



PRESS RELEASE

April 2021

East Anglian hospices unite to mark Dying Matters Awareness Week 2021 by promoting community support and unity

To mark Dying Matters Week 2021, St Elizabeth Hospice is joining forces with St Helena Hospice and St Nicholas Hospice Care, to offer guidance on how communities can better support one another.

Every year, Dying Matters Awareness Week is held to encourage communities, individuals and organisations to come together and open up the conversation around death, dying and bereavement.

This year the awareness week is running from 10th-16th May and, following the recent announcement of St Elizabeth Hospice's involvement with the Compassionate Communities project, the hospice is collaborating with St Helena, in Colchester, and St Nicholas Hospice Care, in Bury St Edmunds, to promote ways communities can support one another during difficult times in their lives.

Greg Cooper, Compassionate Communities Lead Project Manager at St Elizabeth Hospice, said: "The collaboration of the three hospices really is in the spirit of Compassionate Communities.

"It's a project which encourages all communities to look out for one another and to take time out from the chaotic nature of modern life and to have conversations with those around us.

"Throughout the last year we have all faced challenges as a result of Covid-19, but it has been clear that small acts of kindness and friendship can make a big difference to people's lives, especially if they are experiencing a difficult time in their life through bereavement or grief."

Compassionate Communities is a national approach which supplements the support given by healthcare providers, by offering resources and guidance to enable the public to feel more confident in having conversations surrounding the 'taboo' topics of bereavement, death and dying.

The collaboration between the three hospices will see them host a number of online events which will offer advice and guidance to help the public to support each other with kindness during some of the most difficult times in their lives, such as the death of a loved one or the diagnosis of a serious illness.

More than 30 events will be held both online and in person during the awareness week including '*Care and loss during COVID - How do we Heal?*', '*Compassionate Halesworth Tributes to honour and remember at the Pear Tree Centre in Halesworth*' and '*Care and loss during COVID - Palliative Care Nursing Q&A*'.

A number of practical online workshops will also be hosted, for the public to learn more about Compassionate Communities and support available for bereavement and end-of-life care, with a full programme of activities available to view at www.compassionatecommunitieseast.com.

"Open conversations and listening to one another is at the heart of Compassionate Communities and we hope communities throughout the region will join with us in starting these conversations, sharing their stories and ensuring nobody is left feeling isolated." explained Greg.

"We are really looking forward to hosting this special week-long programme of online support events and hope they will serve to help many people in our local communities."



St Elizabeth Hospice is an independent Suffolk charity providing free services to improve life for people living with a progressive or life-limiting illness throughout Suffolk, including Great Yarmouth and Waveney.

To find out more or to get involved call Greg Cooper at St. Elizabeth Hospice on 01473 932492, email compassionate.communities@stelizabethhospice.org.uk or visit www.stelizabethhospice.org.uk/compassion/.

More information about St Helena Hospice can be found by visiting www.sthelena.org.uk and further details about St Nicholas Hospice Care can be found at www.stnicholashospice.org.uk.

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Notes to editors

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About St Elizabeth Hospice

St Elizabeth Hospice improves life for people in east Suffolk living with a progressive or life-limiting illness. Our work is centred on an individual's needs, which means specialist support, whenever and wherever it is needed, whether at home, in the community or at the hospice. Through medicine and therapy we ease pain; we give life purpose and make life liveable.