

Lifeline



The Newsletter of the Cancer Resource Centre

Asian Project Future Secured

The future of the Centre's successful Asian Information and Outreach Service has been secured for the next three years thanks to generous funding from Macmillan Cancer Relief.

The project, originally set up in 2001 with monies from the New Opportunities Fund, was one of seven support projects singled out for special mention in CancerBACUP's report *Beyond the Barriers* earlier this year. The projects were called "unique and their experience can be used as models by other services". The report went on to say of the Centre's project "highly innovative partnership with a voluntary organisation and a NHS Trust".

Wandsworth and its adjacent boroughs have a large Asian population, many of whom find it difficult to obtain information about cancer, treatments, prevention, screening, support services or palliative care because of language or cultural barriers. The project aims to reduce these barriers by reaching out into Asian communities and providing a supportive presence one day a week at St. Georges Hospital, Tooting.

Publicity for the project and what it can offer is displayed in hospitals, GP surgeries, community centres and libraries. People who refer themselves to the service, or are referred by health care workers, can take advantage of all the therapies offered by the Centre and the Home Visiting Service. One measure of the service's success has been the marked increase in the number of Asian clients attending the Centre.

The Asian Information and Outreach Project provides one-to-one information and support, face-to-face and over the phone. Zulfika Ahmed, our outreach worker, speaks fluent Bengali, Hindi and Urdu, and written information about cancer is now available in four Asian languages (Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu) with more to follow. Since the launch of these just over a year ago over 30,000 copies have been distributed nationally.

Zulfika says "My role as the Asian Cancer Information and Outreach Worker has given me the opportunity to work closely with Asian people affected by cancer. The one-to-one interaction with clients gives me a great sense of satisfaction

when I see their faces light up as they realise that I can communicate in their language or am able to understand their culture. It helps individuals to overcome any barriers they may have had when expressing their feelings or experiences of their cancer journey."



Zulfika continues, "As I became aware of the needs of people to share and talk about their experiences with others from similar backgrounds, I approached individuals to see if having a support group would cater for their needs. An enthusiastic response led to the group meeting in March 2004 at the Centre. The group now meets regularly and is growing from strength to strength. Group members have said they don't know how they had coped so far without this support and that these meetings have truly become one of their lifelines".

Another aspect of the project is the health information and cancer awareness days that are held regularly in the local community, often being repeated by popular demand. These are usually organised jointly with Denise Forde (African-Caribbean Outreach Worker) and Fiona Charman (Macmillan Information and Education Officer). All three staff have also been involved in providing cultural awareness sessions for health professionals and volunteers from the Home Visiting Service.

As *Beyond the Barriers* stated "Outreach has to be sustainable and ongoing to have an impact." Petra, the Centre's Director, says, "We are very grateful to Macmillan Cancer Relief for agreeing to fund this vital project for the next three years so we can continue to provide such a worthwhile service to the local community. We have worked successfully with Macmillan on many occasions and I'm sure this will be no exception".

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Director's Column

New People and Activities

Gloria MacDonald has now ended her meditation sessions at The Cancer Resource Centre owing to a change in career. Our thanks go to Gloria who gave a great deal to Centre members over a 7 year period. We are fortunate that David de Vall has offered to work at the Centre monthly on Friday mornings offering consultations drawing on his wide experience of different approaches to meditation. David has a Masters degree in consciousness and transpersonal psychology, is a transpersonal counsellor and is also an accredited healer with the College of Psychic Studies.

We are also delighted that Lyle Jobling will be offering a one-off group in October (which could be repeated if there is demand) entitled *Centred in the Present* (see groups leaflet). Lyle has led groups for over 20 years, and is a shiatsu practitioner, as well as working with clowning, dance and humour.

Workshop Programme

There is no longer any demand for the kind of Saturday workshops that the Centre has historically offered, so we have ended this programme. However, there will still be some seminars on nutrition and cancer and Fiona Charman, our Macmillan Information Officer, (a joint post with St. George's), is going to be re-launching the *Learning to Live with Cancer* Programme in this area. More news of this in our next newsletter.

Support from Primary Care Trust

We are pleased that **Wandsworth Primary Care Trust** has given us a grant of £20,000 early in our financial year. We very much hope that the PCT will be able to repeat this in future years, now that we no longer have the support of Wandsworth Borough Council. The PCT also helped us in our application to **St. George's Charitable Trust**, which has given us a one-off grant of £20,000 this year. This local support is very greatly appreciated.

Notice of AGM

This is taking place at the Centre's premises on **Thursday 4th November** from 7 pm. Four Centre members of different ages and backgrounds will be talking about their personal experiences, and what has most helped them in overcoming the difficulties involved in living with cancer, and finding positive ways forward.

Volunteers at the Centre

In addition to our excellent home visiting volunteers, the Centre benefits from a great deal of very useful help from volunteers, who help us with office work, cover for our Support Officers, publicity, fundraising and many other things. This is all much appreciated.

Plants Seek Help

We are still seeking a volunteer to give seasonal attention to the Centre's plants, which form very much a part of the healing atmosphere. This would not involve coming into the Centre every week, but the plants would benefit from the attentions of someone with green fingers who would advise on re-potting, feeding regimes etc. Please let Clara, our Administrator, know if you may be able to help.



Cancer Lifeline Kit Review

by Fiona Charman, Macmillan Information and Education Officer

The Cancer Lifeline Kit is produced by Health Creation, a company set up by Dr Rosy Daniel, previously the Medical Director at the Bristol Cancer Help Centre. The Kit consists of two main elements: the Cancer Lifeline Programme aimed at people newly diagnosed with cancer; and the Health Creation Programme for recovery and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Each programme consists of a large workbook full of information about cancer and conventional and alternative treatments with self assessments and action plans together with CDs providing relaxation and guiding exercises. There is an introductory video with encouraging interviews from people who have had cancer and also Professor Karol Sikora, a carers' workbook and a very good set of recipes by Jane Sen that are great for anyone starting out on a dairy and meat free diet.

I asked three Centre users for their opinion of the Kit. One user said, "A good, idea, beautifully packaged and presented but overwhelming - and I think if I had got it when first diagnosed I would have found it even more overwhelming". Another said "Best to start with the video and CDs which were good". Our third reviewer said "It has all the things I have looked at in one place". All three reviewers felt that it was expensive at £150 for the whole kit although all the elements can be purchased separately. However, it would be



difficult to know what to choose if you had not seen the items as there is a large amount of work in the programmes that needs time and motivation to complete.

If the mentoring service is contemplated, then this is an extra £35 per hour plus telephone bills. One of the reviewers said, "(The Kit) is a large financial outlay at a time when your finances are probably already being stretched by your changing circumstances". There is mention of a fund available to help people with its purchase.

The Kit will be available for reference at the Centre and there are introductory sessions at The Haven in Fulham costing £50 per day. You can also find out more on the Health Creation website at

<http://www.healthcreation.co.uk>

SEMINAR

Cancer: Positive Choices
Saturday 16 October
10 am – 5.15 pm
Imperial College London.
Information about integrated and
alternative non-toxic recovery programmes

Speakers include:

Dr. Rosy Daniel

Medical Director of Health Creation

Ute Brookman

Nutritional Therapist,

Bristol Cancer Help Centre

Michael Gearin-Tosh

author of Living Proof

Professor Jane Plant

author of Your Life in Your Hands

Fee: £75 Info: 020 8992 4445

2003 Questionnaire Results

This year 37 questionnaires were returned from approximately 250 sent out. All responders had benefited from the services they had attended and all found services either very helpful or fairly helpful.

Last year the majority of responders learnt about The Cancer Resource Centre from a hospital or hospice and there was an increase in GPs and community healthcare professionals giving information about the Centre. One-to-one therapies and groups were praised and found to be very beneficial. One responder said, "I feel so uplifted when I finish", another said that "Without the cancer specific counselling I don't think I would have made it through."

Massage and aromatherapy remains the most popular one-to-one therapy. Several responders commented on the difficulty with sometimes having to wait for therapies due to high demand. However, it appears that responders in 2003 accessed more therapies than in 2002 and the Centre has been providing extra therapists to cope with busy times.

Centre Director becomes FRSA

Congratulations to Petra, our Director, who has become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts as a result partly of her work at The Cancer Resource Centre. Petra said "I will be attending the RSA's Day of Inspiration in October, and no doubt this will energise my thinking about the future!"

Fact File

Self-Discovery Group

A long established group, once known as the Cancer Support Group, the Self-Discovery Group meets every month at the Centre on a Monday afternoon.

It is an open group and welcomes those who have had or are coping with cancer, those newly diagnosed and also carers and supporters. The group size varies but it usually has about eight to ten participants ranging from regulars to newcomers.

Barbara Siddall, who leads the Self-Discovery Group observes, "My experience in holding the Group over the years is that it generates a gentle, intimate and relaxed atmosphere where participants can feel safe to share their feelings and experiences, support each other, share practical help gaining strength from the group support and find friendship."

One client who has attended Self Discovery Group sessions concurs, "It's great to be able to come somewhere where you are free to discuss cancer with people who know what it's about without having to make your personal supporters and family be the only source of strength."

Barbara continues, "There is also an experiential time during the meeting where subjects such as meditation and breathing, relaxation and visualisation are practised. The Group also looks at ways of balancing and integrating one's mind and spirit with one's emotions and body, to seek a balance, gaining insight on attitudes to self and to life. To discover more of oneself. A time for being heard, for needs to be expressed, for laughter and sometimes tears. Do join us"



Fundraising Focus

New Fundraiser

Hello! My name is Jenny Moss and I started work as the Centre's new Fundraiser in June. I've always worked for charities and in my last role was a trust fundraiser for an international charity. I am also a qualified massage therapist so I can appreciate how valuable our members find this and all our other therapies.

Please give me a call or send me an email if I can help with any fundraising ideas.

(Monday-Thursday; direct tel: **020 7801 2967** or email: **fundraising@cancer-resource-centre.org.uk**)

British 10K Success

The Centre had two teams running in the British 10K Road Race this year.



The morning of **Sunday 1st August** dawned hot and sunny as the **Centre's team**, including staff members Fiona and Clara, assembled underneath Eros at Piccadilly Circus. It was then off to the start line at Hyde Park Corner to join 11,000 other runners, including our second team from **Troika**.

All 21 of our runners completed the course, with several notching up a very respectable time. A group of Centre supporters were there to cheer them on as each one crossed the finish line near Downing Street. Then it was off to collect medals and on to St. James's Park for a celebratory glass of fizz and a chat about how it had all gone.

Sponsorship money is still coming in but it looks as though **each team has raised in the region of £2,000**. Our congratulations to all our runners for a great effort!

Christmas Cards

* Limited edition design

* 100% of proceeds go towards the centres work
See enclosed form for details

Yoga Class Fundraiser

The **Sangam Yoga Studio** in Battersea raised a fantastic **£535** for the Centre through donations from one Sunday morning class in early July.

Following a suggestion to raise money for the Centre by one of our members who attends their classes, the Studio Director, Gingi Lee, was keen to support us. As an easy and healthy way to raise money for the Centre, how about suggesting a similar idea to your gym or exercise class tutor?

Fresh and Worthwhile!

Nearly **£300** was raised for the Centre through a Charity Day held by the natural and organic food retailer **Fresh & Wild** at Clapham Junction.

The Cancer Resource Centre was chosen following a suggestion by a Fresh & Wild staff member. Susannah York, one of our Patrons, also joined staff and shoppers to give her support on the day. Petra Griffiths, Centre Director, was delighted by the success of the day. "Many people who come to the Centre live locally and, thanks to the Fresh & Wild Charity Day, even more people now know about how we can help them or their family if they are affected by cancer."

Pink Ribbon Magazine

If you enjoy a good read, look out for **Pink Ribbon Magazine** on sale throughout October as part of Breast Cancer Awareness month.

The Centre, together with two other charities, will share £1 from every copy sold and 10% of all advertising revenue. The magazine is a women's glossy, lifestyle title that celebrates women's battles to fight breast cancer. It will contain a variety of features including celebrity and reader case histories, a breast cancer awareness survey as well a piece about the Centre.

Recent Donations

Many thanks to everyone at **St. Luke's Church** in Battersea and **St. James's Church** Piccadilly for donating **£600** and **£1,434** respectively. We have been fortunate to receive regular donations from both churches and their continued support is greatly appreciated.

Perhaps your own place of worship would be interested in helping the Centre? The Centre helps people affected by cancer all over London and we are happy to provide information and literature about any of our services.

*The views expressed in this publication should not necessarily be taken as those of The Cancer Resource Centre.
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