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Social Care Training Team News

NHS
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NHS Foundation Trust

Issue 2

Sarah's story: Learning care skills from the social care training team helped Gary stay at home longer.

My partner Gary was diagnosed with MND (motor neurone disease) when he was just 55 years. One day we had years of good times ahead of us, then suddenly, our lives turned upside down. Gary had never been ill before. Everything was so new for us, lots of things were happening & we were shocked. I gave up work to look after Gary, dropping £17K in income to do so, because being together, at home was important to us.

Gary wanted to stay at home for as long as possible & I needed to learn skills quickly to care for him. He did not want to go into a hospice nor a hospital. He wanted to be in familiar surroundings. I needed to learn how to give his liquid food through his stomach tube, how to give him his medication through his nebuliser & how to use a suction machine to help remove excess secretions from the front of his mouth.

Gary lost his ability to speak but could communicate through a tablet & he wrote his bucket list. We wanted to grab every opportunity to do things & he wanted to go to watch Leeds United play at Ellen Road. I drove him to Leeds, stopping 3 times to give him care on route, but we did it.

Being able to care for him meant we could have these precious moments before he died. We loved visiting West Bay for fish & chips & although he couldn't eat, Gary still wanted to visit West Bay.

outstanding care
listening and leading
working together

He loved being at home & had just built a new patio before his diagnosis, he wanted to be at home & use the patio.

The final 4 weeks of his life were tough, Gary was sleeping downstairs in a hospital bed & unfortunately got up in the night & fell over. This led me to sleep downstairs & we slept together on the sofa. He did not want to get back into the hospital bed after his fall. We did this for a couple of weeks at which point he was nearing the end of his life & needed to be admitted to hospital.

He died peacefully after 14 days in hospital. I am so glad I was able to support his wishes to stay at home as long as possible.

For further information about social care training please email:

socialcaretraining@somersetft.nhs.uk

or Twitter @caresfttrainers

Sarah & Gary last year



Supporting Somerset Cancer Patients

The Social Care Training team have been supporting patients with the administration of their G-CSF subcutaneous injections.

These injections are used to boost the stem cell count, to allow them to be harvested. These will then be implanted back into the patient after they have received their cancer treatment, to aid with recovery. Often this allows patients to undergo more vigorous chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments than they would without this. The drug is stored as a powder, and we teach patients how to safely reconstitute the drug before injecting themselves in the correct way via subcutaneous injection.

Macmillan Stem Cell service said: **'the referral process was clear and straightforward & without this effective communication, we would have been uncertain about trialling a new service. Our team is very reassured that patients are safe and supported. The amount of calls the team get from patients for support has been greatly reduced. Also, the resources provided look great and are very thorough'** Due to the success of this we have expanded to help support with another drug, Romiplostim.



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