



Press Release – 30 January 2012

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Young people in Herefordshire are encouraged to talk about cancer

Wye Valley NHS Trust and Macmillan Cancer Support have teamed up with Herefordshire College of Technology (HCT), to get young people in Herefordshire talking about cancer, following a recent poll revealing that young people have 200 facebook friends but would only turn to two friends for cancer support.

The new poll of 1,000 people, age 18-35, undertaken by Macmillan Cancer Support for Cancer Talk Week (23-29 January 2012), reveals that one in eight (13%) surveyed couldn't even turn to one single friend for support when faced with a serious problem. This is despite the 'boom' of social networking sites such as facebook and twitter in recent years.

That's why HCT student, India Lane, decided to take action and encourage young people to start talking about cancer, live healthier lifestyles to help prevent cancer, be aware of the signs and symptoms, associated worries and the support available.

Whilst studying Level 3 Health and Social Care at HCT, India has also devoted herself to a new role representing Macmillan Cancer Support. This is part of a new Macmillan Cancer Support initiative to encourage colleges and schools to have a MCS student representative to help raise young people's awareness of cancer.

India, said "My granddad passed away recently after having lung cancer. After that I really wanted to raise awareness about the disease so I became a representative. Just hearing the 'C' word can be frightening, so my new role is a great opportunity to get young people talking to their friends about cancer and hopefully improve the way in which we look after our bodies for a healthier future".

Throughout Cancer Talk Week, students at Herefordshire College of Technology were invited to take part in talks about the history of Macmillan Cancer Support, fundraising activities, specific cancers, the new information and support service available at the Macmillan Renton Unit (cancer unit) for cancer patients and their families, and hear from a cancer patient about their experience.

Kate Birchall, Lung Cancer Nurse Specialist at Wye Valley NHS Trust, commented "It's important for young people to talk about cancer and understand how improving their own health and lifestyle can help prevent cancer. Also by being aware of the early signs of lung cancer they can also encourage family, friends and neighbours to present to their GP's early and maximise their chances of a cure. Young people can help keep their lungs healthy by exercising regularly and not smoking. Lung damage cannot be reversed, so prevention is much better than a cure".

Pauline Featonby, Skin Cancer Nurse Specialist at Wye Valley NHS Trust, said: "Cancer Talk Week is a great opportunity to get young people talking about skin cancer and how to protect their skin from harmful rays. There is a lot of pressure on young people to look good and getting a sun tan is part of this. Often, young people do not realise that even when using sun cream they are risking their health."

Jenny Goddard, Fundraising Manager for Macmillan Cancer Support, says:

[A provider of health and social care](#)

“It is surprising and concerning that people confide in such a small number of friends and family – and more so that others may not confide in anyone. It is important that, when going through something tough, like a cancer diagnosis and treatment, you can speak openly about what you’re going through to ensure you get the right support you need”.

‘If anyone does want to talk to someone impartial or wants advice on how to talk to their friends and family, the Macmillan team can always help.’

To find out more about topics covered during cancer talk week, please contact the following:-

- Becoming a Macmillan Cancer Support school or college representative – contact Jenny Goddard, Fundraising Manager on 07793579376 or email: jgoddard@macmillan.org.uk
- Health and Social Care Course information – contact Suzie Davies, Curriculum Area Manager on 01432 365369
- Support and advice available to cancer patients and families at the Macmillan Renton Unit, in Hereford – contact Alison Stemp, Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Facilitator on 01432 355444 ext 5459 or email hereford.cancerinfoandsupport@nhs.net
- Macmillan Cancer Support can help you with those difficult conversations, call free on 0808 808 00 00 or visit www.macmillan.org.uk

Photograph

Jenny Goddard - Fundraising Manager MCS, Kate Birchall – Lung Cancer Nurse Specialist Wye Valley NHS Trust, India Lane (student at Herefordshire College of Technology and MCS representative), Peter Rowland, MCS Senior Representative



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Macmillan Cancer Support Notes to editors:

Methodology: Macmillan Cancer Support (November 2011). An online survey of 1,000 adults aged 18-35 from across the UK, was conducted on behalf of Macmillan Cancer Support. Fieldwork was undertaken between 16-17 November 2011. The figures have not been weighted.

About Macmillan Cancer Support:

Macmillan Cancer Support improves the lives of people affected by cancer, providing practical, medical, emotional and financial support. Working alongside people affected by cancer, Macmillan works to improve cancer care. More than one in three of us get cancer. Two million of us are living with it. If you are affected by cancer Macmillan can help.

Wye Valley NHS Trust Notes to editor:

- Wye Valley NHS Trust is the first integrated provider of acute, community and adult social care in England.
- The key principles of the organisation are to improve the health and well being of the people we serve in Herefordshire and the surrounding areas.
- With an estimated annual turnover of around £160million, we employ around 2,500 staff. As the first integrated provider of acute, community and social care in England, we aim to build new relationships between our staff, patients, service users and their carers, and with the wider community.
- We are a clinical and practitioner-led organisation owned by our local community and staff.
- We are also working towards Foundation Trust status with the aim of achieving it in 2013.

For further information please contact:

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