

# Mac News

*The latest Weston General Hospital cancer news, views and announcements*

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## Meet the Macmillan Cancer Support Partnership Team

Firstly, we would like to say a big thank you to Emma for including us in this month's newsletter.

I'm Sara Mathewson, and with Maggie Crowe and Wendi Abraham having left for exciting new challenges elsewhere - I'm your new Macmillan Partnership Manager.

I have been at Macmillan Cancer Support now for 5 years. I previously worked in Swindon and Gloucestershire. Therefore, I am looking forward to meeting all of you in the Avon area.

I am a Specialist Palliative Care/Oncology Occupational Therapist by profession. My previous roles include; Lead Cancer AHP at the 3 Counties Cancer Network, Consultant Occupational Therapist, CCG Survivorship Co-Lead, and being a Macmillan Professional. I cannot wait to meet you all in person and to get to really understand your roles.

My working hours are: Monday to Thursday 8.00 am-5 pm

And my contact details are:

email: [smathewson@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:smathewson@macmillan.org.uk)

Mobile 07714 769367



I'm Sue Littler, Macmillan Partnership Quality Lead. I'm thrilled to be back to work with you all again. Especially, after such an incredibly challenging year for everyone.

After many years as a cancer nurse working in in-patient units, as Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialist and Macmillan Lead Cancer Nurse, I left Weston Area Health Trust in 2017 to join Macmillan Cancer Support.

In 2021 I took a career break, to assist with the National Vaccination programme. It was an amazing experience both professionally and personally and it was so lovely to have put a uniform back on!

One change for me has been my working week and this is now:

9.00-17.00, Tuesday to Thursday

And my contact details are :

Email: [slittler@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:slittler@macmillan.org.uk)

Mobile 07720 970337

We'd love to tell you more about what we offer in the next edition, but please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if there's anything we can help you with, and can we remind you that it doesn't matter if you're a Macmillan Professional or not there are lots of resources available on the main Macmillan Cancer Support website for you and people affected by cancer [Macmillan Cancer Support](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

- Link to our Learning and Development hub: [Learning and development \(macmillan.org.uk\)](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/learning-and-development)
- Macmillan Professionals hub with our wider offer to you: [Macmillan Professionals](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/macmillan-professionals)
- Our offer to non-Macmillan Professionals: [For your role \(macmillan.org.uk\)](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/for-your-role)
- Support Line Service which is available 7 days a week, 08.00-20.00 and provides a wide range of services for people with, living with the effects of and those affected by cancer: [Macmillan Support Line - Macmillan Cancer Support](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/support-line)



## Welcome to :

Cath White has joined Denise in the Lung Cancer nurse team



## Promotions:

Congratulations to Tracy Hardley who has become the new UGI cancer nurse specialist

and to Lesley Bowskill who is now a Senior Cancer Support Worker



## Hello's, Promotions and Goodbyes

### Good bye's:



After successfully setting up Personalised Care and Support team Nikki Shepard has left the world of cancer and is now working as an operations manager within the trust.

Lorna Blair who has worked as an UGI cancer nurse specialist for the last 5 years has now taking her care, compassion and nursing skills to the Respiratory Nurse specialist team at Weston General Hospital

You will both be missed but good luck in your new roles



At the end of July we said goodbye to Gilly Robinson Cancer Support Worker

Gilly has worked at Weston General Hospital for over 20 years and for the last 16 yrs has been working with Macmillan . With Dawn she set up and ran the original Macmillan Centre providing valuable support to the Oncology Day unit and the Cancer Nurse specialists as the centre administrator . She was instrumental in creating the information packs we still use within the centre today . Most within Macmillan Southwest affectionately called Gilly the original Cancer Support worker and in her last few years she was officially the Cancer Support worker for Gynae Cancer Team .

Gilly has now retired and is hoping to move the Hampshire Coast to spend her time gardening and spending time on the beach.

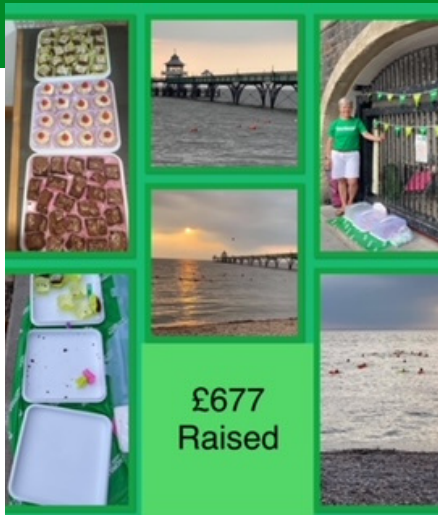
## Haven-makers

Poem created with the Oncology & Haematology Day Unit at Weston General Hospital by Beth Calverley UHBW Poet in Residence



How lucky we feel to talk away frustrations or simply be here when a silence needs no words.  
How lucky we feel to sit with mixed emotions, a huddle of golden moments in the hurt.  
How lucky we feel to have the time to listen, a haven when the outside world is rushed.  
How lucky we feel to hear the chatter of strength as patients' stories hold each other up.  
How lucky we feel that they miss us when they go.  
We share our lives with them - they want to know.  
How lucky we feel to open the side-door to hope and make appointments on behalf of calm.  
How lucky we feel to laugh away our stress and feed our beautiful machine with stars.  
At times, the side-door opens to acceptance - our stars run out as tears and taste the dark.  
That's when friendship puts the kettle on and brews a teapot full of thoughtful glow.  
How lucky we feel to work together tightly, as well as celebrating round each other's homes: a garden party of encouragement, a pamper day, a bunch of secret gis.  
Each evening, we know we've done our job - a new finale at the end of every shift.  
And yet this haven isn't built by luck.  
It's made by being patient, skillful, kind, throughout the best and worst of times, working hard to bring the light.

## Matron's Musings: Amanda Bessant



Although I have lived near the local tidal infinity pool nearly all my life, swimming there was not something I had previously contemplated but after reading about the benefits of outdoor swimming as a way of supporting wellbeing, I decided to give it a try, so last October I took the plunge.....literally!

It was such an enjoyable experience I have been swimming a few times a week ever since, all throughout the winter & even went for a dip on Christmas day.

The recent Macmillan 'Big Sporty Get Together' was a great opportunity for likeminded swim folk to come together for a fundraising activity. My plan was to hold a 24 hour team relay event at Clevedon Marine Lake, the fabulous local swimming group immediately got on board & in not time, 30 swimmers had signed up in either individual slots or joint slots to undertake a one hour relay session.

However this was not meant to be....3 days before the event the seawater pool had to be drained due to the quality of the water.....'Oh no what to do now?' I asked myself

A quick rethink of the situation & a look at the tide times showed there was to be an evening high tide, great, simply change from lake to sea with the 24 hour relay replaced with a flotilla of swimmers around Clevedon Pier.....after the change to venue & activity was agreed, the weather forecast changed to announce lightening at the time of the event!

Forever persistent, I carried on, made plenty of cake & carried on regardless....just as well as the evening was beautiful, not a drop of rain or strike of lightening in the sky.

The camaraderie amongst the swimmers & passers-by was wonderful; the compulsory post swim cake was enjoyed by all & Macmillan funds raised, a win, win all round.

# Last word: Lung Cancer Nurse Specialists

Contact the Macmillan Support centre on :  
01934 881079  
Ex 5079 or email :  
WGMacmillansupportcentre@UHBW.nhs.uk



**For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit [macmillan.org.uk](http://macmillan.org.uk)**

Denise Leighton- Price has been the only lung cancer nurse specialist (CNS) at Weston hospital for the last seven years, now thanks to the successful recruitment of Cath White, there are 2 full time CNSs. They are both based at Weston hospital; covering oncology clinics on Thursdays at the Bristol Hospital Oncology Centre to see patients with the Oncologist. Where possible investigations are carried out in Weston but some investigations can only be carried at the Bristol Royal Infirmary or Southmead Hospital.

COVID has impacted on many people and many services, lung cancer is no exception. The lung cancer referrals have reduced during the pandemic now resulting in people presenting late and unfortunately allowing the cancer to be detected at an advanced state. When a patient is referred to 2 week wait clinic a reason for the referral should be provided by the referring clinician, often the patient does not understand the reason for referral or that there is a possibility of cancer. A further impact of COVID means that patients being referred to 2 week wait clinics have to attend alone to hear a cancer diagnosis, whereas previously they would be accompanied by a relative.

The impact of COVID has changed treatment options for patients. More people were started on Immunotherapy single agent first line and have continued on that treatment. Over the past year we have seen new treatment options become available together with the desire to increase survival in this group of patients. Where possible lung cancer is treated radically, with a referral to the thoracic surgeons for resection or with radical radiotherapy including SABR (stereotactic ablative radiotherapy).

New Genome Sequencing is now routinely performed to determine if TKI (tyrosine kinase inhibitor- targeted therapy) will be beneficial to treat certain forms of lung cancer. This is an exciting time, with many new treatments available for the first time and survival in a group of patients with advanced disease, increasing.

Edited by Emma Pugh  
Macmillan Centre  
Manager

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