



Fern Centre

What's On...

Wig clinic available!

The wig service at the Fern Centre is back up and running and available throughout lockdown. Heidi and Maria from Natural Image based in Exeter travel to the Fern Centre once a month to host a wig fitting clinic. Heidi and Maria wear full PPE throughout your appointment to ensure your safety and will help fit and style your wig. If you were interested in booking a wig fitting appointment please contact the Fern Centre on 01271 311 855 or email us at ndht.theferncentre@nhs.net and we will be happy to talk you through what to expect at your appointment

Pictured below is Heidi from Natural Image at our first wig clinic



Virtual Coffee Morning 8th February!

Our next virtual coffee morning is due to take place on 8th February running from 11-12. It is a great place to meet people and enjoy a friendly chat over a cuppa! Don't take our word for it, here is some feedback from people who joined us at last month's meeting.



Very welcomed by the Fern team

About: North Devon District Hospital / Cancer Services

Posted by GeorgeK0806 (as a service user) at

I recently participated in a new initiative organised by The Fern Centre – a resource based at the Northern Devon District Hospital – supporting both those living with cancer and their families.

An e-mail arrived in my in-box inviting those known to be living with cancer to a virtual coffee morning. Being, an elderly male, I was not sure this was for me. However, I decided to give it a try and followed the on-screen instructions to register my interest. This resulted in a very welcoming e-mail with full instructions on how to log-on with additional practice.

Come the day and time I logged-on and was made very welcome by the Fern team and other participants even though I was the only male present. I am so pleased that I decided to opt in as what followed was a wonderful hour on conversation, a mix of personal stories, humour and non-judgemental chat. It was an opportunity to talk openly about our individual cancer journeys without embarrassment with others who understood the highs and lows – something not always easy to do with those who were not travelling a similar journey. It is anticipated that this will become a regular fortnightly event which I would strongly support as it helps our feeling of well-being, provides an opportunity to make new friends travelling the same journey and combats loneliness.



Monday Meet Up

☕ Let's find our common ground ☕

JOIN OUR VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS

**THE 2ND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
(STARTING MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2021)**

11-12

For instructions on how to join, email the
Fern Centre at ndht.theferncentre@nhs.net

Coming Soon!

Free Online Shibashi Qigong Tai Chi Classes

The Fern Centre has been working closely with one of our volunteers, Warren from Acacia Therapies who will be putting on some free online Qigong classes for patients diagnosed with cancer, patients living with and beyond cancer, their families or carers. These classes will run every other Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. and last between 40-45 minutes

Qigong is the healing form of Tai Chi which focusses on gentle fluid movements that can be done from the safety of your own home. Qigong can be easily adapted to support all abilities and can be done from a seated position or with additional support.

Benefits of Qigong include:

- Boosting immune system
- Reduces anxiety
- Aids with fatigue
- Builds strength in ligaments and tendons
- Improves circulation
- Lowers blood pressure

If you were interested in taking part in the online Qigong classes please speak to a member of your clinical team or contact the Fern Centre directly on 01271 311 855 or email us at ndht.theferncentre@nhs.net



Over and above

Fern Centre

Join Our Online Shibashi Qigong Classes!

Join Warren from Acacia Therapies for **FREE** online Qigong Tai Chi classes. Running every other Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.

Available to patients diagnosed with cancer or living with and beyond cancer, their families and carers

Gentle fluid movements that can be done from the safety of your own home, easily adapted to work with all abilities

For information on how to join speak to the Fern Centre Team on 01271 311 855 or ndht.theferncentre@nhs.net

Cancer Specialist Exercise Support (SafeFit)

SafeFit is a free remote service for anyone in the UK with suspicion of or confirmed diagnosis of cancer. Cancer exercise specialists can offer you advice, support and resources to maintain and improve physical and mental well-being. It has been developed as a collaboration between Macmillan Cancer Support, the CanRehab Trust and other partners. For more information and to complete the self-referral form please see the link below: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/get-help/physical-help/safefit>

See some feedback from a patient who has used SafeFit and how beneficial they found it!

SafeFit and Me

I was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma of the prostate in March 2020 just before the first Covid-19 lockdown. My treatment plan was to have 4 weeks of radiotherapy together with 3 monthly hormone injections. I was fortunate that I did not have too long a wait for the radiotherapy, my 4 week course commenced at the beginning of July. This was completed with no side effects. However, a quick search of the internet suggested a possible side effect of the hormone treatment was weight gain. I had always considered myself reasonably fit living an active lifestyle with no wish to gain weight.

Fortuitously, amongst the many documents given to cancer patients there was information about North Devon Prostate Cancer Support and it was on their Facebook that I found mention of a trial supported by Macmillan and Southampton University Hospital Critical Care Research team to determine the effects of Covid-19 on the physical and emotional wellbeing of those living with cancer. This SafeFit project offered 6 months of exercise with a personal trainer via Zoom in your own home. As someone who is too embarrassed to dress up in Lycra and exercise in front of a lot of young people sweating away in gyms dressed in figure hugging psychedelic costumes, I thought SafeFit was worth exploring. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

All it required was for me to self-refer on-line which resulted in a welcoming 'phone call. I was not sure I would be eligible as I was not overweight, had few side effects and consumed a reasonably healthy diet. However, I was assured during this 'phone call that they welcomed anyone with a suspicion of, or a confirmed diagnosis of, cancer onto the SafeFit programme and it was my choice whether I wished to also participate on the trial or just benefit from the exercise programme. I chose to participate in the trial and was asked to complete an on-line questionnaire which explored my lifestyle, diagnosis, side effects, current level of fitness etc

I was allocated my personal trainer, Frances, who contacted me via Zoom to discuss where I was with my treatment, how I felt emotionally and what I wanted to achieve. Frances assured me that she was a qualified cancer exercise specialist and we made an appointment for my first Zoom exercise session. I am now on my 22nd week of the programme.

I chose to have 3 sessions a week which then reduced to 1 session a month – all of them free of charge - but committed to exercise regularly every day. I have done so ever since and the benefits have been well worth the effort. Frances introduced different exercises or updated the exercises according to my progress. Every session commenced with her asking how I was feeling, any pains or difficulties and my emotional state. Throughout the hour long session she kept a careful eye on how I was doing –was I O.K.

What has it done for me? I am definitely fitter than I was, my blood pressure has come down and there has been no weight gain. In addition I had surgery in December and my recovery was amazingly rapid – pain free within 3 days and back to gentle exercise in 5 days. Just a word of warning the exercises become addictive; even on mornings I did not have as much energy, when I made the effort I felt so much better afterwards. Why not give it a try?

Covid-19 Vaccine scams – spot the signs

The NHS nationally is aware that some people are receiving suspicious calls and text messages offering the COVID-19 vaccination. The guidance below tells you what the NHS will never do, to help you spot the signs of a scam. Please share this with others.

[Coronavirus vaccines are only available on the NHS. You can be contacted by the NHS or a GP surgery local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, the vaccine is free of charge. At no point will you be asked to pay.](#)

- The NHS will never ask you for your bank account or card details.
- The NHS will never ask you for your PIN or banking password.
- The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.

The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you believe you have been the victim of fraud or identity theft, you should report this directly to [Action Fraud](#) on 0300 123 2040. Where the victim is vulnerable, and particularly if you are worried that someone has or might come to your house, report it to the Police online or by calling 101.

There is more information about how you will be contacted about the vaccine on the NHS website at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/how-you-will-be-contacted/>

Recipe Corner

Chocolate and Avocado Brownies

Not eating enough vegetables in your diet?

Then try this sweet dessert packed with added nutritional vegetables.

Who doesn't like a yummy brownie!!!!

INGREDIENTS

- 60 g Coconut Butter
- 100 g Chocolate, 72% cocoa
- 1 Heaped Dessert spoon Coconut sugar
- 1 Small cooked beetroot (vacuum packed is good)
- 1 Ripe Avocado
- 1/2 tsp each Cinnamon, Ginger and Nutmeg
- 80 g Ground Almonds
- 1/2 tsp Bicarbonate of Soda
- 3 Large Eggs
- Pinch of salt
- Handful of flaked almonds (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 180C and line a 15cm square tin
- Melt chocolate, sugar and butter in a saucepan
- Blend eggs, avocado, beetroot and spices together
- Tip almonds into a bowl with the bicarbonate of soda and stir in the chocolate and egg mixtures
- Pour the batter into the tin, sprinkle with flaked almonds if using
- Bake for approx. 20 minutes
- Remove whilst still soft as they will firm up on cooling.



Charity News!

Poppy and Lulu Sponsored Run”

Sixteen year old Poppy Goaman and her thirteen year old sister Lulu are running 24 miles (a mile on the hour), for 24 hours, around their home village of Instow. Their Godmother, and Over and Above volunteer, Lizzie has recently been diagnosed with Breast Cancer, and they wanted to show their support by raising money for the Fern Centre. We think they are wonderful and wish them all the luck for their challenge. Already, at the time of writing this newsletter, they have raised an amazing £3,000. If you would like to donate to their justgiving page, please visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/PopsandLulusrun>



Westward Ho Charity Shop

Our Westward Ho! charity shop is coming along. Tesco have been extremely supportive and have organised the majority of the refurbishment works for us. We are overwhelmed with their kind offers of support. In next month's newsletter we hope we will be able to show you a photo or two of it finished. Of course, Covid-19 restrictions may mean we are unable to open it for a few months – but we will as soon as it is safe to do so. Every penny raised from our Westward Ho! charity shop will be used to support our Fern Centre – we can't wait!

How to Donate

To donate to our Cancer and Wellbeing Fern Centre please visit www.overandabove.enthuse.com/Fern or scan this QR code.

To find out more about the Over and Above charity and the new Appeal, visit www.overandabove.org.uk, the charity's Facebook page or contact the fundraising team on 01271 311772 or email ndht.charity@nhs.net.





Fern Centre

THANK YOU!

Thank you Tesco Extra Barnstaple

Tesco Extra in Barnstaple raised a fantastic £1,514.94 at their Christmas drive thru cinema event in support of Over and Above. There were two film screening, 200 cars, plenty of movie treats and a whole bunch of Christmas cheer. Thank you once again to Tesco's for their wonderful support.



Thank you Bideford Bridge Trust

We are thrilled to announce that Bideford Bridge Trust has just awarded Over and Above £10,000. This will be a great help towards the £120,000 running costs that Over and Above needs to raise each year for the Fern Centre. We are now busy writing to lots of grant organisations to ask for their support to this fabulous Centre.

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Level – Easy

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	9	4		6			1

Level- Medium

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Level- Hard