

Mental Health Chaplaincy in Cambridgeshire

promoting spiritual health, recovery and well being



Newsletter 6

Carols and Coffee



17th Dec 4pm

In the
Chapel Prayer Space
[Patients' Resource Centre]

All Welcome

To contact Chaplaincy: ☎ 01223 218598

Finding a way to live



If I had to give a reason for breaking down I would say it was because I could not find a way to exist.

Clare Allan
Author of *Poppy Shakespeare*

Christmas time and New Year bring with them familiar stories. Whatever our culture and home community, we depend on stories to help shape our awareness, behaviour, and our expectations of life itself. And for all the talk of finding our place in the world around us [politicians call it social inclusion] we might just be helped to take our first steps in that direction if we find a way to live out our own story in a way which is right and good for us. In fact, what we call **Recovery** is, at heart, a way of living in which we uncover, discover and express more freely who we are, what we believe and put our faith in, and begin to value our own life as being its own, unique, and precious story. So, at this time of year - as all about us people are celebrating life itself and how special life can be - I hope the New Year is one in which you find greater reward and a deeper understanding of your own life and how you might use your own talents and time to change your own life and the life of those around you, for the better.

Wishing you a happy Christmas

John

Mental Health Chaplain

Touching and remembering lives

News from Chaplaincy on Denbigh Ward

One of our mental health chaplains, Rev. Andrew Neate, tells us about his regular visits to Denbigh ward: As it's not possible for Denbigh patients to come to our Sunday Chapel Communion service I have, with support of staff, developed a ward service suited to their special needs. I concentrate on the main Christian times of celebration and recollection of Christmas, Easter, Harvest, and Remembrance Day. To help share in an informal way, familiar hymns, prayers and many visual reminders are used to enhance personal memories and shared experiences. Patients' families are encouraged to come, and they often reflect that it is good to have something in which they can share too. Parishioners from Our Lady & The English Martyrs RC Church in Cambridge provide the music and help prepare the service.

Denbigh Ward, situated on the Fulbourn Hospital site, is an 18-bed ward providing acute assessment and treatment for older adults who suffer organic illnesses (mild to severe dementias).

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"We're getting married in the chapel. . ."

. . . Ding dong the bells are gonna chime!

Well, we couldn't quite manage bells, but we did sing and enjoy some lovely music. The space was filled with friends and family. And it was a real pleasure to have been asked by Brian and Karan to officiate and hold their wedding ceremony in Fulbourn Hospital Chapel. They felt it was a natural step to take, especially as the local mental health community had played such a major, helpful and valuable part in their recovery and their lives individually and together. We wish them well for their future together.



WEDDING
CAKE
OBSERVED
FROM
A GREAT
HEIGHT

The Chaplaincy Team

Here for you

We offer the human touch and a personal presence. We take a non-clinical, confidential, non-judgemental approach, and are here for you, whether you have a religious faith or not.

Who we are

John Nicholson ■ Alan Goddard
Andrew Neate
Evelyne Hanley ■ June Hughes

☎ 01223 218598

john.nicholson@cambsmh.nhs.uk

Seeing people, not labels

One of life's privileges is to meet someone facing death well. Contradiction? Paradox? When I responded to his invitation to pay him a call, Bob* told me that facing the end of his life has been a liberating experience. For the first time in 37 years - since his first breakdown - he is at peace with the world around him. He is aware of being treated with kindness and as a human being: a person at last. The cancer has changed everything. He no longer feels victimised by what he has found to be an authoritarian and cruel psychiatric system, with its labels and harsh treatment. Even at home he feels free now - no longer having to hide his hoard of books away for fear of them being regarded as a potential fire hazard by others. His faith is giving him profound succour, and he has found the courage to tell those professionals he meets from the mental health community of the things he dreams of, hopes for and believes in, regardless of what they might do or think. Morphine is filling a space in his brain once drenched in anti-psychotic chemicals. What he really needed all along, he says, was spiritual care, and to be treated humanely.

John [Chaplain].

See www.cancerbackup.org.uk

*Bob is not his real name.

Have you thought of learning more about stress reduction?

Cambridge Buddhist Centre is offering courses to learn more about mindfulness and meditation practices and give you the chance to discuss these and your experience of them in a group.

Who is it for?

Everyone who wants to work to change themselves. The programmes are known to help with a wide range of problems, both physical and psychological. But the benefits extend beyond that.

We all have times when we experience stress and difficulty and Buddhist practices can significantly change the way we relate to these, greatly enhancing our capacity to cope.

By developing more awareness, for example, you can learn to deal more effectively with difficulties and take more pleasure in the good things in our lives

See www.cambridgebuddhistcentre.com or call 01223 577553



Working Together Lunch

Friday December 14th
12-2pm

Room 251
Helmores Building
Anglia Ruskin University, East Road

- Refreshments provided
- Music from Lifecraft singers & friends

MICHAELHOUSE CHORALE

*A choir for the mental health
community in Cambridge*

FOR ENJOYMENT, NOT PERFORMANCE
Every Friday: 2.30- 3.30pm

For information contact:

☎ 01223 309167 or 709769

**Feeling suicidal or desperate? Remember -
Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 [24 hours] or jo@samaritans.org
There's also the mental health Lifeline [7-11pm] on 0808 808 2121 [free call].**