

Snapshot



St Oswald's
Hospice

Spring | Summer 2024
News and updates

So much to celebrate, thanks to you!

This year, our children's unit is celebrating its 21st birthday with lots planned to mark the epic milestone – and we simply couldn't have got here without you!

So much has changed since the Jigsaw Appeal culminated in our children's hospice opening its doors in 2003, – not least the extension of our short breaks to young adults up to the age of 25 in 2012.

Other highlights include the renovation of our children's lounge, the opening of our accessible outdoor playground and our partnership with South Shields Surf School that brought accessible surfing to the region. More recently, we've also launched our Outreach Service to extend our nurse-led support to families in their homes.

We see caring for young people and their families from across the North East as a privilege and we want to thank everyone who has supported us over the years.

We will be celebrating our 21st birthday in style this summer with special events for our children, young adults, families, staff and volunteers to enjoy. The anniversary also gives us the chance to look at how we are developing our Children and Young Adults Service to adapt to the changing needs of those we care for. We are proud and reassured to know we will embark on this with you, our supporter family, by our side.

Thanks to your kindness and support of last year's Good Night's Sleep Appeal, where you helped raise over £53,000, we have recently received delivery of our new specialist beds for our Children and Young Adult's service, and are in the process of updating our much-loved sensory room. Your support means so much to the young people and families who will benefit from this new equipment.

We're also excited to share that building work will begin this month on our new Young Adults Accommodation. The self-contained accommodation has been designed to promote independence and provide a smoother transition for our young people as they move into adulthood. It will feature two new bedrooms, a garden area, a living space, an accessible bathroom and wet room. It will also have its own 'front door' – perfect for late night returns from the pub or the cinema!

Sister, Diane Nicholson, who joined the children's unit when it first opened, said: **"We are one of the few places that can provide care for over 18s with complex medical needs and so to be able to create this new space, which will increase our capacity and provide more autonomy to our young adults in a supported and caring environment, is thrilling for me and everyone in the team."**

Ewan Barry is one of our young adults who is set to benefit from the new accommodation and "can't wait" for it to be ready for him and his friends.

We hope you share Diane and Ewan's excitement about the new Young Adults Accommodation and you join us in wishing our Children's Service a very Happy Birthday!

PS: We'll keep you updated on the progress of our Young Adults Accommodation build in your next issue of Snapshot.





Inspiring the next generation in Health and Social Care

Following a successful pilot scheme, our Volunteer to Career pathway has secured funding to continue inspiring future healthcare workers. The pathway helps those interested in a future in Health and Social Care access high-quality training and mentorship while gaining practical clinical

experience. Volunteers work towards nationally recognised qualifications under the guidance of an expert team of clinicians and mentors in our Lymphoedema Service or Adult Inpatient Unit.

Jackie Haskey, a Lymphoedema Specialist (pictured here with current volunteer Angie spearheaded last year's pilot. She said: **"The pathway is a fantastic way for the hospice to gain more clinical volunteers while the volunteers themselves gain invaluable tools to take the next steps in their careers."**

Matthew, who has successfully completed Volunteer to Career, told us about his experiences:

"Volunteering at St Oswald's Hospice has developed my skills and confidence with patients. I'm hoping to apply for postgrad medicine and the experience I've gained will absolutely be at the top of my application!"

Scan for more information about the Volunteer to Career pathway and to watch Matthew's story



Widening access to our Focus on Living Centre

Did you know that people living on a low income are less likely to access palliative care in the UK?

At St Oswald's Hospice we have always said our doors are open to everyone who needs us. We want to understand any barriers to access that may stop some people from coming to us for the care they need.

Davina Radford, our Spiritual Care Lead, is currently heading up a project that is all about Widening Access to our Focus on Living Centre. The project is working across two Newcastle communities, Elswick (NE4) and Byker (NE6), areas that are known to be among the 1% most deprived postcodes in the UK. They are home to more people from ethnic minorities than other areas of Newcastle. People living in these areas are more likely to be in poor health and life expectancy is more than 10 years lower than for people in our more affluent communities.

Davina explained how the project aims to readdress this:

"I'm talking with GPs and the local communities, and getting a clearer picture of any barriers to accessing our Hospice services – including barriers to referral by healthcare professionals. Ultimately, we want to increase awareness of our services amongst people living in these communities and dispel any fears or myths about hospice care. And of course, the ultimate aim is to increase referrals from these areas."

"We have so much to offer at the Focus on Living Centre – we provide holistic care to help people to live well with progressive life-limiting conditions – and it's only fair that everyone should be able to access this service if they need it."



Giving moments of comfort

A cuddle from a loved one can be so comforting and reassuring. It can help us feel safe, important and loved. Something that is especially important for patients who are in the final days or hours of their lives.

Our Adult Inpatient Unit now has a new, extendable 'cuddle bed' by Umano. This new bed, generously funded by The JGW Patterson Foundation, has everything you'd expect from a hospital-style bed, but can be extended from a single to a double bed, meaning our patients can share a bed with their loved ones, at the most tender of times.

Anne Tuck, Matron of our Adult Inpatient Unit, explains:

"Patients often tell us that St Oswald's Hospice feels like a home-from-home for them. They feel welcomed, comfortable and safe, which is wonderful to hear. All of our Inpatient rooms have facilities for a patient's loved one or family member to stay overnight should they wish to, but our standard beds can only accommodate one person. Patients can sometimes find this hard, especially if they've never spent a night apart from their partner, spouse or loved one before arriving here."

"The 'cuddle bed' has now changed this. The bed adapts from a single bed to a double with just a click of a button! It's really easy to use and great for couples who want to stay together. We also care for people who have young families too, so it's lovely that their children can snuggle up on the bed with Mum or Dad, and be comfortable instead of having to 'squeeze on'. The bed has also helped patients with Lymphoedema, as it gives them the space and support they need to feel more comfortable."



Portraits with Purpose show continuing bonds

Last month saw the exhibition of Portraits with Purpose: Continuing Bonds, a collaboration between St Oswald's Hospice and local Artist, Leanne Pearce.

Working with bereaved and pre-bereaved families, who have accessed the hospice's bereavement support and other care services, Leanne created 12 poignant portraits of their loved ones.

The collection, which was on display at Newcastle Civic Centre 10th-17th May, provided a positive, creative focus for grief and supported families in their 'continuing bonds' process. After the exhibition, the portraits were gifted to the families.

Melanie Rutter, one of the participants, said: **"This whole process has been more than I had imagined, in a really positive way."**

The Hospice and Leanne wish to thank the families who took part in this unique and emotional project. They have been so open, honest and generous with their experiences and stories.



You can find out more about Portraits with Purpose here



Focus on research...

At St Oswald's Hospice, we're committed to improving the care and quality of life of our patients and their families through ongoing research. Here is a shining example of a research project currently taking place at the hospice.

Better palliative care for those with long-term conditions

Dr Felicity Dewhurst has begun research to improve palliative care as part of her National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Advanced Fellowship in Palliative Care Research - the first of its kind to have been awarded.

NIHR Advanced Fellowships are only given to individuals deemed future leaders of research in their medical fields.

Felicity has partnered with Newcastle University to look at ways to improve palliative care for patients with multiple long-term conditions.

She said: "Even though palliative care is a universal human right, people with multiple long-term conditions, particularly non-cancer illnesses such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart failure and dementia, often don't get as good care at the end of life as they could do."

"I want to change this and provide better experiences for patients and their families."



Scan here to read more about Felicity's research

Retail Round-up



Ouseburn Adventures for our retail team

We're excited to be opening a Retail Hub in the heart of Ouseburn in Newcastle later this year!

Known for its creative community and passion for sustainability, the Ouseburn Valley felt like the perfect place to house our central retail team.

Located on Ouse Street, our new 14,000 square foot unit will have a dedicated donation point open to the public six days a week as well as a multifunctional event space for pop up shops, fundraising events and so much more!

Our E-commerce and Central Sort functions, integral to the retail team's fundraising efforts will also relocate to Ouseburn, allowing the team space to expand and develop – exciting stuff! We will update you in the next issue of Snapshot, so watch this space!

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Join in with the Great North FUN!

Have you or your child got a place in the 2024 Great North Run and would like to join our dream team? We are looking for runners who have already secured their own places* to join us for this iconic weekend in September – we'll supply a Team St Oswald's running vest/t-shirt and cheer you all the way to the finish line!

Scan here to join the team
www.stoswaldsuk.org/great-north-run-2024



*Our adult charity places have now all sold out but we have a waiting list which you can join by scanning the code.

Thank you!

All of the news, updates and developments we've told you about in Snapshot can only continue thanks to you, our community of supporters. You have helped us to develop and grow our services so that we can continue to be there for the patients and families that need us. We hope you have enjoyed reading this little Snapshot of what we have been up to, thanks to your support.

If you don't already, do follow us on social media, where we post regular updates, news and ways to get involved in our work and events. **Search St Oswald's Hospice on Facebook, use @stoswaldsuk on Instagram and X (formerly known as Twitter) and browse our website at www.stoswaldsuk.org**

If you have anything you'd like to chat to us about, you can email us at supportercare@stoswaldsuk.org – we'd love to hear from you!



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