

Friday, November 11th 2011

PRESS RELEASE

Bereaved families and friends invited to remember this December

MEMBERS of the public are being invited to remember their loved ones at a special memorial evening to be held next month. Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will be hosting the Tree of Lights ceremony on Monday December 5th at Blackpool Victoria Hospital to help families pay tribute to lost loved ones in the run up to Christmas

This is the sixth Tree of Lights service to be held for people of the Fylde Coast and will include the opportunity to enter the name of a loved ones into a special Book of Remembrance, which will be on display in the Hospital Chapel throughout December, a special tree lighting ceremony with music and readings, and seasonal refreshments.

Bereavement Support Officer, Wendy Thomson said: "This event is for bereaved families, carers and friends to pay tribute to their loved one at Christmas time. Everyone is welcome to attend. It's a special memorial evening for all and is non-denominational.

"I work four days as a Patient Advice and Liaison Officer and on Fridays I am a Bereavement Support Officer which I find really rewarding. I find it really satisfying to be able to get hold of something and make a difference. I spend a lot of time getting feedback from bereaved families and making sure that we provide the best possible care to these people. We do get very good feedback but if there is anything we can do to enhance our support we will try to do it.

"I first attended the Tree of Lights Service a couple of years ago following the death of someone very close to me and it was really nice to be able to remember them in this way.

"Although it's a public event in a lot of ways it's a very private thing also. Christmas is a good time to remember people who are no longer with us and the event is a really good way to do this.

"The ceremony is not religious in tone and open to anyone who wishes to attend and remember their family and friends. It does not matter whether your bereavement was recent, many years ago or if the person you lost was cared for at one of the local hospitals."

Participants are also invited to contribute to the Tree of Lights Appeal by dedicating a light, in the Quiet Garden at Blackpool Victoria Hospital, in memory of someone special. Single or multiple lights can be dedicated for a suggested minimum donation of £5 per light. All dedications will be entered into the Book of Remembrance. In addition, donors will receive a memento decoration that can be added to their own Christmas tree at home.

All donations made to Blue Skies Hospitals Fund for the Tree of Lights Appeal will support Bereavement Services at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. This is a vital service that provides those who have suffered the loss of a loved one with appropriate emotional and practical support.

If you would like to attend the Tree of Lights Event and/or make a donation to the Tree of Lights Appeal, please request a leaflet from the Fundraising Office at Blackpool Victoria Hospital on 01253 657904 or email info@blueskieshospitalsfund.org.uk.

The Tree of Lights Event will take place on Monday December 5th at 7.30pm, in Oliver's Restaurant at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

To make a general donation to the Tree of Lights Appeal, please send a cheque made payable to 'Blue Skies Hospitals Fund' to

Tree of Lights Appeal, Fundraising Office, Blackpool Victoria Hospital,
Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool, FY3 8NR

If you would like to make a secure, tax efficient donation online, please visit www.justgiving.com/Tree-of-Lights2011, where you can also leave an optional message remembering a loved one.

Finally you can donate by text. Just text TREE50 and the amount you want to donate to 70070. Blue Skies Hospitals Fund receives 100% of the donation which will be taken from your phone credit or appear on your mobile phone bill.



PIC: Bereavement Support Officer Wendy Thomson.