



Surrey Network for Social Enterprise

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice

Background and history

The Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice is a social enterprise that cares for patients with cancer, motor neurone disease and other terminal illnesses. It lies on the outskirts of Farnham town and serves the populations of West Surrey and North East Hampshire. The hospice is named after a local mother of three who died of cancer in 1970. Her husband, Sir Edward Tuckwell, a Bart's surgeon, founded the hospice to ensure people would have access to specialist palliative care in the local area. The hospice admitted its first patients in 1978. Since then more than 6,000 local people facing terminal illness have been cared for at the hospice and in their own homes.

An independent charity, with a board of trustees that governs its activities, the hospice employs some 150 full and

part-time employees - the equivalent of 100 full-time staff - and is reliant on the work of over 550 volunteers.

"We have a very positive philosophy of care at the hospice," says Sarah Brocklebank, Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Chief Executive. While specialist palliative care is provided for adults with progressive illnesses for whom curative treatment is no longer possible, the hospice also promotes an active and holistic approach to achieve the best quality of life for both patients and their families.

The hospice provides a range of services, including occupational therapy, physiotherapy, a range of complementary therapies, counselling and welfare advice, information and assistance. Services and facilities have been progressively extended over the years. For example, a full time

Medical Director was appointed in 1991; home support was introduced and the team expanded on several occasions; day care was first offered at the hospice in 1990 and extended to four days per week in 1995.

Recent building work and improvements have included the opening in 2005 of a conservatory/activities room attached to the day hospice, and the ROWAN room, the first facility of its kind in the country that allows patients with reduced mobility to take control of their own environment.

Funding

To fund its work the hospice relies upon legacies, donations and a mix of income generating activities, which include its 10 charity shops. It costs £3.9 million a year, or £10,000 a day, to run the hospice but less than 17% of this funding requirement comes from the NHS, way below the national average for hospices of 34%. This means the hospice is under continuous pressure to develop additional revenues. The fundraising and retail teams, assisted by many capable and willing volunteers in the local area, work hard in hospice shops, at the hospice itself and across the region to organise events and appeals, to generate 'the missing millions'.

In 2005/06 the hospice had a financial shortfall of around £200,000 because income from donations and legacies did not keep pace with the rising costs of caring for patients and their loved ones. This led to some cost saving measures as well as some new fundraising initiatives, including the launch of the 'Living Appeal' to help raise an extra £500,000 every year.

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Retail development

The hospice's social enterprise activities are centred on ten Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice shops, located in major towns in the area. Their income comes almost exclusively from the sale of donated goods and in 2005/06 they raised some £655,000, or approx. 17% of total hospice revenue. The shops are able to maintain their profitability because they have 150 dedicated volunteers who help keep costs to the minimum.

Shop revenues increased by 10% in 2005/06, the result of changes that enhanced operations. A new shop was opened in Godalming, Phyllis Tuckwell's home town. The shop in Farnborough moved into the Kingsmead Shopping Centre, leading to a 35% increase in turnover, and the one in Fleet was modernised. This refurbishment provided a furniture sales area that now generates significant profit. In fact, furniture has been a highly successful line for the shops as a whole, with sales growing by some 25%. As a result, the hospice added to

its team of delivery drivers, who collect and deliver acceptable donated furniture to sell in the shops.

The success of the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice shops is recognised in the independent Charity Shops Survey Report, which rates them amongst the best in the country. "We are delighted to be at the top of the league," says Sarah. "It's great recognition for our staff and volunteers."

The future

The biggest challenge for the hospice team is to manage the inevitable tension between what the hospice aspires to do clinically with what can realistically be afforded. "On the revenue front we will do more of the same," says Sarah, "but there are also several opportunity areas. These include further upgrading of the shops, possible new locations, extending shop operations into e-business and addressing some infrastructure issues." Maximising revenue from the wide mix of potential sources is also critical. To help achieve this, Sarah is encouraging the

fundraising and retail teams to look further at ways they can co-operate. This follows experience with the 'Living Appeal', which raises awareness for the shops and contributes to their revenue growth. "We recognise that one public facing area can positively impact on another," says Sarah. "We need to exploit this."

There are further activities and projects being planned on the care front too. The hospice wants to optimise the clinical mix and balance between in-patient, community, outpatient and day hospice services. Designing and building a new therapy room is planned as part of the longer-term vision for the therapy and training wing. There is also work to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders in the NHS and voluntary sector, including other hospices and charities.

Sarah sums this up in typically positive Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice style, "The future is bright," she says, "and there's lots to do!"



Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice

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Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice is a member of the Surrey Network for Social Enterprise.

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