

Cancer Connect

The St George's newsletter for people affected by cancer

Issue 8 – March 2021



Covid-19 vaccine

The roll-out is starting

Coronavirus vaccine and Cancer patients

From the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic, St George's University Hospitals Trust has been instrumental in the race to develop a vaccine in partnership with The Oxford University. The Oxford University AstraZeneca Vaccine was approved for use on 30th December 2020 soon after the Pfizer BioTech vaccine.

St George's University Hospitals Trust was also one of the first hospitals to open a vaccine clinic in the country and has now vaccinated over 20,000 people. The newly set up Vaccine clinic has now expanded to 14 cubicles meaning that up to 700 doses can be given daily.

Added to this we are now able to offer the Vaccine to our Cancer patients. The Vaccine has been deemed safe by our Cancer and Vaccine teams to be given to patients receiving ongoing cancer treatment, including those receiving chemotherapy. If you have any questions about receiving the Vaccine, please discuss this with your Clinical Nurse Specialist or the Consultant managing your care.

Bev Wilson Clinic Nurse Specialist in Haem-oncology told us 'It's incredibly uplifting to be able to offer my lymphoma patients their COVID vaccine on the same day as their clinic appointment at short notice. Well done to St Georges my patients are very happy and it's nice to be able to do something uplifting.'

Rachel Perrot, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Colorectal cancer wanted to thank the hard work of the Vaccine team especially for fitting in her patients at short notice.

Janice Minter

Head of Nursing for Cancer, Surgery & Major Trauma

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A new caring initiative kindly supported by St George's Hospital Charity.



Additional information: <https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19/vaccine/>

Keeping you safe

Treating patients during the Covid-19 pandemic has been a major challenge for teams at St George's – but they want everyone to know that they are still here for you and a range of measures are now in place to keep you safe during your visit.

All staff are now wearing face masks, and patients and visitors are asked to wear a mask or covering. You'll also notice lots of new social distancing signage as well as hand hygiene stations in place across the hospital.

If you are due to have a planned operation or procedure, there are a number of steps that patients are asked to follow, such as self-isolating and undergoing a Covid-19 test.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, many aspects of the care St George's staff provide hasn't changed, so please don't hesitate to access treatment if you need it.



For more information, visit:
www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Voice listening event

Outpatients services
and cancer patients

The main action points going forward are:

- Closer collaboration with the IT and administration divisions to relay the experience and feedback from the Cancer patients.
- Review the appointment information given to patients, e.g. how to prepare for virtual appointments and how family/friends can be accommodated.
- Assess the educational needs for staff around the new media communications.

Watch this space and emails to learn how these are being actioned.

Thank you all for your continuing support of Voice.

Sue Fox

Chair of Voice, the Cancer Patient Support Group at St George's Hospital

Scan to watch the
event online



It was a gamble! It was a challenge! It was scary! But it was a success!

Our first on-line Listening event in October was a great success, despite the lack of tea and cake, and we gathered very valuable feedback from our members.

Despite not being able to meet in person, there was a lively Zoom discussion about how the new way of working in Outpatients has affected Cancer patients. Very clear instructions from Neil Dennis, our "techie" Core Group member made it very easy so hopefully even more of you will join us for our next on-line event.

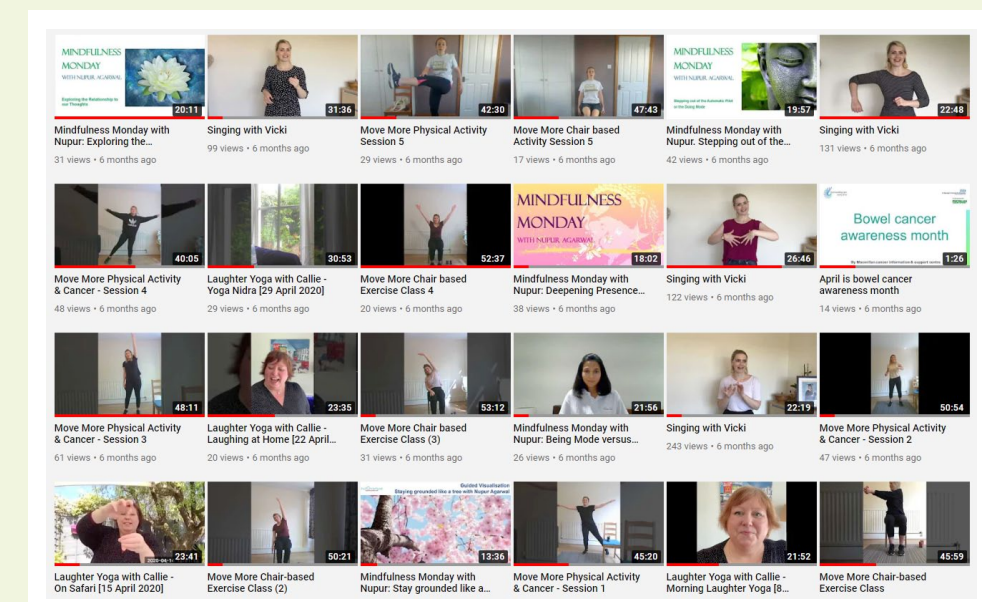
Support in your community

Adapting to a new way of offering support

The Coronavirus pandemic may have made it more difficult for in-person groups and activities, but local and national charities have brought in some brilliant online support activities to help people who have had a cancer diagnosis. You don't even have to leave your home to make the most of these fantastic digital services.

The Macmillan Information & Support Centre led the way by launching a new YouTube Wellbeing channel in partnership with Full Circle Fund Therapies, Move More Wandsworth, Callie di Nello & Victoria Hodges. For 18 weeks they offered weekly videos at 10am consisting of exercises classes, laughter yoga, introduction to mindfulness and singing for wellbeing sessions. The channel has now 62 bespoke videos accessible to all at any time.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2hmgAIGy4tjAK2QEZ9vQDQ/featured>



The Macmillan Centre Wellbeing
YouTube channel channel

Full Circle Fund Therapies launched its Wellbeing Hub: reduce your stress, relax your mind and body and improve your wellbeing through free online sessions including Mindfulness, Guided Visualisations and Breathing Techniques.

www.fullcirclefund.org.uk/wellbeing-hub

If you're looking for something a bit more active, the online calendar at Paul's Cancer Support Centre includes Yoga classes, Get Active sessions and Move Dance Feel events. The centre has been reopening, but you can still arrange remote initial appointments and talking therapy sessions. www.pauls.org.uk

It's understandable that at this time you might need to talk to someone. South East Cancer Help Centre's range of online services includes telephone and video counselling, as well as Distance Reiki and a number of online group

therapies and classes.

www.sehc.org.uk/services/one-one-therapies/497-distance-reiki

In your 20s, 30s or 40s? Young adults should check out Shine Cancer Support's Facebook group, 'lockdown inspiration' and book and film clubs — as well as online meet-ups.

www.shinecancersupport.org/online-workshops/

And keep active with Macmillan's Move More programme, which Enable have been running online: make the most of their health and fitness support, including group exercise classes — on Zoom!

www.enablelc.org/movemore



Cancer Treatment Comfort Kit



On Monday 5th October, the Macmillan Information Centre Manager in partnership with St George's Hospital charity launched the Cancer Treatment Comfort Kit. They are handed out to patients at their first visit and we hope they will help to alleviate some of the initial pressure and worry that patients may face.

So, what's included?

- **Hard candy** – chemotherapy can alter the sense of taste so why not have a sweet treat to hand
- **Lip balm** – skin can become dehydrated and cause dry lips
- **Hand and nail cream** – to keep hands and nails well hydrated
- **Hand sanitiser** – to keep hands clean during hospital visits
- **Plastic cutlery** – chemotherapy can leave a metallic taste, so patients prefer to use plastic cutlery instead of metal
- **St George's Hospital Charity Mindfulness Puzzle Book** – to unwind and fill the time during treatment

As well as these practical items, the kits also include various local information on how to access support, group information and other charities that can help throughout the treatment journey.

The Macmillan Information and Support Centre

The Macmillan Information and Support Centre at St George's Hospital provides free, confidential information and support for anyone affected by cancer. Whether you are living with or beyond cancer, or you are a loved one or a friend of someone with cancer we are here for you.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Macmillan Centre at St George's has made changes to the way we work. We can welcome you for face-to-face drop in sessions with social distancing measures in place. Our new Video call option allows you to get the same meaningful conversation in the comfort of your home.

Location: St George's Hospital, Grosvenor wing ground floor

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Telephone: 020 8725 2677

Email: cancer.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk

Video call: book appointment via the website

Website: www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/service/cancer-services/macmillan-cancer-support/



The Cancer Connect editorial team would love to hear your comments about our newsletter



Estelle Le Galliot

If you would like to make a comment, want more information about any article or have a suggestion for a future article, please email [Estelle Le Galliot, Macmillan Information & Support Centre Manager at patient.voice@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.voice@stgeorges.nhs.uk) or contact the Macmillan Information and Support Centre on **020 8725 2677**.

You can also visit the centre on the ground floor of Grosvenor Wing, St George's Hospital.

St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust,
Blackshaw Road, Tooting, London SW17 0QT
Tel 020 8672 1255 www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

