

MOULTON MARSH Nr Fosdyke

"When my wife was diagnosed with Cancer services provided by the NHS swung into action, & great efforts were made to bring about a successful outcome. However, after a period of some twelve months it was recognised that my wife's condition was beyond further treatment and that her life expectation was probably no more than six months.

Faced with such a dreadful prognosis, what my wife (and I) most needed was support, advice & services that would enable her to live as near normal existence as possible during her remaining months. Regrettably, largely due to the lack of a local Hospice, the real situation was far from what we had hoped for.

No pain Consultant was in post locally and no Palliative Care In-Patient facility was available - the nearest Hospice, in Lincoln some 40 miles away had no beds available. When my wife's illness was in it's final stages she was in great pain which could no longer be controlled at home: in the absence of a local Hospice or a bed elsewhere, she was admitted to a ward at the local General Hospital.

Whilst not wishing to be overly critical of staff who were doing their best, the lack of anyone trained in Palliative Care resulted in my wife (an uncomplaining and courageous woman) spending the last two days of her life crying out in constant unmanaged pain and begging for the end to come. Immediately after her death the staff had no idea how to handle her family and dealt with the situation by vanishing into a staff room. The Bereavement Service offered by the Hospital closed for the weekend at 5pm on a Friday, my wife died at 6pm.

Some few months after the death of my wife, my Mother In Law was admitted to a Hospice in the North of England, suffering from an almost identical condition. The difference in the way the properly trained (in Palliative Care) staff handled the situation was amazing. Whilst obviously Ma's passing was sad, she was not in pain & unlike my dear wife died with some dignity.

The difference in the two circumstances served to make it very clear to me how important it is to ensure that Hospice provision is made available for residents from our area.

Preston