Cancer charity committed to supporting people living with cancer throughout Coronavirus crisis launches urgent matched giving appeal

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PRESS RELEASE

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throughout Coronavirus crisis launches urgent matched giving appeal

Bristol-based cancer charity, Penny Brohn UK, has been keeping a close watch on the government's announcements regarding COVID-19 and the effect the measures are having on people with cancer and the charity.

As a result of the government's guidelines it has suspended all face to face cancer support services last week to ensure the safety of its clients. As the country enters lockdown the charity's National Centre in Pill, near Bristol will be closed until further notice.

Penny Brohn UK has been supporting the holistic needs of people with cancer for 40 years and remains committed to giving people the support they need during this time of crisis. The charity is already working hard to deliver vital support remotely, either over the phone or virtually.

Laura Kerby, CEO commented that:

"Many cancer patients already feel very anxious and vulnerable as a result of their diagnosis; its associated symptoms and treatment can have a significant emotional impact on people and their families, with fear, isolation, loss of self-esteem and loss of independence having a huge impact on their health and wellbeing.

This is now being intensified by the impact of coronavirus on essential healthcare systems and people with cancer now face the real possibility of delays, cancellations and changes to their cancer treatment.

It is a worrying time for all of us but for those living with cancer it is even more frightening. They need charities, like Penny Brohn UK, to continue to be there for them; to support their emotional, psychological, physical and spiritual health more than ever.

Penny Brohn UK is one of very few UK charities who is helping people to find ways to live well with the impact of their cancer - both within and beyond a clinical setting. Our ability to work alongside medical treatment is instrumental in helping patients seek the most appropriate environment and services for them. The NHS alone is not in a position to support patients' holistic needs and quite rightly focuses on giving patients the best treatment and care.

This isn't the time to have to scale back services. This isn't the time to have to scale back services. Therefore, the challenge for us becomes how do we best support people with cancer to improve their quality of life when they may be feeling anxious and disconnected at home?"

As well as protecting its clients, staff and visitors during this extra-ordinary situation, Penny Brohn UK is also considering the financial implications of the virus and the potentially damaging impact on the charity. The charity does not receive any government funding relying overwhelmingly on public support. They have already had to postpone all their major events in May, community and events fundraising has practically ceased overnight.

Laura Kerby, continues

"The loss of the May events will be a catastrophic blow to the financial health of the charity. Each year Mad May contributes around £300,000 of income. The further loss of a major grant will be another huge blow. This means we may be looking at the potential loss of one third of our income this year. Without the ability to raise the vital funds needed to sustain us through this crisis, the future of the charity, and our ability to support people with cancer, is seriously under threat."

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The charity has been offered a life-line. It is urging everyone to get involved with its urgent appeal, Double Your Money which launched this week. In an extraordinary act of kindness, a generous benefactor has offered to match all individual donations made to the charity until Monday 6 April 2020.

Laura Kerby added:

"We know that this kind of extraordinary match funding opportunity doesn't come along every day. We want to reach out and continue to help the people who need us most. In fact, it's absolutely crucial that we do. We simply can't turn anyone away. But we can't do it without help. I urge people to donate if they are able. A gift at this critical time is now doubly important. Together we can make sure that no one need go through cancer alone.

How to give?

1. You can make a bank transfer using the following bank details:

Account No. 53874455

Sort code: 56-00-05

Using the reference: Doubleyourmoney

2. Text DOUBLE to 70660 to donate £10

3. You can give online at: https://www.pennybrohn.org.uk/doubleyourmoney-5/

About Penny Brohn UK services

Penny Brohn UK is continuing to offer telephone support through its helpline, counselling, nutrition, and integrative doctor's sessions via phone. Please contact bookings by emailing bookings@pennybrohn.org.uk if you would like to speak to someone about this.

You can also access their online resources, including a wealth of self-care tips and other assets to support you during this time. **Their Helpline is also still open on 0303 3000 118 if you have any concerns.**

With 40 years' experience, Penny Brohn UK recognises that people with cancer need more than medicine. Its whole person approach offers personalised care from the point of a cancer diagnosis into treatment and throughout survivorship. Exploring areas like diet, exercise, emotions, relationships and managing stress, our free courses, one-to-one therapies, and group sessions, work alongside standard medical treatment to achieve the best health and wellbeing by supporting the holistic needs - psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical - of people affected by cancer.

For more information about Penny Brohn UK go to www.pennybrohn.org.uk

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