

Family Newsletter

Hello and welcome to the latest newsletter for Little Havens families

Updates from the Care Team

The Hydrotherapy Pool

The Hydrotherapy Pool continues to provide us with challenges, which means it's difficult to open the pool for any sustained length of time. We have experienced a range of issues from parts failing, water readings being out of range for safe use, to delayed delivery of replacement parts. We often fix one problem, only to be faced with a new problem. We know closing the Hydrotherapy Pool leaves families disappointed. Unfortunately, we have taken the difficult decision for the Hydrotherapy Pool to be decommissioned, which means this facility will not be available for the medium term.

This decision has been made as we are planning to upgrade the Hydrotherapy Pool's existing operating system. This means once this project has been completed, we will be able to reopen our Hydrotherapy Pool, with a new modern, updated filtering system. We have only just come to this decision and the project is in very early stages which means we can't share any further information at this time but we will keep you updated in the newsletter.

There is a longer-term plan to rebuild the Hydrotherapy Pool completely to a more modern standard. However, in the meantime, we are focusing on improving the existing facility so that the Hydrotherapy Pool can become available to families again as soon as possible.

Care at Little Havens

Unfortunately, we still do not have enough nurses to open the In-Patient Unit full time, but we continue to provide telephone support 24/7 for symptom management by calling 01702 552 200.

We need to recruit five more children's nurses to enable us to open our service 24/7. This is a problem affecting children's hospices nationally. The shortage of skilled children's palliative care nurses across England has been highlighted by the national charity [Together for Short Lives in a 2019 report](#). We are doing all we can to recruit for these vacancies so we can resume a full service, we have had a steady stream of nurses enquiring about jobs.

We have revisited how best to deliver a service that can meet the needs of those whose needs are greatest within the resources we have available. A letter was sent to families at the end of April which explained this further. As a charity, we are honoured to offer our services free of charge. We are no longer allocating a set number of overnight respite stays per year. All requests for respite will be considered following our Respite Decision Tool which means we can prioritise people, applying fair processes that identify individual needs. We can only prioritise a family's need if we understand your personal situation and we encourage you to complete the respite request forms and communicate with us so that we can consider your needs.

Upcoming Events

- Stay'n'Play (under 7's) – every Tuesday
- Online Music Therapy – every Friday
- Sensory Storytime – Wednesday 18th May
- Jubilee Party – Tuesday 31st May
- Sensory Storytime – Wednesday 1st June
- Social Saturday – Saturday 4th June
- Cosy Sunday – Sunday 12th June

Reminders

Visitors to Little Havens are no longer required to undertake lateral flow tests before coming to the hospice. All visitors to Little Havens will undergo a Covid symptom questionnaire and temperature check upon arrival. Anyone with a temperature of 37.8 or above will not be allowed entry. If presenting symptoms consistent with Covid, we will request that you conduct a lateral flow test which we can provide. Please do not attend if you have any symptoms of Covid-19.

Adult visitors are not required to wear a mask at the hospice, but face coverings are available. Staff at Little Havens will continue to test twice a week and wear a mask.

Updates from the Care Team continued ...

We are pleased to confirm we are now able to provide overnight respite care for young people up to the age of 25 (previously up to 19), who meet our criteria.

End of life care will always be our priority and we are supporting children to be cared for at home or in the hospice at the end of their life. Similarly, The Woodland Suite (a bedroom available at the hospice for families to use once a child or young person dies) is available for families to use whether the child has died at home, in the hospice or a hospital. If families have any questions about end-of-life care and the services we provide please do contact the Care Team so we can discuss each family's circumstances.

Internet Access at Little Havens

We want to offer our patients and families free access to the internet as part of the care services we provide. We also want the internet to be a safe place for everyone that uses it. That's why we are asking anyone who wants to use our Guest Wi-Fi from within our hospices to read, understand and agree to our Internet Acceptable Use policy.

You will only be required to fill out this form once. We ask everyone who will be using the internet to complete this form. Parents/carers can complete the form on behalf of children under 13 or those over 13 who aren't able to complete it themselves. To receive the Wi-Fi password please complete the form [here](#)

Day respite at Little Havens

Day respite (or 'day stays') are available to children and young people up to the age of 25 and can be booked in advance. We are often able to facilitate day stays at short notice, so if you need last-minute day respite, please ring the hospice on 01702 552 200

If your child or young person has not stayed at Little Havens before, we ask parents/carers to stay for the first visit to help us get to know your child. Parents or carers are not required to stay if your children or young person has previously had a stay. If a parent or carer would like to stay for the day to enjoy our facilities, we will try to allocate you a parent bedroom upstairs which gives you space to relax while we care for your child or young person. You may choose to spend the time relaxing in your room, having a bath, enjoying time in our gardens, or going out for the day knowing your child is having fun being cared for. Day stays also are an opportunity for you and your child or young person to build relationships with the Care Team.

Drop in visits to our garden throughout May and June

In May and June we are trialling opening the garden for unplanned drop-in visits Monday to Friday, 9-5pm. This means on a weekday during May, if you decide you'd like to use the garden facilities at Little Havens you can just turn up at the hospice (before 4pm) without needing to pre-book or phone in advance.

For unplanned drop-in visits, we won't be able to provide food, however you are welcome to bring a picnic and drinks will be freely available.

Families can still book visits to the garden and multi-sensory room via the Family Area, and we will continue to provide food with these activities.

If you have carers supporting you at home, they can bring your child or young person to Little Havens to use the facilities for the day (or a few hours) to enjoy the garden, multi-sensory room, bath and soft play.

You can pre-book a visit to the hospice online via the Family Area, call us on 01702 552200 to arrange a visit or for the garden drop in Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm.

Young Adult Transition Events

In March we successfully held our first Young Adult Saturday Social. These events are specifically for young adults aged 14 – 25 aimed at helping families to feel more confident as they approach transition.

The session included a talk from Lauren Summers, Transition Lead Nurse, providing 'An introduction to transition and supporting young people moving to adulthood and adult services'. This can be viewed online on the Family Area [here](#).

The next session on Saturday 21st May is now fully booked. However bookings for Saturday 23rd July is now open. The event will run from 11am to 3pm (lunch provided), along with activities for young people. There will also be a talk from a professional or expert in young people's care. For more information or to register your interest please visit the '[Transition Zone](#)' on the [Family Area](#).

Help shape hospice care in Essex

We're working with St Luke's, Saint Francis Hospice and Farleigh Hospice, to help shape the future of palliative care services for local people of all ages in mid and south Essex.

Whether cared for by a hospital, hospice or community service, we need to know what was wanted and needed during this time, and if there were any barriers to accessing these.

The survey will take five minutes and will be completely anonymous unless you have more to say and would like to leave your details. Please click here to complete the [survey](#). You can also contact Healthwatch Essex on 0300 500 1895 if you need to access the survey differently.

Round up of our April family events

We had such an egg-cellent time at our family events in April from spring Sensory Storytimes to a week of Easter trails around the garden with special visitors from Alamanda Therapy Animals and Essex Pygmy Hedgehogs.

During the Easter half term, we also held our first event exclusively for siblings. It was such a special day bringing together brothers and sisters supported by the hospice.

We are busy planning plenty more family-friendly events for the summer holidays. If you have feedback or suggestions for the type of events you would like to attend please get in touch with the Activities Team by email lhbookings@havenshospices.org.uk



Sharing your feedback with Havens Hospices

We really value your feedback, as this helps shape our services. If you have any comments or ways we can improve our care at Havens Hospices please use the feedback form on our website here to let us know www.havenshospices.org.uk/feedback

This feedback form is anonymous, and we do not seek to identify the person completing the questionnaire. Should you have an urgent enquiry relating to care, would like to make a complaint or would like a response to your comment please call the hospice on 01702 552 220.