

ST CATHERINE'S HOSPICE

Your Guide: Community Care

Inspected and rated Outstanding ☆ Care Quality Commission

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Introduction to St Catherine's Hospice

For more than 40 years, St Catherine's has been there for adults across West Sussex and East Surrey. Whether in people's homes, in our Wellbeing Centre or on our Ward, our specialist teams provide free high-quality physical, emotional and practical support to those living with a life-limiting or terminal condition. We also offer bereavement and carer support to those close to them, helping them through the hardest days and nights.

Our vision is a future where everyone approaching death and those who love and care for them can access compassionate, specialist palliative and end of life care. Our values – Human, Courageous, Energetic, Connected and Expert – define who we are and how we act. We treat people with understanding, patience, respect and, most importantly, dignity.

St Catherine's is more than our hospice building in Pease Pottage. Our Community Team provide most of our support in people's homes, care homes and local community hospitals.

As a specialist, palliative care service we work closely alongside GPs, hospital teams, community nurses and other NHS services. We do not replace these services but offer advice and support in addition to them.



How to contact us

St Catherine's Hospice,
Grace Holland Avenue,
Pease Pottage,
West Sussex,
RH11 9SL
01293 447333

You can contact us for advice between 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday. We are also available during these hours at weekends and on bank holidays for any urgent issues. Unfortunately, we are unable to take calls from patients or their family/carers outside of these hours, but you can leave us a non-urgent message which will be responded to after 8am the next working day.

If you need emergency help, please call 999 or 111 and let them know that you are being supported by the hospice. Healthcare professionals can call the hospice for advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week, should they need advice about how best to support you.

What we do and how we can help you

Our aim is to ensure that you have the right care by the right person at the right time in the place you want to be. We support not just the physical aspects of your condition but also its emotional, social and spiritual impact on you and those close to you.

We recognise that people under our care need different types of support, so we have a multidisciplinary team of specialist professionals within our Community Team who can help you.

When we contact you, we will discuss how we can support you and those close to you and agree a plan of care. Your plan will be reviewed regularly and amended depending on what you need. You may benefit from regular reviews by us, and we will arrange follow up appointments. Or you may not need such frequent input but are happy to know that we are in the background. Things may change over time, and we ask that you call us when you need us.

Our Community Team work closely with your hospital teams and your GP who remains your primary doctor. We may also arrange for other professionals within the community to become involved in your care if needed.

Symptom control

Many people living with life-limiting or terminal conditions experience troublesome symptoms that impact on their quality of life. These may include pain, shortness of breath or nausea. If you experience any symptoms, our specialist clinicians will review these with you and provide guidance to improve them. The same conditions can affect people differently and our advice will be tailored to you. The advice we offer may include general advice, changes to your medications, and strategies to help cope with symptoms when they occur.

Each time we meet with you we will want to understand what matters most to you at that time. In addition, our team will assess, with you, the physical and psychological burden of your illness and any symptoms you are experiencing, with the aim of trying to reduce these whenever possible.

Emotional and psychological support

We are committed to ‘total care’. This means that whatever is important for each individual person matters to us. You and those close to you may have questions or concerns which are just as distressing as the physical symptoms of your condition. Being diagnosed with a life-limiting or terminal condition can affect many aspects of your life. This may include how you feel about yourself and your relationships with other people, or it may cause problems from the past to resurface. Sometimes you need to talk about your sadness, your anger or your worries about what has happened to you. It can help to talk to those closest to you about how you feel about the changes in your lives. However, you may find it difficult to talk as openly as you would like, because you are concerned about upsetting each other or for other reasons. In that case, it may be helpful to talk to someone who is not personally close to you. You are welcome to speak to any of our St Catherine’s team about your feelings, and we have some team members who have particular expertise in this area, for example our social workers, Spiritual Care Team and counsellors. You could speak to them on your own or with anyone you choose including carers, family members or friends. They can help you say things to those close to you that you want or need to say. They can also help you to talk about practical planning.

At St Catherine’s we welcome everyone regardless of faith or beliefs. We encourage people to express their spirituality or to practice their religion, if they have one and if they wish, in their own way. If you would find it helpful, we can arrange for a member of our Spiritual Care Team to contact you or to arrange a visit. The Spiritual Care Team work closely with all community faith leaders but are equally available to support people with no religious affiliation.



Children and young people

Adults may find it hard to talk with children because they are concerned about protecting them. However, even young children find it helpful to ask questions which can help with worries and fears they may have about what they might be seeing and hearing. Our Wellbeing Team can help you consider how to have these conversations and offer resources to help. They may also suggest involvement from other charitable organisations.

Carers support

We understand that when someone is referred to our hospice, they often aren't the only person who needs support; the people who care for them may also need our help. Our Carer Support Team are here to listen and help explore your concerns. They may also make suggestions about other services and support available to you locally.



Financial and welfare support

Our Welfare Team provides information to help you receive the financial support you may need. There are various benefits, depending on age and circumstances, that you may be entitled to claim. Some are not means tested but are there to help you with the additional costs of your condition. Our Welfare Team can also help you to apply for a disabled parking permit (Blue Badge), provide information about free prescriptions or the NHS Low Income Scheme and source charitable grants to help with the cost of living.

More welfare information is available on our website: www.stch.org.uk/welfare. If you have any concerns regarding finances or need support with benefit applications, please contact our Welfare Team on 01293 447333.

Functional support

As well as offering support and guidance for specific symptoms, our Therapy Team, which includes physiotherapy and occupational therapy, can assist you in maintaining your mobility and independence. They may suggest exercises, help you create goals or offer equipment. They offer support either through groups (see www.stch.org.uk/wellbeing-calendar) or as individual appointments. Most appointments are offered in our Wellbeing Centre at the hospice. However, following assessment, a home visit may be possible to arrange.



Advance care planning

It is hard to imagine being too unwell to make your own decisions about how you will be cared for. By making a plan you can make sure your wishes are known if that happens. Your plan may cover medical, social and care issues. Many people also like to get their affairs in order by discussing their funeral arrangements and reviewing and updating their Will to make sure it reflects their current wishes.

Advance care planning offers you the opportunity to plan your future care and support, including medical treatment, so that healthcare professionals can ensure that the care they offer aligns with your wishes and priorities, and we know what is important to you. This is especially important at a time when you may no longer be able to make decisions for yourself. You may be considering, or have already arranged, proxy representation for a time when you are unable to make decisions for yourself. This is called a Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare. If this is the case, then please make sure that you share the documentation with us and your GP.

Admission to St Catherine's Ward

Not everyone we look after in the community is admitted to our Ward, but sometimes an admission can be very useful. If we feel an admission would be helpful one of our team will discuss this with you. An admission may be suggested or requested for:

- **Symptom control:** you may be admitted at any stage for help with difficult symptoms. The aim would be for you to go home once your symptoms have improved.
- **Assessment:** you may be offered an admission for a period of assessment to see if we can make changes to your care to maintain or improve your health or independence, or to establish what help you may need in the future. Sometimes this is following a period of time in hospital, or a change in your condition which is hard to adjust to physically or psychologically.
- **End of life care:** many people we look after will stay at home at the end of life with the support described above. But if, for whatever reason, this cannot happen an admission at our hospice can be offered.

To help you know what to expect you can view our hospice tour on our website homepage: www.stch.org.uk.





Your personal information

We receive personal and confidential information about you from yourself, your family and from other services. We need this information so that we can provide you with proper care and treatment. Members of our Community Team looking after you will share your information with each other, and other teams involved in your care. This is usually done via shared electronic health records. As well as GPs and district nurses, these teams include hospital teams, other specialist community teams, pharmacists, ambulance services, continuing healthcare, social services and sometimes regulatory bodies such as the Care Quality Commission.

We will ask you who in your family you are happy for us to talk to. We will only give out information to those listed. This list can be updated at any time. It is always helpful for us to know if you have a Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare. We will ask to see confirmation of their legal permission to hold this role for you.

You can find further information about the information we collect and share on our website: www.stch.org.uk/your-information.

If you would like to have access to your medical records, please talk to one of our team.

Consent

St Catherine's is committed to providing high quality care. Before any member of our staff examines or treats you they will seek your permission or consent to do so. If at any stage you cannot consent to examination or treatment, we will do what we think is in your best interests. Anything you have said previously about how you wish to be cared for, and the views of other people important to you, will be considered. If you ever feel that your consent has not been sought, please let a member of the team know.

Chaperones

A chaperone is a trained member of staff who can be present during a consultation, examination or conversation to provide support and reassurance. Their role is to:

- Protect your dignity and comfort
- Act as an impartial witness during the examination
- Provide emotional support if you feel anxious or vulnerable
- Assist with communication if needed.

When you are assessed by a clinician you will be asked if you would like a chaperone to be present. You may decline this offer, either because you feel you do not need this support or if you feel a family member or carer can be present. If you would like a chaperone, there may be times when one is not immediately available. In which case, we may need to rearrange your assessment to a mutually convenient time.

If you know that you would definitely want a chaperone, please let us know so this information can be held on your record and planned in advance.

Giving feedback

Compliments

We pride ourselves in providing the highest standard of care and hope that you will experience this whilst we're supporting you. If we are providing you with a service you are happy with, please do let us know. We value feedback on all aspects of our service and will make sure any feedback and compliments are passed onto the teams who look after you.

Please send your positive feedback and compliments to qualityteam@stch.org.uk.

After a person has died, we send out a Hospice Feedback Questionnaire to their carer / next of kin asking for their views on the care we provide.

Complaints

We understand that at times we may fail to meet our high standards, or our service may not meet your expectations. Should this be the case, please bring any concerns to our attention so we can try to put matters right and resolve any issues. If this does not happen to your satisfaction, you can make a complaint in the following ways:

- **Verbally** by telephone or in person to any member of staff
- **By letter** to Quality Team, St Catherine's Hospice, Grace Holland Avenue, Pease Pottage, RH11 9SL
- **By email** to qualityteam@stch.org.uk.

We investigate and respond to all complaints. If you would like a copy of our complaints leaflet, please call the Quality Team on 01293 447333 or read our complaints process on our website www.stch.org.uk/complaints-policy.

Feedback to the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Our service is registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC cannot get involved in individual complaints about care provision but is happy to receive all types of feedback about our services at any time. Please see the CQC website for further details: www.cqc.org.uk/give-feedback-on-care.

Supporting diversity

We value the different backgrounds, cultures, faiths, genders, sexualities and life experiences of everyone we support and aim to tailor our support for you as individuals. We would ask you to please treat our employees and everyone you meet with consideration and courtesy and respect everyone's physical, social and spiritual differences.

Meeting your communication needs

We are committed to making sure you can access information and communicate with us in a way that meets your needs. If you need information in a different format, such as large print, easy read, Braille, audio, another language, or if you require an interpreter (including British Sign Language), please let us know. We will do our best to provide information and support in a way that is accessible and suitable for you.

How you can help

Fundraising and donations

The care we provide is only possible thanks to the generosity of people in our local community who fundraise for and donate to us. Every year, only around a third of our funding comes from the NHS; and around £7.5 million is donated by supporters. This incredible amount means we can continue to deliver personalised care to people living with a life-limiting or terminal condition and those closest to them.

People support our hospice in lots of different ways. From leaving a gift in their Will to playing the monthly lottery, taking part in one of our fundraising events or hosting their own, or volunteering their time and talents. If you would like to fundraise for St Catherine's or make a donation please ask to speak to our Fundraising Team by calling 01293 447361 or visit: www.stch.org.uk/how-you-can-help.

Sharing your story

It's also possible to support the hospice in other ways. We're grateful to anyone who is willing to share their experiences of our care, either to support a fundraising initiative or for educational purposes within health and social care training. Please let us know if you are interested in helping us in this way.



This version 2 guide was created in September 2026 and will be reviewed every two years.

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