A personal appeal from Dr Kate

Dr Kate Smith has been a Medical Director at St Luke’s Hospice for 25 years, and was a volunteer doctor here before that.

This is her story, how St Luke’s care has changed over the years – and how you can help us support even more local people.

“Being Medical Director may sound a bit grand, but basically it involves having overall responsibility for the medical care of hospice patients, supporting our doctors and nursing staff, and leading the clinical team.

My aim is to improve someone’s symptoms whether they are physical, such as pain or sickness, or emotional or spiritual. It is important to be alongside the person who is so ill, not turning away when things get really difficult, not saying ‘there is nothing more we can do,’ even if the only thing we can do is to be there for them, to be available, to sit with them.

I must have met thousands of people during my time at St Luke’s Hospice, and they have been an inspiration in the way they deal with what life has sent their way.

Looking back at how St Luke’s has changed in the last 25 years, there are many things to be celebrated.

We always felt that the education of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals was very important.

We knew we couldn’t look after everyone who might benefit from our care, but we could pass on what we had learned to others and improve end-of-life care outside the hospice.

We now work with many different organisations, all with the aim of improving palliative and end-of life-care (across mid, south and east Cheshire in particular) but much further afield as well.

I am so proud of what the Hospice has achieved over the last 25 years thanks to the generosity of people like you. But in order for us to continue to expand our support to local people and their families at the Hospice and within the community, we need your support.

We want to reach out to more people in the community, to support all medical and care teams across neighbourhoods like yours.

If we are going to continue to do this and help more local people, we need to invest more in our nursing and medical care.

If you would like to make a donation or get more information please visit our website. Thank you.”

Dr Kate Smith

www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/donate
Kath Knight says “Befriending is a complement to both St Luke’s services and to council/NHS services. It’s not a substitute for home care or other ongoing support but it is making a big difference to the lives of local people. It takes a lot for a person to admit to the impact that loneliness has on their life, and people can feel like they are a failure for feeling lonely. Evidence from Age UK shows that 1 in 10 people aged 65 or over say they are always or often feel lonely, and half of all older people consider the television their main form of company.”

Volunteers and members of the Alsager Sing Along Group give us a bit of an insight into the benefits of the group:

“I have a health condition which is very isolating. I don’t go out apart from this group. I used to work with the elderly and really missed it, so this group is a double help to me. I feel less isolated and I am able to work with the elderly again through volunteering.”

“We all think of hospice care as being in a building at Winsford. Yet care, support and signposting to relevant groups are such an important part of growing older and thinking about care at the end of life. If anyone is hesitating about getting involved, please don’t. The community work that St Luke’s is now involved with is fantastic. Social isolation is reduced, you get a chance to connect with local people again, feel supported and the groups help to grow your personal confidence.”

If you would like to know more about the community matters work that St Luke’s is taking forward, please contact Siobhan Horton on 01606 551246

www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/community-matters
Most people are aware that we are an adult hospice, but what they may not be aware is that we support children and young people through our Phoenix Group.

February saw the third anniversary of our monthly bereavement group for youngsters aged 6-17. Young people attending the group have experienced the death of someone important to them through illness. Through meeting others they find that they are less isolated with their grief and ‘not the only ones’.

The group supports young people to:
• Normalise the process of grief and its range of emotions
• To encourage expression of feeling
• Learn about the effects of significant change in their lives
• Develop new coping skills
• Share and have fun with a group of other young people to ease a sense of isolation

“My school friends don’t understand how I’m feeling, and I can’t explain it to them. I can have fun and feel normal at the Phoenix Group”

As part of one of the groups, the youngsters each made a memory jar. They coloured salt with chalk, each choosing their own colours to represent a memory.

“My sad memory is at the bottom and I’ve put my happy memories on top of it”

For more information, please contact the Family Support Team on 01606 555692.

Local groups and individuals have supported this project including Freemasons of Kinderton Lodge of Middlewich and The Inner Wheel Club of Nantwich.

“Taking part in the ‘recording memories’ activity has also lifted my heaviness in my heart. Thank you St Luke’s”

“When we look back at the old box of family photos, we can all reminisce about times past. One of the things that people really do miss is the sound of a loved one’s voice.

St Luke’s is offering a new service to help and support people who want to record their life experiences onto a CD. They choose what happens to the recording, what they do with it and who to give it to.

The ‘Recording memories’ service is free to patients, carers and elderly people.

If you know of someone who would like to preserve their stories in their own words (and produce a lasting record of their unique voice), please telephone the main hospice number on 01606 551246. Give reception your name and a contact telephone number and leave the rest to us.

“This has been wonderful. It has been a chance for me to talk about my life and upbringing without having to write it all down”

“It has been so good to talk about my life before I was ill”
2015 is our Year of Sport. The great thing is that ANYONE can take part.

Tom is our first Ambassador!

Skier Tom Rascagneres aged 14, from Hartford is the first ‘Year of Sport’ ambassador for St Luke’s ‘Year of Sport’ campaign 2015.

Beginning on a plastic slope at the age of six, Tom has worked his way through fun races and ski holidays to become a very successful young racer.

Tom has signed up to be our first Year of Sport Ambassador. The Grange High School pupil said "My Grandparents received support and treatment from St Luke’s and I want to help fundraise as much as I can for such a great cause. I have some ideas in the pipeline - my Head of Year at school has agreed to offer a helping hand and I’m really excited to get started.”

If you want to be a Year of Sport Ambassador, please get in touch with Rhys or Mark.

How can you get involved?
- Get your sports club to organise a match for us, half the fees could go to your club and half to St Luke’s
- Host a crown green bowling pair’s competition, add a bit extra for the hospice to the entry charge
- Brownies and cubs – hold a sponsored walk or do something connected to your sport or charity badge to raise some money
- Hold a family picnic and rounders match with each person donating to the day
- Get the children to do a sponsored dog walk (the dog gets extra walks and the kids will be tired out)
- Grandparents – challenge the youngsters to a dominoes and darts match, each donating some money

Whatever you do, please raise a few pounds for us and ‘Do it for St Luke’s’.

Contact Rhys Edwards or Mark Porter on 01606 555811 or 01606 555697
Please let us know what you are doing for the Year of Sport.

www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/sport

Our nurses are cheering you on, so come on, ‘Do it for St Luke’s!’

Go on! Get active and tell us how you will raise some money. We have a great fundraising pack to help give you some starting points. You can find it on our website or give us a call if you’d like one in the post.
Jane Thompson our Head of Events gives us an insight into St Luke’s midnight walk.

“10 years ago I was chatting with a friend who was also a patient at the hospice. Whilst undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer, Claudia had signed up to do the Moon Walk in London. Training for a marathon walk at night was a shock to her system. However more of a shock was the letter that told her she hadn’t got a place! Claudia persuaded me that St Luke’s should create their own version of a ladies night walk in Cheshire.

How glad are we that we listened to her and took that leap of faith. 10 years on we are creating our 11th midnight walk. Since the start of our walks, St Luke’s has benefitted by more than £2 million raised by people like you.

We are more than ‘a little proud’ to be the first ever hospice midnight walk and even more proud that it continues to be one of the largest and most successful in the UK. Claudia lost her brave battle with cancer but I know for sure that she would have been so excited to know of the legacy she left us.

The midnight walk and the money it has raised has been a very significant part of our income generation. To consider an event programme that didn’t include the midnight walk and the average £200,000 a year it raises would be inconceivable. No individual event comes anywhere close to raising such a life changing amount of money.

You can imagine, therefore, our fears that the golden goose could become extinct! Without 1,000 plus women taking on the walk in 2015 St Luke’s Hospice would be a much poorer place indeed.

Please join us NOW and help us to continue to raise the essential and much valued £200,000 that forms part of our annual budget.

Whether you are walking in memory of a loved one or walking for fun with family or friends, you can sign up online by going to www.midnightwalk.co.uk and ensure the success of our very special fundraising walk. You will be doing something very special indeed to support patient care. Hope to see you there.”

Jane Thompson x

A walking legacy

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Jane Thompson x

Here come the girls!

I’m walking the midnight walk to celebrate 4 years of being cancer free

Mavis

I’m walking in memory of you Mum and the care you received from St Luke’s

Helen

Sign up now at www.midnightwalk.co.uk

6.5 or 13.1 mile sponsored walk on Saturday 27 June 2015 • Reaseheath College

We also need 200 volunteers to help out on the night! Call Angela on 01606 555690
Volunteering has given me my life back

Meet Julie, a lady with a bubbly personality and a contagious smile. Behind the smile though, life has been tough. Election day 2010 was a day of results on many levels; Julie was diagnosed with cancer following a routine mammogram.

“I was 49, I’d had a routine mammogram and was called back. I was told that it was a mass of cancer. It just didn’t register. I didn’t have time to think as the treatment process started very quickly. My husband couldn’t take in the news. My children (in their late teens) were both upset by the news too. The hardest part of the journey was telling my parents. I was determined to see my daughter graduate in HR; this was the goal that kept me going through my treatment.

Friendships are hard when you have a cancer diagnosis. Some people don’t know how to react and withdraw from you. This is a very hard part of starting to live a normal life again. Once the physical treatment had been completed, I was very low and in a dark place. I was referred to St Luke’s and accessed their complementary therapy and counselling services. I had heard of St Luke’s before, but never realised the extent of the work that they do.

When Winterley Grange opened, a friend suggested that volunteering on reception may be just what I was looking for, and it was. I wanted to do something with my life, to give something back to St Luke’s. I can genuinely say that I love volunteering. I have a reason to get up in the morning. I get to meet some wonderful people and I can relate to what they are going through. When you have battled cancer, you understand how people in a similar situation are feeling.

Thank you St Luke’s, volunteering has helped me so much in getting my life back on track and I’m looking forward to the future.”

Volunteer

Reception calling

If Julie’s story has inspired you, why not volunteer to help cover our Winsford main hospice reception? This role is vital to the smooth running of our daily business. As receptionist you are the “first port of call” for anyone and everyone who visits or telephones us for whatever reason.

We are looking for people who have time to spare, have a warm friendly manner and the ability to stay calm in a busy work environment. We need help during the week as well as over weekends and if you are interested, we will try and find a time slot that fits with the rest of your commitments.

Retail expansion!

These are exciting times for us. Our furniture warehouse is expanding and our house clearance enterprise has really taken off. We are looking for enthusiastic and energetic individuals with a “can-do” attitude to join this great volunteer team:

- Warehouse Sales Assistants
- Warehouse Assistants
- eBay Researchers
- Van Drivers
- Van Driver’s Assistants

For all vacancies call Angela Slack or Pam Ford on 01606 555689/555690 or apply online at www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/volunteer

Charity and coffee shops

Our wonderful shop teams are always on the lookout for that special person. You’ll make new friends and will be giving us the gift of time, which is so precious to us.
It’s such a simple idea and St Luke’s receives money every time that it’s used. It costs you nothing, yes you read that right, NOTHING.

Think about any shopping that you do online: Changing your utilities, booking rail tickets, finding that special gift for a loved one, even booking a holiday.

Go to the Care2Save website first, nominate us as your charity, then shop as normal via Care2Save. Once you’ve nominated us, every time you shop through the Care2Save website we get money donated to us.

You may recall from our newsletter two years ago that we were thrilled when Care2Save launched, an idea that came from St Luke’s (and is now known all over the UK). A gem of an acorn that is now blossoming into oak trees everywhere!

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“Every ticket bought will not only give you a chance of a great cash prize, but will also enable us to care for people at some of the most distressing times of their lives”

If you would like some extra tickets, please give us a call on 01606 553553 or email promotions@stlukes-hospice.co.uk

Free money for St Luke’s!

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If you would like some extra tickets, please give us a call on 01606 553553 or email promotions@stlukes-hospice.co.uk
Full information on all of our events can be found from our website: www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk Dates are being added all the time. We also have music, food and informative events running.

**Don’t miss out!**

**Change of a Dress**
27-29 April
www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/change

**Adopt a Duck**
at our family duck race
21 June
www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/duckrace

**Sandiway Corporate Golf Day**
28 April
www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/golf

**Ladies Only Midnight Walk**
27 June
www.midiwightalk.co.uk

**5K fun at our**
**BUBBLE RUSH**
16 May
www.stlukes-hospice.co.uk/bubblerrush

**Share your story**
One of the biggest things we are asked about is real life stories. Patients and their families can still worry about what a hospice is, what happens here and how they feel when they are referred to St Luke’s.

- Can you help put their worries to rest?
- How has St Luke’s touched your life?

If you have a story to tell, please get in touch. You don’t need to write the story, just talk to us and we’ll do the rest. Get in touch with Liz Wells or Jo Hughes on 01606 555816 or 01606 555891