

Review of Shropshire & Mid Wales Cancer Forum Objectives 2013

Looking back over the last year we are pleased to report some positive results:-

We now have regular representation from Shropshire and Telford Hospital(SaTH) at our meetings. Rachel Redgrave, has been attending since her appointment to the role of Operations Manager Oncology and Haematology. This is a very positive development and we look forward to continuing to work together.

The demise of the established Cancer Networks and the restructuring of the NHS has meant huge changes. At the forum we have worked hard to establish new and appropriate contacts and are pleased to report that this has been very positive. We have made and are in contact with the Shropshire Healthwatch, Telford & Wrekin Healthwatch, local councillors from both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin plus the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) in both areas and the West Midlands Strategic Clinical Network (SCN).

Whilst we did not hold our own promotional event, we were pleased to have a stand at the Health & Wellbeing Clinics run by SaTH and at the Telford & Wrekin Healthwatch launch.

We did work with Macmillan to host a one day workshop “Making a Difference”. This was attended by 8 on the day, with people from Wolverhampton, Mid Staffs and even the Shropshire Councillor for Health. Everyone who attended the day was inspired by the excellent facilitator Derek Stewart who filled the room with his enthusiasm and passion for improving cancer services.

Regarding rarer cancers, we are aware that SaTH have submitted a bid for a specialist CNS for rarer cancers. We however, have not made any progress.

We have added new information to our website that has been recommended by forum members. The website has had 1244 visits during the calendar year of which 83% are new visitors. The most frequently visited page is support – other, which has been viewed 521 times, followed by the home page 392 visits, support local 182 visits, support local/Hamar 180, support/breast groups 133. It is of little surprise that most cancer patients / carers/ friends are looking to find out what support is available. Some 317 of our visitors knew the web address and came directly to the site, while 30 came from a link on another website, all others found us through a search engine.

We are hoping that SaTH will be giving out a leaflet- Patient Entitlements to all cancer patients receiving chemotherapy when it has gone through the internal validation process. We have also got permission to use the ASK3 questions information and hope that we will be able to produce some leaflets next year.

The forum is still promoting the need for a treatment summary and has seen examples of what SaTH's cancer computer programme can produce. We remain optimistic that in the not to distant future all of SaTH's cancer patients will be offered a treatment summary.

Preparations are well underway for a pilot half day workshop provided by Macmillan, developed at our suggestion and hosted by ourselves entitled Giving YOU a Voice in your Healthcare Consultation.

The West Midlands Strategic Clinical Network has agreed to fund a small amount of expenses for the forum. Currently it will pay the room hire, travel to and from the meeting expenses for the months of February and March. It is unaware of its budget for 2014/15 and therefore unable to commit to any future funding at this point.

It is also with great sadness that we have to report the sudden and unexpected loss of one of our longest serving members Eileen Lewis, her enthusiasm and passion will be missed.