June 2020

Dear colleagues

MACMILLAN TELEPHONE BUDDIES

Macmillan Telephone Buddies is a new UK wide telephone befriending service, set up by Macmillan in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Anyone affected by cancer can receive a regular telephone call – for a period of up to 12 weeks - from a trained volunteer buddy who can be there to provide a listening ear and support your patients and their families who may be experiencing isolation and loneliness.

We hope that this service may also provide some additional support and help to alleviate some of the pressure being experienced by health professionals, who tell us that they are spending large amounts of their time supporting patients who are experiencing isolation and loneliness on the phone.

In addition to this we have joined forces with Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland’s ‘Kindness Project’ which offers practical support to people affected by cancer such as shopping, collecting medications and dog walking.

I enclose 2 information sheets which give more detail on how to access both services, and would be very grateful if you could distribute these amongst your staff and colleagues and encourage them to share the information with patients and their families.

As you know, many people with cancer are facing anxiety and uncertainty. Those who are considered to be clinically vulnerable are also at a higher risk of loneliness and isolation because they have instructed by the government to go into shielding, with this period now being extended until the end of July.

Macmillan recognises that there is increased isolation felt by people living with cancer who are either shielding or social distancing at this time. It is our goal that no one should face cancer alone, which is why we are rolling out our UK-wide Telephone Buddies service.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Janice Malone

Engagement & Volunteering Manager (Scotland)