worrying time for the family. We were in Hull at the time for the October great fair when he took ill. The care and compassion shown by those looking after him in the NHS was humbling and it made the Mayoress and I determined to support our local hospital teams which look after children and young people in Walsall.

"They don't only support the child but the family too and anything we can do to help their time in hospital we're keen to get involved in. My predecessors have told me what a great charity Well Wishers is – I'm very impressed that its local supporters are shown exactly where donations go and how the money raised makes a difference.

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager, said it was definitely a case of third time lucky for Well Wishers.

"The charity has been proud to work with previous Mayors Councillor Rose Martin and Councillor Chris Towe and the team is looking forward to getting on board with Councillor Harris and the Mayoress over the next 12 months.

"We loved it when they popped in shortly after being sworn in and they struggled to get off the ward as so many patients, parents and staff wanted to chat to them! We're thrilled that Well Wishers has got the support of the third Mayor in a row and can't wait to keep them busy."

The Mayor's other chosen charities are The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and The Midlands Air Ambulance Charity. His family's personal experience of the care shown to their seriously ill grandson also drove him to make another popular donation to the Manor Hospital's Children's Ward. He and Mayoress Christina kindly donated two push along and two electric cars for young patients to use en route to surgery and treatment.



Little Journey app launched for young patients

Young patients coming to Walsall Manor Hospital can now use a child-friendly app to help them feel prepared for their surgery and treatment thanks to charity funding.

The Little Journey app has now launched and has been funded through Well Wishers.



It provides engaging, interactive and age-appropriate content to help calm any nervousness children may have about coming into hospital and to help them and their parents and carers better understand what will happen during their stay.

Little Journey was founded in 2018 by Dr Chris Evans, an anaesthetic Doctor, who had witnessed first-hand how distressed and anxious children and families felt about surgery, along with Sophie Copley, an expert in human-centred product design.

Garry Perry, Associate Director Patient Voice – Experience said: "A hospital visit or stay can be daunting for anyone but especially for children and young people, many of whom won't have used healthcare services before.

"Little Journey is a really helpful way of guiding them through what to expect well ahead – explaining what will happen in a straightforward way and helping to take away a lot of the nervousness they feel.

"It is also invaluable for parents and carers trying to support their children through what is a worrying time for the whole family."

Walsall's Little Journey currently features the Paediatric Surgery and MRI Pathways and, leading up to the launch, staff on the Children's Ward have been familiarising themselves with its content and features.

Over the next few weeks families will also be asked to give their feedback which will be used to make any changes needed.

Garry added: "We'd like to thank Well Wishers for funding this for us and helping us work in partnership to improve our young patients' experience."

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager said: "Well Wishers is pleased to be able to support such a useful resource for families who use our paediatric services.

"There was no hesitation when the Charity Trustees were approached to provide funds of just under £7,500 and we look forward to hearing feedback as to how charitable funds has made a difference to our young patients and their families' experience."

The app is free to download from Google or Apple stores and contains lots of useful information.

A fundraiser 'Kam would be proud of'

Colleagues and loved ones have raised £3,325 in memory of a former Walsall patient.

Martin Quinn hosted a fundraising walk to honour his late colleague Kamaljit Singh Bains, who died at Goscote Hospice on 12 July 2023, following a short battle with lung cancer.

This will be added to the £2,500 donation which was raised by Kam's cousin and cricket colleagues who held a charity cricket match at Walsall Cricket Club in October 2023.

Martin added: "I feel very proud to have helped raise funds for such an important cause."

"Hearing from Kam's widow Preeti about the wonderful ongoing support she and her sons have received was great to hear. The hospice looked after Kam with exceptional care in his final days and were (and still are) a great support to his family and friends. I am pleased to know we have contributed to the amazing work that is carried out by the hospice.

"I think Kam would have been delighted as walking was something he loved and being extremely sociable, this is exactly the sort of event he would have enjoyed. Kam would be really proud of us and I am sure he would be happy to know we did this in his memory."

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager, said: "It is so heartwarming to see everyone who loved Kam come together and take part in last month's fundraising walk. We are so grateful to everyone who donated towards this amazing amount for the hospice that cared for him."



In memory of Kamaljit Singh Bains

The three-mile walk took place in the British Camp location in the Malvern Hills to raise money for the hospice that cared for Kamaljit.

Martin, Regional Head of HRL Midlands at Make UK had known Kam for 15 years and was his manager.

He said: "We had about 20 family, friends and colleagues of Kam who joined us for the walk. We were extremely fortunate with the weather which was bright and sunny. Afterwards we all had a lovely lunch at the Malvern Hills hotel.

"We enjoyed being able to positively remember Kam together. It was lovely to have a shared experience with people who knew Kam the best and share stories about him. Getting to know his family and spending time with them was really special.

Martin, together with Kam's family, friends and colleagues, managed to raise an amazing £1,680 from donations. Make UK generously agreed to match fund £1,645 to support the work of Goscote Hospice and in appreciation for all that was done for Kam and his family.



Colleagues' pride at running total

Walsall NHS colleagues have raised more than £2500 to improve patients' experience after taking on two marathons.

Reshma Jayakumar, Manoj Lakha and Andy Tams took part in the London Landmarks Half Marathon (LLHM) after securing places via Well Wishers.

Along with almost 19,000 other runners, they set off on the 13.1-mile (21km) course, which took in sightseer favourites including Big Ben, St Paul's Cathedral and Trafalgar Square.

The proud trio took on the challenge on Sunday 7 April and were all thrilled to have completed the course.

Manoj Lakha, Graphic Designer, said: "I'm proud of myself, Reshma and Andy for championing Well Wishers and raising money towards all the wonderful causes it supports."

"Thank you to everyone who donated and a bigger thank you to Well Wishers for all its amazing achievements across our Trust."

Midwives Amy Doherty and Natalie Wilkes took part in the AJ Bell Great Birmingham Run on which also coincided with International Day of the Midwife.

The run is the Midlands' biggest running event. Thousands of Brummies pound the streets every year to rise to the challenge of either the Birmingham half marathon or the 10K, with plenty of participants raising cash for good causes.

Amy and Natalie said: "It was pretty tough in the heat but the atmosphere and crowd was amazing! We're feeling good and both so grateful for all the kind donations for Well Wishers."

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager, said: "What an amazing experience and achievement for our colleagues who took part in these two marathons. We are so proud of them and grateful for all the money they have raised for the charity."

"The money we raise helps to buy things over and above what the NHS is able to provide and help to provide the best experience possible for patients, service users and families."



Activity pack donation

Children and young people being treated at Walsall Manor Hospital are being given activity packs to help them through potentially stressful visits.

Age-specific activity packs are being given to children who are treated on Ward 21 and in the Paediatric Assessment Unit, the Emergency Department and Paediatric Outpatients.

The 500 packs were kindly donated by Well Wishers and contain a colouring book and pens.

One of the first patients to receive a pack was four-year-old Freddie. Freddie attended hospital after having an accident, hurting his mouth.

His mother Karley Mason said: "It was a lovely surprise for Freddie to be given a pack and kept him entertained. He was still colouring in during the car ride home!"

Georgie Westley, Fundraising Manager, said: "Our main aim is to provide amenities and comforts for patients which have not been provided by the NHS.

"We were delighted to buy these activity packs for some of our youngest patients and hope it makes their hospital visit happier and less stressful."

Emma Lester, Play Specialist said: "We wanted to get something to give to the children who attend these departments which would act as a distraction to them while they wait for assessment, are on our ward or maybe waiting to be admitted.

"Patient experience is important to us and these books will help keep the children amused and in turn reduce the parents' stress levels.

"This should then make the whole experience less traumatic for both the child and their parents."



Get in touch to support

See our dedicated charity website for fundraising ideas and support, upcoming events and how to make a donation at www.walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk/charity

Call the Fundraising Team on **01922 656643** or e-mail wht.fundraising@nhs.net

Don't forget to follow us on social media!

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