

Autumn 2025

Life⁺

Stories from North London Hospice

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Our year in numbers



Inpatient Unit



315 admissions
10.2 days average length of stay
86% occupancy
91% of patients achieving their preferred place of death



Community Palliative Care Services



21,636 visits by our Community Palliative Care Service to our patients

3,370 referrals
92% of patients achieving their preferred place of death

6,571 total number of calls received through our overnight specialist Community and Palliative Advice Team (5pm-8am)



Compassionate Neighbours



170 referrals
40 Compassionate Neighbours trained
212 number of group sessions held



People and Culture



586 volunteers
211 staff



Fundraising



8,712 People and organisations supported us by giving us a gift
56 people kindly left us a gift in their will



Retail



43,806 Number of Gift Aid registered donors
288 Number of retail volunteers



Outpatients and Wellbeing Service



223 referrals
1,383 attendees



Patient and Family Support Services



1,139 Number of people assisted by our support services (social work, bereavement, spiritual care)

From The Editor

Recently, in a team meeting, I was asked to share something meaningful I've learnt working here. I happily retold a few anecdotes, too detailed to explore now, but the thread that tied them together was this: while we are a dedicated group of individuals, each with our own roles and duties, at North London Hospice we show up as humans first.

That shared approach cuts across job titles and departments. From clinical staff to volunteers to admin teams, everyone understands that what people remember most isn't always what we did, but how we made them feel. That's why empathy, compassion and genuine connections are at the heart of everything we do.

I hope, as you explore the pages of this edition of Life Magazine, you can see that humanity shining through. It's embedded in the culture of the Walk and Talk group, it's what helped Patrick learn to trust us, it's what compelled Dora to visit Hatton Garden on a weekend and it's why Michelle Collins has decided to become an ambassador.



All these stories, at their heart, are about this community coming together, through the laughter, fear, resilience, grace, struggle and pain. They remind us that the greatest gift we can offer is ourselves. Our time, our attention and our willingness to be there.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this magazine and to all of you for contributing to the community that is North London Hospice through that shared humanity. It is what makes this place so special.

**Caron Kemp,
Content Editor,
North London Hospice**



Creating A Trusted Connection

When Patrick was referred from hospital to our Inpatient Unit, following a complex gastrointestinal episode, his sisters were braced for a stressful ordeal. At 61, new environments had always been laden with anxiety, and the family were exhausted from a difficult fortnight on a busy ward.

"It was clear that Patrick was slow to develop from a young age, and he soon started missing key milestones like reading and writing," explained his sister Carmel.

Born in Paddington, the fifth of eight siblings in a devout Irish Catholic family, until his only brother died, Patrick spent his youth in and out of mental health

facilities and undergoing a barrage of tests before being diagnosed with schizophrenia, learning disabilities, autism and a raft of further needs.

"He can't do anything for himself and when our parents died some 30 years ago, he moved into residential care," Carmel shared.

“He can't cope with crowds or noise and can become nervous easily, so familiarity is critical, which isn't really compatible with a hospital stay.”

Frightened and unaware of what was happening, Patrick wouldn't let the staff touch him and his six sisters had no choice but to

rally and take over his everyday personal care.

"It was traumatic for us all and Patrick was highly distressed," Carmel added.

"He can't tell us when he's in pain, but he would be rigid and scared. So, when they suggested him coming to the hospice, we wanted to believe it would be better, but with every move his capacity has deteriorated, so it was a difficult judgement call to make."

That said, once Patrick settled into his private room on our Inpatient Unit, the change was swift.

"It was almost miraculous and totally phenomenal to see. From the beginning, every member of staff and volunteer treated him like a human being, reassuring him and caring for him in such a gentle way that he noticeably relaxed," Carmel relayed.

“They took the time to understand him, filled his room with leprechauns for St Patrick's Day and explained everything using his teddies. They gained his trust. I am just overwhelmed with the kindness, respect and dignity shown to him. He wouldn't necessarily know, but we would.”

And this trust gifted his family something important too.

"It's given us time to reconnect with each other. We've been able to watch films with him and listen to music. They've given us our relationship back," she reflected.

“We are indebted and beyond grateful and the highest compliment I can give is that, despite Patrick having six sisters already, I'd like to adopt everyone from the hospice into our family too.”



Prioritising Patient Services

The financial challenges facing our hospice sector are well documented and sadly North London Hospice is no exception. However, unlike many other hospices, rather than closing services, we are adapting by delivering for patients within our current resources and putting them at the heart of everything we do.

Inevitably, in the 40 years that we have been serving our community, much has changed. We recognised that our Patient Services, designed some time ago, needed to become more agile and sustainable and so, having listened to a wide range of voices, we have introduced some important changes.

Focused on ensuring we are fit for purpose for the future, we have redesigned our services to include a 24-hour rapid response Care Co-ordination Centre, to improve responsiveness to our patients and carers.

We have also created a Nurse Consultant role for our Inpatient Unit, to improve patient care by providing expert nursing advice and leadership. And we have integrated our community services to reach people more quickly, as well as prioritising our community outreach programme.

Our vision is still to provide **the best of life, at the end-of-life, for everyone**. Together we have achieved wonderful things over the decades, and we are rightly proud. These changes build on the work of our founders, utilising our expert knowledge to evolve and modify so that we can continue to prioritise our patients and their carers.

For more information email nlh@northlondonhospice.co.uk





Our Winners

Helping Hand Award: **Susan Warner**
Fundraising Champion: **Mary Warren**
Above and Beyond Award: **Maria Newcombe**
Quiet Hero Award: **Victoria Newman**
Group Recognition Award: **Grief Café Team**
Outstanding Contribution Award
Special Mention: **Victoria Jerome**
Outstanding Contribution Award
Special Mention: **Mumtaz Ahmad**
Outstanding Contribution Award
Winner: **Carole Shotts**

Volunteers Honoured At Westminster

A group of North London Hospice volunteers took a trip to Westminster recently, to join a special gathering hosted by Bambos Charalambous MP. The event, held in the Jubilee Room of the House of Commons, was an opportunity for volunteers to meet each other and for the hospice to say thank you for all that they do.

Coinciding with Volunteers' Week, an annual UK-wide campaign to celebrate and recognise the contribution of volunteers, the afternoon included speeches, drinks and nibbles and our inaugural North London Hospice Volunteer Awards.

Opening the event, Bambos Charalambous MP emphasised the immense contribution that

all our volunteers make to the organisation. He said: "In the case of the hospice, we know that the organisation simply would not be able to function without you. Whether that's through working in our shops, generating income or supporting patients directly on the Inpatient Unit, your contribution as volunteers help to keep the hospice running."

“Let's just think about that for a minute. This means that without you, there would be no hospice. I know that the entire North London Hospice community recognises this, and on behalf of everyone, thank you.”

Snapping Into Action

Usually found behind the camera as North London Hospice's go-to photographer, keen runner Ian swapped his tripod for trainers earlier this year as he took on the iconic London Marathon.

Setting and smashing his fundraising target of £2,000, Ian was motivated by the special insight he gets into our work.

“I have the honour and privilege of capturing a lot of the images the hospice uses for promotional purposes. From events like the annual Big Fun Walk to those heartwarming moments of engagement between patients and staff, ”

he said.

“I know what a fantastic service they provide so I was delighted to be able to support in this way. ”

Plus, the 26-mile challenge through the capital also happened to coincide with a milestone birthday.

“This is my 50th year and I have a six-year-old son who I want to be fit and healthy for,” Ian explained.

“Health and fitness are important to me. I want to ensure I can run with my son in ten years’ time.

And there is nothing like the marathon as a goal. The support

along the way is incredible and the feeling of euphoria at the finish line is immense.”

And while this mammoth achievement, completed in little over four hours, has only ignited a desire to do more competitive running, Ian paused long enough to pay tribute to his biggest cheerleaders.

“My family and friends were just amazing, encouraging me and supporting me from the moment I began fundraising and it is only because of them that I could raise what I did for the hospice. I do get to see first-hand what an amazing job everyone does, and I am not sure there is a more important cause to support.”



Keen Eye Reveals Hidden Treasure

It was the feel of this particular gold bracelet that caught Dora's attention. Softer than the usual costume jewellery filling the cabinets of the High Barnet hospice shop ready for new owners, curiosity got the better of her.

Recently employed as the store's manager, having served as a volunteer at the large furniture and general goods outlet along the main High Street, Dora decided to get the piece valued.

"I do love bling, so it got my attention immediately," Dora explained.

"I asked one jeweller to take a look at it, and he confirmed it was real gold and gave me an estimation of value."

That weekend, with her husband in tow, Dora travelled to London's Hatton Garden to seek out a deal.

"I went into five shops before I was sure I was being treated fairly," she added.

"I had done my research and knew what I should expect, and the jeweller I dealt with spent time hearing about North London Hospice."

Having sought clearance from senior management, Dora walked away with just under £3,000 to add to the shop's monthly intake and a big smile on her face.

"I see it as my job to raise as much money as possible for the hospice and that means doing our homework," Dora concluded.

"Remember too that often people donate to us having lost a loved one, and they deserve for us to maximise that gift for everyone's benefit."



Guided By What Megan Held Dear



From the moment Megan arrived, one word came up more than any other. Home. It surfaced in conversation with family and staff, in quiet reflection and sometimes with unmistakable longing. For the 66-year-old former childminder, it wasn't just a place, it was a feeling, a goal, a hope.

Having arrived on our Inpatient Unit following a lengthy hospital stay fraught with medical emergencies, Megan was depleted and desperate for familiar surroundings. Albeit debilitated by a rare lung cancer, this left daughter Letty torn.

“We knew she wasn’t stable enough to go home and that the hospice was the best place for her, but you also want to honour the wishes of your loved ones, especially at such important moments,” she shared.

“Initially she was confused and suspicious, but the team quickly earned her trust and opened a conversation around care plans with her and us as the family. They listened and they cared, and so they built a relationship with her.”

It was because of this open and honest dynamic that Letty feels her mum was able to find some contentment.

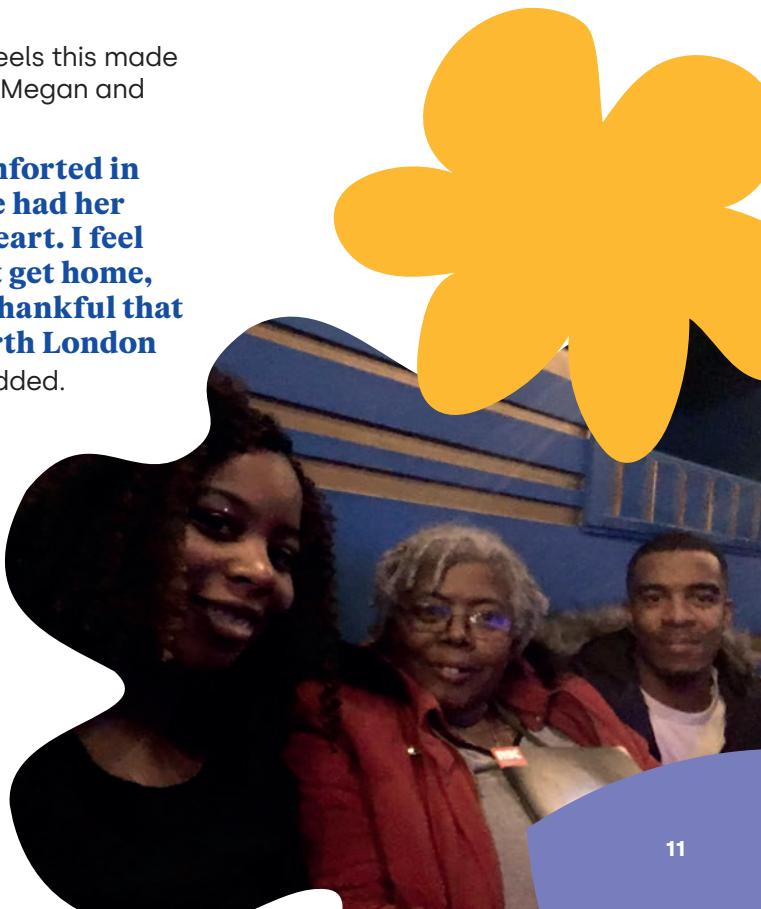
"It would've been easy for the team to focus efforts on her care in the hospice, but they also worked tirelessly to put the wheels in motion to honour her wish to come home, though it was complicated and time consuming," she explained.

"They made every effort, and we even had two false starts, but mum was deteriorating. The thing is, that by the hospice team never losing sight of what mattered to her, she felt heard and supported. That was priceless."

On reflection, Letty feels this made all the difference for Megan and her loved ones.

“We were all comforted in knowing everyone had her best interests at heart. I feel sad that she didn't get home, but equally I feel thankful that we could be at North London Hospice,” Letty added.

“I'll forever be grateful and I think everyone is superb. Every single person had a part to play. The volunteers bringing her lunch would chat to us, the cleaners were so friendly. It's a team effort and it extends beyond medical care. Even now, with the distance of time, when I step foot inside the building, it feels like a second home, and I associate it with pure love and compassion.”



What Matters To You

Stories of tenderness from across the hospice, where small moments had a big impact

The Lost Letter

Staff were sorting out records in our archives when they came across an envelope which was marked 'private' but didn't have any other details on it. They therefore opened the letter and found it was written by a patient who had died on the Inpatient Unit in 2018. The letter was intended for her young daughter.

The team tracked down the deceased patient's details through records and found their daughter's contact information. They made contact and the daughter came into the hospice to collect the long-lost letter. A very emotive read, she said she could hear the words in her mother's voice in her head as she read it.

The Icing On The Cake

We had a patient staying on our Inpatient Unit who shared with the team that he was due to celebrate his 54th wedding anniversary. He explained that he wanted to do something special for his wife to mark the occasion.

At the patient's request, an eggless cake was ordered from a local bakery, complete with Happy Anniversary iced on top. We also arranged for a card to be given to her to mark this important milestone.

The couple were very happy with what we had organised and decided to invite some of their relatives over to the unit to share tea and a slice of the cake, whilst celebrating the day all together.

A Full Roast Dinner

A patient staying on our Inpatient Unit shared with us her love of fine dining. Regaling us with a long list of eateries she has visited over the years, she went on to reflect that she still had one wish. A lover of a traditional roast dinner, she told us how much it would mean to her to be able to visit Totteridge's The Orange Tree pub one last time.

We contacted The Orange Tree and secured a wonderful volunteer to drive her from IPU to the pub and back again afterwards. There she was shown to her favourite table with her son, and the pair enjoyed a fabulous meal together, including dessert. When they came to leave, the pub manager told them it was all on the house. A big thank you to the lovely team at The Orange Tree for their kindness and brilliant hospitality.





Healing Through Music

In a special project aimed at bringing music to patients and their families, we were delighted to welcome harpist Aisha Palmer to our Inpatient Unit. Aisha, who is a professional musician from The Royal Academy of Music, has performed throughout the UK in

venues which include the Royal Festival Hall and Lancaster House. The project was funded through the philanthropy arm of The London Clinic. It is our hope that this will be repeated on a more regular basis. With thanks to The London Clinic and Aisha for this special experience.

Here For Your Wellbeing



Did you know we offer a broad range of clubs and interest groups?

Run in partnership with Compassionate Neighbours, they are all free of charge and open to anyone connected to North London Hospice. We are unable to provide transport; however, friends, family and carers are welcome to join too. We look forward to seeing you soon.

At North London Hospice, Enfield (N21 3AY)

- **Games Group, Mondays 11am-1pm**
A group for anyone who enjoys playing board and card games
- **Knitting and Crochet Club, Wednesdays 11am-1pm**
A friendly, relaxed social group where everyone can enjoy chatting, and spending time together.
- **Photography, First Wednesday of the month 3pm-5pm (in person and online)**
A digital camera isn't required; some members use their smart phones
- **Music for Life Group, Thursdays 2pm-3pm (please call to confirm)**
Activities include singing, drumming, playing instruments, group composition, improvising, song sharing, listening and general music chat. No experience necessary
- **Art and Craft Making, ad hoc workshops** (see website for more details)

At North London Hospice, Finchley (N12 8TT)

- **Whetstone Stray Community Allotment, Tuesdays 2pm-4pm**
Please do contact Brigid before your first visit on 07780 815 496

Online

- **Seated Exercise Group, Tuesdays 11.30am-12.30pm**
Gentle seated exercise group led by a volunteer physiotherapist
- **Film Club, Monthly (usually Tuesdays at 4pm)**
Searle is a film lecturer and prepares a talk with some video clips based on a particular topic
- **Mindfulness for Wellbeing, Second Tuesday of the month 2pm-3pm**
Led by Denise, our volunteer Mindfulness teacher
- **Gardening Group, last Wednesday of the month 12pm**
Therapeutic group with a guided activity. All materials provided

For more information, or to suggest a new group, please contact the Compassionate Neighbours team on **CN@northlondonhospice.co.uk** or **call 0800 368 7848 (Option 3)**

For more information about our Wellbeing Services:

northlondonhospice.org/our-care/north-london-hospice-enfield/

A Cup of Comfort

When you are grieving, the benefits of a safe, non-judgemental space to be heard and feel less alone with a warm cup of tea in hand, can be profound. That is why, just over a year ago, the North London Hospice Grief Café was born.

Created with the input from bereaved people in our community, this relaxed, welcoming group is open to everyone, free of charge and with no referral.

“We want more people to feel more supported, wherever they are in their grief journey” explained Mary Galligan, who coordinates the service alongside volunteers Lyn, Derek, Adriana, Rachel and Andrew.

“We find that some people want to talk, while others appreciate simply being around others who know what they’re going through. Either way, this is a friendly environment where everyone is welcome, whether you have links to the hospice or not.”

With sessions facilitated by trained volunteers, there are no forms to fill out, no waiting lists and no commitment to attend.



“People often say they feel lighter and more connected after attending. It reminds us that grief is natural and ongoing, and that you don’t have to go through it alone. Sharing your story, or hearing someone else’s, can be healing in itself,” Mary added.

“Whether your loss was recent or a long time ago, whether you’ve spoken about it before or never have, it’s ok. We’ll be here to welcome you, just as you are.”

The Grief Café runs monthly, every second Tuesday, from 09.30am to 11am at Enfield Town Library Community Room (1st Floor).

For more information call 0800 368 7848.



Lights, Camera, Compassion

When much-loved actress Michelle Collins' dear friend needed more intensive end-of-life care, she strongly encouraged his family to put aside their fears and misconceptions and to come and take a look at North London Hospice. It was a conversation that would prove pivotal, with Melvyn J Taub finding the peace and dignity he craved in the weeks he spent on our Inpatient Unit, and Michelle laying the foundations for a burgeoning and valued relationship with us.

“ Sadly, I have lost many loved ones over the years, and I just knew the hospice would offer Melvyn and his family the calming support and space they desperately deserved, ”

explained Michelle, best known for playing Cindy Beale in BBC's Eastenders.

"I'd come and see him at all times of the day and night and always found everyone so friendly and kind, plus there was a meditative quality about the place. Instead of feeling sad, it felt full of love and humanity and it's hard to quantify the difference that made, but it was immense."

And when Melvyn died in September 2024, rather than walking away with her grief, Michelle set about hosting a star-studded Big Fun Quiz which raised more than £25,000 for the hospice, before becoming an ambassador earlier this year.

"My mum was brought up in care and as children we relied on the goodwill of our church for support. We lived through a lot of struggles, but my mum instilled in me a great generosity of spirit," Michelle shared.

“ So, I have a big conscience regarding charity work and was honoured to be asked to stay involved with the hospice. I've seen palliative care play out in various environments, including abroad, and we don't realise how special a free, compassionate, specialist service that looks after people holistically is. To me, this infrastructure is a necessity, and I'll do all I can to shout about it. ”

With a number of other charities in her portfolio, Michelle was nonetheless pleased to take on this role with North London Hospice in Melvyn's name and to draw on her lived experience.



“After my mum died, I spent six months in counselling, and I think it taught me how to have these conversations. This, plus losing two of my best friends and nursing my ex-husband at home, makes me vehement in my loyalty to the hospice sector, ” Michelle added.

“Melvyn’s death brought this all into sharp focus for me again and so I see my ambassadorship as his legacy, but it is also to help share and normalise what the hospice does. And honestly, one day – I hope not for many years – I want to be able to come to North London Hospice when I need to. Perhaps that’s the best illustration of my connection to this place.”



Let's celebrate the lives of those
we want to remember together

Light Up A Life

Sunday 30 November 2025, 4.30pm

47 Woodside Avenue, London, N12 8TT

The ceremony begins at 5pm

Each winter a memorial tree outside North London Hospice in Finchley is lit up with a thousand lights, each one sponsored in celebration of someone special. The light-up ceremony is an opportunity to reflect and remember.

To RSVP or to dedicate a light, please visit
northlondonhospice.org/events/light-up-a-life-2025,
email lightupalife@northlondonhospice.co.uk or
scan the QR code



Hospice After Hours

When the day ends and the world quietens, the care offered by the hospice remains unfaltering. Through the night, in addition to the nurses and doctors on our Inpatient Unit, a dedicated team of palliative care experts ensure that our community is looked after too.

Between 8pm and 8am, experienced medical professionals are on hand providing support and advice to patients, carers and fellow healthcare workers via our dedicated out-of-hours telephone service. The North Central London Palliative Advice Team (NCLPAT), delivered by North London Hospice, offers a single point of access to specialist input overnight, seven days a week.

Available for residents within the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden and Islington, the team works collaboratively with other healthcare professionals, such as District Nurses, Paramedics and Out of Hours GPs, offering a holistic approach to individual patient care.

And for those wishing to remain at home in their familiar surroundings in their final days, our Palliative Care Support Service provides one-to-one care overnight.

For Marian – who has been working with the team for five years – stepping into intimate family spaces in such fragile moments is a privilege she holds dear.

"Doubtless this is the most rewarding job I've had in my life," she shared.

“I’m there not only for clinical support but to help the patient feel comfortable, to talk and to listen, to reassure them and their family and to be a steady presence during an incredibly emotional time.”

The Palliative Advice Team can be contacted on 020 8152 3252 between 8pm and 8am.



North London Hospice

Overnight palliative phone care service

For patients, carers & community health professionals in North London



Call 020 8152 3252
between 8pm and 8am

Meet the volunteer

Walking and Talking with Russell



Russell, with Claire and Bob

When Russell's lifelong friend was admitted to North London Hospice in 2013, the care she received in her final three weeks left a lingering impression.

Following the shock cancer diagnosis of his friend, Russell was heartened and comforted by the way the whole hospice team supported her and her daughter plus all their loved ones. Once the funeral had passed, Russell felt compelled to give something back.

Initially volunteering with meal delivery on our Inpatient Unit, the fit wasn't quite right for him.

"I found it really hard not to stop in each room and have a long chat,

which resulted in other people's meals going cold," Russell shared.

"It confirmed to me that the caring and conversational aspect was where I wanted to be and I was encouraged to look into the bereavement support work."

After completing a thorough training course, Russell began to offer a caring, listening ear to those looking for a space, one-to-one, to share their grief. This carried on for some time, until the bereavement team floated the idea of a walking group. Leaning into the benefits of exercise and conversation for a person's physical and mental wellbeing,

it would use the shared experience of participants to create a warm and safe community.

The idea piqued Russell's interests immediately and, alongside fellow volunteers Claire and Bob, the trio facilitated the inaugural North London Hospice Walk and Talk Group. Now, some nine years later, the group has grown and flourished, with the same three people at the helm.

"It remains a privilege to run this service with Claire and Bob," Russell added.

“Some of our members are otherwise quite isolated and this weekly meet up can be their sole window to the outside world. It can help people feel less alone, and sometimes it's easier to talk to strangers. Plus, we know that when walking, what's said is completely different as the environment is less confrontational.”

Though Russell is keen to point out that participants don't actually have to walk or talk.

“We always end at the café in the park, so people can join us just for that part. And while we encourage conversation, it's not necessarily about their loss. It's about meeting others, making friends and stepping back into the world,”

he explained.

With the group meeting from 10.30am to 12.30pm every Wednesday at a local park come rain or shine, the weekly arrangement is a highlight in Russell's diary.

“Over the years I have witnessed people share the most vulnerable parts of themselves and be heard and accepted. They have reconnected with life, made new friends and found respite in nature. It has also taught me a lot about humility and how to understand people better. Engaging with others is fuel for living, and that goes for the volunteers too.”

For more information on the group, email
nlhbereavement@northlondonhospice.co.uk

Diary dates

September (TBD) – Remembrance Ribbons

Join us for our first ever Remembrance Ribbons event this September. For a donation, you can dedicate a ribbon in memory of someone special. The ribbons will then be displayed at the hospice in September and supporters will be invited to come and experience their collective beauty. For more information, visit northlondonhospice.org/remembereribbons2025



21 September – Skydive Day

As part of our brand-new Elements Challenge, we're kicking things off with AIR - inviting you to soar through the skies for Skydive Day 2025. Take the leap from 10,000 feet and help raise vital funds to support patients and families at North London Hospice. For more information, see <https://northlondonhospice.org/events/skydive-day-2025/> or contact fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk



9 October – The Firewalk

Could you be a brave sole for North London Hospice? This October, we continue the Elements Challenge with FIRE. Take on the ultimate test of courage as you walk barefoot across hot coals, showing that with the right mindset, anything is possible. For more information, see <https://northlondonhospice.org/events/the-firewalk-2025/> or contact fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk



30 November – Light Up A Life

Our annual Light Up A Life event in 2025 will start from 4.30pm (ceremony begins at 5pm). Refreshments, including mince pies, doughnuts and mulled wine will be available. For more information contact lightupalife@northlondonhospice.co.uk



January (dates TBD) - Christmas Tree Collection

This Christmas, North London Hospice is once again partnering with JustHelping, to provide a Christmas tree collection service to help raise vital funds for the hospice. In return for a donation to support local hospice care, we will come and collect your real tree from outside your home and recycle it for you! No hassle, no waste and no needles in your car!

For more information contact
fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk



February (date TBD) – Cold Water Dip

Get ready for our coolest fundraiser yet! This February, the Elements Challenge concludes with ICE - a bold cold water dip that's guaranteed to make a splash. Take the plunge and show your support for North London Hospice in a truly unforgettable way.

More details will be making waves soon – to register your interest email
fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk



To find out more or register for any of our events, please visit:

<https://northlondonhospice.org/support-us/our-fundraising-events/>



scan me



Meet The Team - Sara Coffey

Surrounded by paper, pens, shells, image cards and an aura of calm, Sara uses her extensive training as a dramatherapist to help people under our care find creative expression for their experiences.

From a peaceful corner of our Enfield site - home of our Outpatient and Wellbeing Services - patients referred to her for a variety of reasons are gently encouraged to give voice to their feelings. Whether around diagnosis, identity changes, end of life, loss, reminiscence and much more, they use creative-based approaches that aren't reliant on verbal communication.

“Often people have a misconception that I am going to make them ‘perform’ or act in some way, but actually dramatherapy is much broader than that and is designed to be accessible and powerful for anyone wishing to engage,” Sara explained.

“So much shifts when someone becomes ill and here, we try to find ways to explore that. Whether through imaginative storytelling, using metaphor, writing letters or connecting with imagery, at its heart my work is about opening up possibilities and exploring what is meaningful to each individual”.



And this person-centred flexibility was demonstrated beautifully recently, with a patient managing complex neurological decline that has compromised her speech and movement. But rather than see all that's been stripped away, Sara found an unexpected way in.

“This articulate, educated, adventurous lady has found her world rapidly shrinking, and yet we instantly discovered a mutual love of Greek mythology that allowed us to leave North London behind and travel across time and space. Through connecting with archetypal characters in a playful yet profound way, we have been able to explore some of the difficulties she faces,” Sara shared.



“When we become ill, we can feel diminished to what can be seen externally. My work with this lady has been about celebrating her as the multi-faceted person she is. I can't fix things or make her condition better, but through using dramatherapy to go on our own odyssey, I hope I have made her feelings more bearable and found a way to walk alongside her.”

From her feedback, this patient clearly appreciated such an approach.

“Only last year I had a full, active life and I feel very frustrated by how things are now. I was initially sceptical about dramatherapy, but I have enjoyed my six sessions with Sara without worrying about anyone else. I'm still frustrated, but having someone I can really share things with definitely helps”, she said.

Sentiments like this are why Sara is so passionate about her job.

“We are all storytellers at heart, and we all deserve to be heard. At one of life's most vulnerable moments, I hope that by actively listening with compassion, I can offer an important holding space, help people feel a little less alone and perhaps find meaning along their journey.”

New Kid On The Block



The best of life,
at the end of life,
for everyone.



This summer, North London Hospice proudly opened the doors of its newest charity shop, right in the heart of one of the area's most dynamic neighbourhoods - Upper Street, Islington. The launch represents an exciting new chapter in our growth as we extend some of our overnight palliative phone care services into the London boroughs of Camden and Islington.

Our retail shops play a vital role in funding the care and support we provide every day to people across North London. As the cost of delivering specialist palliative and end-of-life care continues to rise, we are constantly looking for new ways to increase income to help fund the services our patients and families rely on.

The Upper Street shop - curated with care and powered by

generosity - brings our signature mix of high-quality, pre-loved fashion, books, homeware and gifts to a lively and well-loved high street. With its strong sense of community and passion for sustainability and independent enterprise, Islington has already welcomed us warmly. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who helped bring this new shop to life - from the team who transformed the space in record time, to those who supported us by spreading the word, donating items, or simply stopping by in our first weeks. If you are ever in the area, we'd love you to drop in and see what's new. And while we are so pleased to have already welcomed new members to the team in Islington, there's always room for more! Hospice care starts with community - and on Upper Street, we've already found ours.

Letters

The North London Hospice will forever be in my heart. Even though my mum was there for just one month, the help and love we all had was incredible. They even allowed us to have a 50th anniversary party for our parents two days before my mum died. Always grateful to you all and for all the brilliant help you do to help people.

To every single member of staff who helped my dad in his final hours. A sincere thank you from the family for your compassionate level of care, support and attention. My dad said how wonderful you all were, and he was right. You're a wonderful team and I hope we can repay you for everything you've done.

I am writing on behalf of my family to express our heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional care and compassion you showed to our beloved cousin, who sadly passed away under your care. During such a painful and difficult time, your team offered not only professional and attentive care, but also genuine kindness and support to us as a family. We deeply appreciated how often you checked on her and on us, ensuring we were comfortable and had everything we needed. The small acts - offering tea and coffee, providing a companion bed, recliner chair, and covers so we could stay overnight - meant more than words can express. You allowed us the space and time we needed to grieve, always with gentleness and respect. Your compassion helped us feel supported and cared for, and we will never forget the warmth you showed us during those final days. Thank you for everything you do.

North London Hospice

North London Hospice,
47 Woodside Avenue,
London N12 8TT
T 0800 368 7848 (Freephone)
E nlh@northlondonhospice.co.uk
www.northlondonhospice.org



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gift aid it Make your donation go 25% further – at no extra cost to you. If you are a UK taxpayer, you can boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate, simply by ticking the box on the left. It won't cost you a penny more. Yes, I want to Gift Aid this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to North London Hospice.*

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 North London Hospice would like to keep in touch about our work and future events, appeals, newsletters and other ways of getting involved, by post or by the channels below with your consent. You can let us know if you would prefer not to receive these communications by contacting us at Fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk. Visit northlondonhospice.org/privacy-policy to find out more about how we use your information.

I would like to hear from North London Hospice by email I would like to occasionally hear from North London Hospice by phone

*I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address, or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

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