

Care at Wakefield Hospice is about living.

It's about adding life to days when days cannot be added to life. It is making every moment count and creating lasting memories. It transforms lives.

When every moment matters, we need to ensure patients are as comfortable as possible and their needs are always being met. We aim to preserve a person's dignity and create precious memories for their loved ones.

Seeing her Dad, Trevor, start to lose his dignity, Fiona was relieved when he was admitted to Wakefield Hospice and describes the impact a syringe driver had.



"As Dad turned 80 he was diagnosed with melanoma. It was a long illness but one which he fought with courage. It had always been his wish to stay at home but he became very weak and tired, and the pain relief was no longer working.

We could see that this very proud man was starting to lose his dignity and it was having a huge effect on him and those around him who loved him. Fortunately, a bed was available at Wakefield Hospice.

It was a peaceful place where he could sleep and be calm without any fear, pain or stress. He was given 24 hour pain relief, and the syringe drivers used at the hospice enabled him to live the last few weeks of his life without suffering.

Our lasting memory is one of a very poorly but relatively cheerful and content man."

The way a person dies can have a profound effect on how their loved ones remember them. Through the use of the syringe drivers Trevor's pain and symptoms were managed, allowing him and his family to make the most of every precious moment together, creating fond last memories for his family. In fact, Fiona recalls **"He was very weak but found the strength to tell a funny story and make us laugh"**.

Wakefield Hospice takes great pride in providing outstanding end of life care. This does not always mean that we care for patients in their last few days but also those with life limiting illness, symptom control and pain management needs.

Syringe drivers are pivotal in this role. They help reduce symptoms by delivering a steady flow of injected medication at a constant rate under the skin for as long as it is needed. The drivers are sometimes called a continuous subcutaneous infusion.

Patients can arrive with existing tissue damage and our more frail patients are at greater risk, especially those who are nutritionally compromised, as skin can become more delicate. A syringe driver removes the need for regular, repeated injections helping to keep the patient as comfortable as possible, especially as more than one medication can be administered through a single syringe driver.

Staff time is also freed up by not having to spend as much time administering medication. The drivers are pre-programmed with the patients prescribed medication dosage, calculating the rate at which medication should be given. Once in place, very little intervention is required and they give continuous relief for up to 24 hours.

continued



They are a very reliable way to control symptoms and are particularly useful when symptom control by medicines given by other routes are no longer appropriate or effective, for example when:

- the patient is in severe pain and a regular flow of medication is needed for sufficient pain relief
- the patient may be agitated or distressed
- the patient's airway is compromised through respiratory secretions
- the patient is prone to vomiting or nausea
- the patient is weak
- the patient finds it difficult to swallow tablets or liquid due to a dry and/or sore mouth

Due to their high frequency of use the drivers often break and need replacing or require repairs or parts replacing. On average, the hospice needs to replace three drivers each year.

In the last twelve months, the hospice has paid out £6068 for syringe drivers. Every time we repair a driver it costs £250 through our maintenance contract, which also costs £1950.00 annually. That aside, to replace each driver now costs the hospice £1,076.00 (not incl VAT).

In the year prior we spent £3182 showing this last year is not a snapshot occurrence.

Providing pain relief, and making patients as comfortable as possible, is at the heart of the care we provide but comes at a regular cost. This application is to ask for a £1,076 grant donation which will provide vital patient-focussed pain relief and take pressure off whether we can afford to replace/repair or not when the next driver breaks (and it will!).

Time is a precious thing at our hospice. It's only a matter of time before we need to replace or repair more drivers and when we do, we need to act immediately. We have a limited number of drivers for use and it is not unknown for one person to require two or more drivers at any time, so the hospice is taking a pro-active approach in requesting funds in readiness for the inevitable next expense.

2020 has seen an unprecedented pressure on hospice budgets following the Covid-19 pandemic. Retail shops had to close, fundraising events postponed or cancelled altogether which resulted in an average £80,000 per month loss of income. The hospice is proud to remain functional during these times, caring for some of the most vulnerable people in our community, but it has come at a cost.

Re-forecasted budgets, post Covid-19, anticipate a deficit of £470,000. Any support the Trustees feel able to provide towards these essential costs to support the hospice as it continues to care for vulnerable people in the community, will be of immense value and truly appreciated.