



Virtual Memory Café

Welcome to our August 2021

Virtual Memory Café Newsletter Edition 15

Please join the Solent Admiral Nurse team at our Virtual Memory café. Grab a cuppa, sit down and relax. Our Virtual Memory café will hopefully give you some advice and guidance, however most importantly we hope that it makes you smile and reminds you that you are not on your own.



Please feel free to call us on 0300 1234 026 or email snhs.admiralnursing@nhs.net

Address: Admiral Nurses, Address: Admiral Nurses,
East Community Independence Service, Bitterne Health Centre,
Commercial Street, Southampton, SO18 6BT



Memory Cafe Update

So sorry to all of you that were hoping to join us at the end of June at Medwall Court. Unfortunately, following the Governments postponement on the lifting of restrictions, we made a decision to postpone our Café in order to minimise any risk to anyone attending.

We are now hoping to hold the first Café back on **Tuesday 3rd August at 2pm until 4pm at Medwall Court**. This should be in line with the proposed lifting of restrictions on the 19th July. We will try and contact all of those people who have expressed an interest in attending but anyone else who would like to attend please contact us nearer the time to ensure we are still able to open on this date.

Due to our current staffing short fall, there is likely to be only the one Café per month in the short term once we open.

Those of you that attended Highfield Café I am sure will join me in saying a fond farewell to Val Hall who retired at the end of May this year. Val has been working as an Admiral Nurse for many years now, having retired previously from her full-time post at Southern Health. I know she will be missed by many and maybe we can entice her along to one of our Cafes next year! It would be nice to give her a proper send off.

We are also hoping to update you regarding the Highfield Café run by volunteers from The Caraway Trust in our next edition of the Newsletter

Well I hope to see some of you in August, please let me know if there is anything you would like to see covered at either the Café or future editions of our Virtual Newsletter.

Bye for now *Karyn xx*

Admiral Nursing Support for Family Carers

In the interim, whilst the Admiral Nursing Team is short-staffed, Admiral Nurses employed by the charity, Dementia UK, are able to provide support in the following ways:

Admiral Nurse Helpline

Family carers can call the Admiral Nurse Helpline for free on 0800 888 6678 or send an email to helpline@dementiauk.org.

The lines are open: Monday to Friday, 9am – 9pm and Saturday and Sunday, 9am – 5pm

All calls to the Helpline are confidential and are answered by an Admiral Nurse, employed by Dementia UK. Admiral Nurses will provide advice, support and information and there is no time limit on the call. Many people call for more than 45 minutes and you can call back whenever you need to. If appropriate, you will also receive a tailored information pack after your call.

****** Please note that Helpline staff are aware that more carers will be calling from the Southampton city area until the service is operating at full capacity again.

Admiral Nurse Virtual Clinic

Carers / families can also book a dedicated clinic appointment with an Admiral Nurse, employed by Dementia UK. This is helpful for families who would rather book a dedicated time / slot in advance. You need to go online to book your appointment and you can choose to have either a phone call or a video call (using Zoom) with an Admiral Nurse.

To book, go to: <https://www.dementiauk.org/get-support/closer-to-home/>

Quiz Time

Guess the Year

In which year did each of these things happen?

1. The Soviet Union launched the first satellite, Sputnik.

1947, 1957 or 1967

2. Edward Heath became Prime Minister.

1970, 1980 or 1990

3. Hitler's Germany invaded Poland.

1938, 1939 or 1940

4. Roger Bannister first ran the mile in under 4 minutes.

1934, 1944 or 1954

5. The first James Bond film, Dr No, was released.

1962, 1972 or 1982

Guess the Rowntree's chocolate bar from the following clue?

1. A bubbly chocolate bar - - - -

2. Made in that city - - - - -

3. The mint with the hole in - - - -

4. Milk Chocolate selection - - - - - - -

5. Have a break - - - - -

Answers to last month's Sporting Quiz:

1-Fred Perry, 2-Jim Clark, 3-1966, Bonus Point-Bobby Moore 4-Roger Bannister, 5-Cricket, 6-Blue, Yellow, Black, Green and Red. 7-Yellow, Green, Brown, Blue, Pink, Black. 8-Ended in a draw between USA and GB. 9-Kinshasa-Zaire, 10-Brasil

Be part of Research on Dementia...



Who are we?

Hi! We are Emma and Caitlin, both Research Nurses for Older People's Mental Health, working for Solent NHS Trust Academy of Research & Improvement.

What do we do?

The Academy of Research & Improvement setup and run research involving people living with dementia and other mental health conditions, and their carers. Research and improvement can improve services, quality of care and find new treatments. Find out more by visiting www.academy.solent.nhs.uk.

What does participating in research involve?

There are many ways to be involved and this depends on the type of research. It could involve:

- Completing questionnaires about your experiences.
- Being interviewed about your experiences.
- Providing samples, like a blood test, or a mouth or nose swab.
- Trialling new treatments, like home-based activities, medications, or an exercise programme.

Are there other ways I can be involved in research?

Yes! We want to involve people with lived experience to help make research and improvement more relevant, practical, accessible, and meaningful for people with mental health conditions. You could help on various aspects of research, from the design to the sharing of results stage, or anywhere inbetween. If you are interested in being involved please visit the [join in](#) section on our website.

How do I get in involved?

If you or the person you care for are interested in being part of research and improvement or wish to find out more, please contact Emma or Caitlin via: research@solent.nhs.uk or phone 0300 123 3994.

On contacting us we would work with you to find out what best suits you, let you know which research you could take part in, or ask you if you would like us to contact you about future research. We really look forward to hearing from you.

Living Through a Pandemic

A Reflective Viewpoint

It's fair to say, the last 15 months have been like no other. As a 51 years old woman, experiencing a pandemic with various lockdowns, it has proven to be a time of reflection on one's own life. Throw into the mix, a cancer diagnosis at the end of last July, and life as I know it, will never be the same.

The benefit of receiving such a diagnosis during unprecedented times, is that I don't have the fear of missing out, as there is nothing to miss out on. Every cloud.....!!

You never expect to be called in to a consultant's office, to receive such life changing news. What I naively thought was a broken rib, turned out to be one of many chest wall tumours, and a secondary source of cancer. An ultrasound would find out the primary source. Just over a week later, I was told that I have primary peritoneal cancer. A rare, noncurative cancer that has metastasised to my ovaries and to the surface of my liver, bowel, and lungs. Couldn't just have a straightforward cancer, was my first thought. As I never do anything by halves!!

I was pretty much told that I probably wouldn't live to see 51, but the end of March saw me celebrating that time on this earth, so cancer has chosen the wrong woman to deal with!!

From the onset of my diagnosis, I have remained proactive. Initially researching the type of cancer that I have, and what I could do to keep myself as healthy as possible, not just relying on the chemo that they offered me. This has brought about a lot of lifestyle changes – becoming vegan, giving up refined sugar, no more alcohol, and becoming more sensible than I ever imagined possible! I am also bipolar 2, so it has been crucial to keep on top of my mental health as well as physical health, and to date, I have done just that.

A friend of mine, who is a fellow rare bird (having been diagnosed with a rare breast cancer), told me that having cancer was an opportunity to reinvent myself, and she is absolutely spot on! Having cancer does certainly change a part of you, that you will never get back, and that can be tough to get your head around, but as the months have gone by, I have come to realise, it's not such a bad thing. I am still a free spirit, with an unwavering determination to keep going. My bloody mindedness has paid dividends, that's for sure! I am also a very strong, independent woman, which is just as well, as my partner and I came to an end at the end of March. Unfortunately, he couldn't deal with my diagnosis, and I had to make the decision to part the waves, as it is not my responsibility to deal with that from anybody. My number one priority is too simply stay alive, and it takes every ounce of my energy and reserves to do that.

Staying positive can be utterly exhausting, but there is plenty of evidence out there to support the fact that maintaining a positive attitude is fundamental in keeping on top of anything. As my counsellor said, I have a diagnosis, but at this point, I am not ill.

I have been shielding since last July, and even though government guidelines changed at the end of April, I am still working from home, to keep myself safe. I have to admit, I am a little anxious about the impending “freedom day”, but can only be responsible for what I do, which will be to continue to wear a mask wherever I go, do online shopping, only meet friends outdoors, socially distancing. Life won't change for me, but I am so used to things being the way they are now, I don't really mind.

I wake up every day, with gratitude for how lucky I am to still be here, and whilst I have had to say goodbye to certain things and people, I do have a good support network of friends, and my health professionals have continued to be wonderfully helpful.

My best friend of 47 years is my constant source of support. We talk on the phone, or text every single day. It has been hard for her too, knowing that my life may well be shortened quite significantly, but she puts her feelings to one side, and provides me with helpful information, looks for clinical trials that may be available. She also comes to look after me when I have chemotherapy. I really don't know what I would do without her. Although she lives over 100 miles away, I always feel she is by my side, so I never have to feel alone or lonely.

I have also had to come to terms with the fact that my family are of no support, so I have let go of the upset I felt around their attitude towards me. Once you get to that place, it is totally liberating.

It's been nearly a year since my diagnosis, and I have finally made my peace with it all. The nitty gritty of writing a will and organising my funeral has been done, and now I just live day to day, and have started to organise my bucket list of things to do. It sounds like a bit of a cliché, but this has turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

A life changing bit of news, such as cancer or dementia, can seem like the end of the world, but you do reach a point where you can take the positives from it all, and of course you will have your good and bad days, but you just have to take it one day at a time.

There is so much more I could write about, but the newsletter would become a novel! I wanted to be candid about my story, as I can empathise with all of the lovely readers of this great publication. Having your usual support network put on hold, due to covid, can be very frustrating and isolating, and it can often seem as though there won't be an end to it.

I also have 3 beautiful dogs, that are my absolute world. I bought a border terrier puppy around 5 months ago, and he has been such a lovely focus for me, and they all bring joy to my life, and keep me sane.



Meet Hoodoos

The moral of this story is to keep on communicating – with friends, family, neighbours, with the wonderful admiral nurses. Even if you can't do this in person, a voice on the other end of the phone, or a face online via zoom, can make all the difference to your day.

Just remember, you are not alone.

I look forward to chatting to some of you again.

Je-an xx



Out and About with Boo

Mayfield Nurseries

Boo and I had the pleasure of volunteering at the Southampton Dementia Festival. We helped on the afternoons at Mayfield Nurseries. Boo wore his special bow tie for the occasion.



The Southampton Dementia Festival happens because of volunteers and the public spirit of Southampton to make it happen. It was a welcome opportunity to see people in person again

We enjoyed nature inspired activities, making bird feeders and painting garden bees and stones. My mum and I had a try at Ribbon Dancing which we found a fun way to exercise and move. Of course, Boo was very interested in acquainting himself with everyone. Positioning himself under tables waiting to gobble up crumbs of food! There is no need to vacuum when you have a Labrador around!



The afternoons were complimented by plenty of tea and cakes and an amazing folk singer and guitarist.

I was happy to see people in person again. The sunny weather was the icing on the cake. Being a part of Southampton Dementia Festival 2021 was a pleasure



Boo focusing on cake

Rachel & Boo xx

Mayfield Park, Weston Lane

Taken from Dementia UK website:



With temperatures continuing to rise this month, people may be concerned about what this means for those they know who have dementia. Even though the lockdown is easing, families may still be concerned about the health and wellbeing of their relative with dementia. This can make it more difficult for people to see if someone with the condition is comfortable and well.

Due to communication difficulties a person with dementia may not be able to explain that they are dehydrated or feeling unwell because of the heat. It may also be harder for families to monitor for signs of heatstroke and dehydration and remind the person with dementia of the importance of drinking. For families living apart from a relative, you could consider using technology, such as alerts on smart devices, which can remind a person that they need to drink throughout the day.

Ice lolly's and cool drinks such as fruit milkshakes may help to hydrate too.

Some medication can be affected by a person's dehydration and this may lead to a drop in blood pressure. This can lead to falls or fainting. You can avoid this by keeping track of when the person with dementia takes their medication. Sticking to the same schedule every day and ensuring the medication is taken with water is advisable. Perhaps encouraging sips of water with each individual tablet may increase peoples intake.

Sometimes a person with dementia may get confused with what clothing to wear during the heat. They may wear fleeces, thick coats or jackets instead of cool and loose fitting clothing. In situations like this, you can look at buying a similar style of clothing made out of a much thinner natural fabric. If you live with the person, put out a clean set of cool clothing every day in the morning so they know what to wear.

There is information and guidance to help you stay safe during spells of hot weather which can be found on the following website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>

Resources

This is a quick guide to some of the support you can access at the moment. We have included some local organisations as well as national charities and support groups. Please let us know if there is anything that you would like us to include or if you know of a really useful resource that we have not included.

 **Caraway** As well as supporting our Memory café s and providing Anna Chaplains, the Caraway Trust also have some really useful resources to download aimed at supporting people at home during Covid19.
www.caraway.uk.com

 **CARERS IN SOUTHAMPTON** *Helping unpaid carers* Carers In Southampton help adult unpaid carers with signposting, carers cards, carers assessments and emergency planning. Tel: 02380 582387 www.carersinsouthampton.co.uk
email: enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk

 **DEMENTIA CARERS COUNT** *Supporting Family Carers* Dementia Carers Count provide a one-day course for partners, family members and friends caring for someone with dementia to explore the topic of delirium in more detail. If you would like to attend this one-day courses in the future. Tel: 020 3096 7894 www.dementiacarers.org.uk

 **DementiaUK** *Helping families face dementia* Dementia UK's website is a really useful resource for lots of practical advice on living well with dementia. Their Dementia Hotline that can be contacted if you need to speak to someone. Tel: 0800 888 6678
www.dementiauk.org

 **Solent Mind** *For better mental health* Solent Mind is the local branch of the charity Mind and they also have some really good resources including a Coronavirus Well Being Hub and Well Being tool kits. Tel: 023 8202 7810 www.solentmind.org.uk

 **SO:Linked** *Supporting Southamptons People in Communities* SO:Linked offer practical advice, support and sign-posting with everything from food and medicine deliveries to support with your pets. Their friendly navigators can be contacted by phone or check out their website. Tel: 023 8021 6050 www.solinked.org.uk

 **Young DementiaUK** Whilst it is aimed at those living with early onset dementia, those of us who are young at heart will probably find Young Dementia useful as well. They have lots of practical advice about living with dementia.
www.youngdementiauk.org