

Susan Murray ear acupuncture clinic to launch for people with breast cancer

A new service providing ear acupuncture for people with breast cancer is soon to be launched, thanks to generous support from the family of a former patient treated for the disease at the Kent Oncology Centre.

Susan Murray, from Headcorn, died in June 2015, and her husband, Bill, along with her children, have been keen to do something positive in her memory.

It was decided that, with the help of Claire Ryan, Macmillan Nurse Clinician, the Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic would be set up, primarily for people living with secondary breast cancer.

Bill Murray said: "My family and I are very pleased to help set up, fund and sustain the Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic in memory of Susan, who was a very dearly loved wife, mother and grandmother.

"Ear acupuncture is a safe form of treatment and has been used for many years to help patients cope with the side effects of cancer treatments. We

hope the setting up of the clinic will provide as much help as possible and make this form of treatment more widely available.

"Quite apart from the effects on patients receiving treatment for the disease, symptoms can be no less upsetting, and anything which helps in alleviating these is to be welcomed. Susan would have been proud."

Claire Ryan, Macmillan Nurse Clinician and Roz Yates, Acute Oncology Nurse, have received their training to administer the new complementary ear acupuncture service, which aims to promote relaxation, help encourage a sense of well-being and assist in the management of hot flushes, a common and debilitating symptom of breast cancer treatment.

Claire Ryan said: "I had the pleasure of caring for Susan when I was newly appointed last year. Susan was selfless and generous, concerned about others rather than herself. I am sure she would be so proud of Bill and her family, who have been so generous and committed to helping



and supporting others living with the uncertainty of secondary breast cancer. It's very humbling that the generosity of the Murray family will provide a complementary service that will be accessible to, and benefit, many patients like Susan."

The Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic will launch on 19 January 2016 at the Kent Oncology Centre.



Susan Murray

THE SUSAN MURRAY EAR ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC

This new service is primarily for people living with secondary breast cancer. Each person's experience of secondary breast cancer is unique. For many people though, living with the uncertainty of the diagnosis is the hardest part, and can significantly affect their emotional well-being. Several other elements of this service combined with the actual ear acupuncture, suggest that this can be a successful treatment model. General effects of a group treatment have previously been reported to offer, marked relaxation and feelings of physical and emotional well-being, improve sleep patterns and a clearer mind, promoting receptive and rational thinking which enhances the benefit of other

psychological support strategies such as counselling.

People who receive anti-cancer treatment such as chemotherapy or hormone (endocrine) therapy for their early stage breast cancer can experience hot flushes as a result of their treatment. This physical, sometimes debilitating, symptom can also have an impact on their emotional well-being. Research has shown that ear acupuncture can help with the management of hot flushes.

The clinic will be called the Susan Murray Ear Acupuncture Clinic in memory of Susan, who received treatment for her secondary breast cancer at the Kent Oncology Centre under the care of Dr. Russell Burcombe, Consultant Oncologist.

WHAT IS EAR ACUPUNCTURE?

Acupuncture is an ancient form of medicine that originated in China, and has been practiced for several thousand years. It involves the insertion of extremely fine acupuncture needles into specific points which encourages the body to release endorphins, known to help with pain and symptoms of stress, as well as emotional well-being.

HOW IS EAR ACUPUNCTURE ADMINISTERED?

Ear acupuncture treatment is given in a quiet group setting and each treatment is around 30-40 minutes long. The treatment is safe and simple to administer, and can be offered to many people at one time, making this new service more accessible to many more patients.