

An update from the Chief Executive



Catherine Hodgson
Chief Executive
The Brigitte Trust

Inside this issue:

Help at home	2
Dr. Jean Collins Chair, Brigitte Trust	2
Our Service	3
Training Courses	3
Contact Details and Area Map	4

My name is Catherine Hodgson and I was appointed Chief Executive of the Brigitte Trust in April 2013 after the retirement of Ron Alexander. I'm enormously pleased to have joined such a wonderful organisation.

Since the Brigitte Trust was founded in the early 1980's we have successfully pushed our boundaries to cover an ever wider area. However, the last year has seen the most ambitious and wide ranging expansion in the Brigitte Trust's history.

We now offer our free service in Woking, Spelthorne and shortly, Runnymede. We have, for the first time, extended into West Sussex to Crawley. In spring 2014 we will extend the service again, this time to Horsham and its surrounding area. We are proud of our expansion and pleased to offer our unique service to more people and their families facing life-threatening illness across Surrey and Sussex.

We are delighted that our expansion has been supported by Macmillan Cancer Support which is providing an important financial contribution over a three year period. Macmillan Cancer Support has shown significant confidence in the quality of the Brigitte Trust's service and we are proud of our association with such a renowned and highly regarded partner. The Brigitte Trust also receives statutory funding and we are pleased to announce that Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group has guaranteed its support into

2014.

Our volunteers are central to our service and their dedication enables the Brigitte Trust to continue to provide vital support to clients at a difficult time, to provide carer respite, ease isolation and most importantly to provide a listening ear.

From April 2012 to March 2013 Brigitte Trust volunteers gave almost 6,000 volunteer hours to supporting clients.

The period April to June 2013 saw the Brigitte Trust receive a total of 83 referrals, including referrals from our new areas. These are truly encouraging figures.

We will be holding our annual Focus Group session for clients in October. This is a valuable opportunity to receive feedback and comments on our service from those people that it exists to support.

Our challenge going forward is to ensure that we are able to meet referrals for our service with sufficient numbers of our highly trained volunteers. We are actively recruiting for our free volunteer training courses scheduled for the Autumn in Weybridge and Crawley, with more courses in early 2014.

Details can be found inside this newsletter

We are hugely encouraged that knowledge about our service continues to grow. Our service is frequently praised for its high quality and is valued by clients, their families and referrers alike.

Emotional Support and Practical Help at Home

Jane Bellingham - Macmillan Service and Development Manager

Delivering the free Brigitte Trust Service of emotional support and practical help to a greater number of people in an increasing geographic area continues to be a great challenge. The network of Macmillan health professionals provided by Macmillan Cancer Support has helped to promote the service we provide. Knowing that Macmillan has endorsed our service has given other health professionals the confidence to refer patients to our service. It is paramount during this time of expansion that the quality of support that our volunteers provide remains consistently high. There is also a balance to be achieved between the number of referrals and the number of volunteers to support those. A number of our volunteers are now supporting more than one person at any one time. Our volunteers are a dedicated team who work professionally to provide the right help at the right time. I am extremely proud of the support that they provide. We now have a team of six Area Organisers (AO's). Members of this

team are responsible for dealing with all referrals that come to us. They remain the contact points for referrers. See full details on the back cover. An AO will visit a client in their home to discuss how the Trust may help, ensuring that the right support is provided. Keeping in touch with referrers is a key part of an AO's role and so do contact them to enable us to work with you in providing more support for your patients. Currently we are recruiting more volunteers to attend our training courses in September 2013. These will be held at The Charis Centre, Crawley and Broadway Malyan, Weybridge. Full details are on the facing page but do feel free to call the office for more information. Despite all the challenges and on-going change, our clients have always been and will continue to be at the heart of everything we do at The Brigitte Trust. Do what you can to keep that heart beating.

Jane Bellingham
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Jane Bellingham
Macmillan Service and
Development Manager

Managing the Brigitte Trust

In accordance with charity law the Brigitte Trust is managed by a body of Trustees who are legally responsible for the proper governance of the Trust. We have to ensure that the Trust operates within the law at all times; that everything the Trust does supports our objectives as registered with the Charity Commission; and that the Trust's finances are properly managed. In addition to being a registered charity the Trust is also a limited company, regulated by company law as well as charity law, so the members of the Trust's Board of Management are both directors and trustees – all at the same time! This might all sound very dry and boring but it's actually a fascinating and challenging role. The Board works closely with Chief Executive Catherine Hodgson, who has overall operational control of the Trust. A major preoccupation of the Board is achieving a balance between the Trust's funding and its obligations to its clients, volunteers and staff. This is not a new problem either for The Brigitte Trust or any other charity, but it is one that the current economic climate has intensified. Recession and austerity have between them badly affected many of the Trust's potential benefactors, from individual donors to statutory funders. Given the reality of the funding situation the Board had to consider how the Trust could remain attractive to potential

fundors whilst maintaining its purpose and ethos. We decided that the Trust needed to extend its service by extending our area of coverage and the offer of our service to anyone with life-threatening illness within that area. This provides a coherent catchment area and strategy that makes sense to prospective funders and commissioners. It also, crucially, underpins and preserves the essential nature of the service that the Trust provides. We were delighted to be awarded funding by Macmillan Cancer Support to help us achieve our objectives. Tremendous progress has already been made, and we are now entering a period of consolidation and adjustment to strengthen our position. Of course it will be Catherine who leads the work on this and who will advise the Board on further developments, while our Trustees will continue to bring their wide mix of knowledge and experience, including fund raising, health and social care, charity and company law, and financial and business management, to the decisions that the Board needs to make.

Dr. Jean Collins
Chair

Our Service

The Brigitte Trust provides additional non-medical support at home for people with a life-threatening illness, their carers and family members. The service, which has been available for almost thirty years is free of charge and our volunteers help in many ways, providing:

[Emotional support and a listening ear](#)
[Respite for carers](#)
[Support for those living alone](#)
[Transport, shopping and trips out](#)
[Bereavement support](#)

The service, normally for three hours per week, is flexible according to the needs of the client.

The service may be accessed during and after a course of treatment or surgery, where the health or wellbeing of the client or carer is poor, where support is needed to sustain a caring role, and towards the end of life. Bereavement support for up to six months is also available to the family.

Practical help such as mentioned above is greatly valued by carers, who appreciate the opportunity for a weekly respite break.

In providing emotional support our volunteer will be sensitive to the individual and cultural needs of each person supported, with confidentiality maintained and respected.

Our volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds. All are required to attend a 12-week training course as well as monthly supervision and ongoing training. All volunteers have undergone full DBS checks.

Volunteers are not trained or insured to offer nursing or personal care.

How to make a referral to the Trust

You may simply telephone one of the Area Organisers or the Brigitte Trust office with the details of the patient you wish to refer. The Area Organiser will contact the patient to set up a visit to discuss how the Trust may help. Area Organiser contact numbers appear on the back page.

A suitable volunteer will then be allocated and will make an introductory visit as soon as possible. Regular visits will be arranged according to the needs of the patient and/or carer.

www.brigitte-trust.org

"I have no family and no friends nearby. Before my cancer operation I suffered OCD and so a hospital stay was challenging for me. Released from hospital I could not go out alone and needed practical help such as shopping. My volunteer was wonderful. My life has seen great sadness. Eventually I was able to share my stories with my volunteer having never shared them before. I am moving on now in a way I never felt I could."

A Brigitte Trust client



Volunteer training courses 2013/2014

Our next volunteer training courses start in September 2013 in Weybridge and Crawley, with new year courses planned for Dorking and Tandridge.

Sessions include:
Active Listening Skills
Assumptions
Awareness of Beliefs
Boundaries
Loss and change
Bereavement

Please check our website for further training courses as they are arranged.

An information pack for potential volunteers can be found on the training page of our website. Alternatively please ring Sharon Sillitoe on 01306 881816 to find out more.

Areas Covered

BY OUR FREE SERVICE



Expansion of service into Runnymede
Spring 2014

Area Organisers

Area 1	Mole Valley East Guildford	Deb Herbert	01306 713 255
Area 2	Reigate, Banstead, Tandridge	Sarah Pattenden	07926 527 199
Area 3	East Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell	Jenny Beech	07926 526 509
Area 4	West Elmbridge, Spelthorne	Viv Hibbert	07926 526 751
Area 5	Woking	Pauline Jackson	07926 526 504
Area 6	Crawley	Diane Martin	07864 502 880

We are here to help...

and encourage you to make use of our free service to your patients within these boroughs



Emotional Support and practical help at home to people and their families facing life-threatening illness

The Brigitte Trust 316 High Street Dorking Surrey RH14 1QX
01306 881816 - www.brigitte-trust.org

Reg. charity 288923