SIX SPECIALIST COMMUNITY NURSES APPOINTED TO STRENGTHEN CHILDREN'S PALLIATIVE CARE ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER

Wednesday 11 November, 2026

Six Children's Palliative Care Community Nurse Specialists have been appointed to Kentown Support's Greater Manchester programme to provide specialist community-based care for seriously ill babies, children and young people and their families. Five nurses are already in post, with the sixth due to start this month.

Expanding community palliative care across Greater Manchester

Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Tameside, Stockport and Salford previously had no children's palliative care community nurse specialist. Each will now be covered by one of the new nursing roles, helping to create more consistent provision across Greater Manchester's ten areas.

Building on its first programme in Lancashire and South Cumbria, Kentown Support aims to help reduce the postcode lottery in community palliative care nursing across Greater Manchester. This ambition aligns with the Government's Modern Service Framework for Palliative and End-of-Life Care, which sets out equitable access to high-quality, responsive and needs-based support.

Greater choice for families

Families will have greater choice about where their child receives support as services share specialist knowledge and coordinate care. Each nurse will work alongside existing children's community palliative care services, including teams in Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale (HMR), Oldham and Trafford, the Children's Palliative Care (STAR) team and local hospices.

Davina Hartley, Programme Manager, North West Children's Caner Operational Delivery Network, said:

'The Kentown Support Programme is a fantastic initiative bringing together services for children with palliative and end of life care needs across Greater Manchester. This will undoubtedly improve the support available to families, as a truly multi agency offer, including counselling, bereavement support, family support and clinical provision. There are additional specialist palliative care nurses newly in post across Greater Manchester children's community nursing teams ensuring that every team has access to specialist nursing and this is a huge step forward which will help to reduce inequalities, improve integrated access to care, and strengthen the support available across health, social care, community services, and voluntary sector organisations.

This will give children and their families access to high-quality care and a wider range of support options closer to home. I am excited to be involved and see the development of this programme as it builds and goes from strength to strength to support children with life-limiting and life-shortening conditions across Greater Manchester.'

Collaboration with Alder Hey

To strengthen the skills and confidence of its Children's Palliative Care Community Nurse Specialists across Greater Manchester, Kentown Support has begun a three-year collaboration with Alder Hey's specialist palliative care team (SPCT). Nurses will receive clinical placements, regular supervision and access to specialist advice, as outlined below.

- **Clinical rotation:** Each Kentown Support nurse will spend up to six months working within Alder Hey's specialist palliative care team under an honorary contract. Nurses will take part in the team's clinical work to develop their palliative care competencies, with development tailored to their individual knowledge and skills.
- **Clinical supervision:** Every two months, the Lead Nurse for Palliative Care at Alder Hey will facilitate group supervision, providing a safe and confidential space for nurses to reflect on complex clinical situations.
- **Specialist advice:** When dealing with complex clinical situations, Kentown Support nurses will be able to contact the Alder Hey Specialist Palliative Care nurses and doctors for additional

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specialist guidance.

Adrienne Rushton, Lead Nurse for Palliative and Bereavement Care at Alder Hey said:

“The Specialist Palliative Care Team (SPCT) is looking forward to collaborating on this project. We hope it will help more families access high-quality palliative care nursing support and play a part in reducing inequalities in palliative care delivery.”

Wider support for children and families

Families referred for nursing support can also access other elements of Kentown Support’s Greater Manchester programme, including therapeutic counselling, bereavement support and family service coordination.

Mollie Whitworth, Neuromuscular Specialist Practitioner for Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital said,

‘Our experience of referring to Kentown Support for Therapeutic Counselling has been extremely positive. The referral process is straightforward, and families have consistently commented on how quickly they are contacted following a referral. Receiving prompt confirmation that the referral has been received also provides reassurance to us as professionals that families are being supported.

The service has been invaluable, particularly as we do not have direct psychological support available for our babies, children, young people and families. The positive feedback we receive from families highlights just how helpful and valued this service is.’

How to make a referral

Referrals are now open. Families and professionals can make a referral through the Kentown Support website: www.kentownsupport.org.uk

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