



3rd December 2009

Bulb planting event marks beginning of partnership for Ashley House and Marie Curie Cancer Care

Ashley House plc today announced plans to provide long term support for Marie Curie Cancer Care as the new partnership was launched with a bulb planting ceremony.



The planting of the 'Field of Hope' is in the grounds of County Oak Medical Centre, Carden Hill, Brighton. The planting is supported by NHS Brighton & Hove and the GP practices operating from the County Oak Medical Centre: Warmdene Surgery and Carden Surgery.

The partnership aims to raise funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care through a programme of staff fund raising events while also providing the charity with opportunities to enhance end of life care services in local communities, within the medical centres developed by Ashley House.

Employing more than 2,700 nurses, doctors and other healthcare professionals, Marie Curie Cancer Care expects to provide care to around 29,000 terminally ill patients in the community and in its hospices this year and is the largest provider of hospice beds outside the NHS. The charity has contracts with 96% of health trusts across the UK but recent research shows that many people don't know if there is a Marie Curie Nursing Service available to them locally and even fewer know how to get the support of a Marie Curie Nurse¹.



Celebrating the official launch of the Marie Curie/Ashley House charity partnership is from left to right,

- **Jonathan Holmes** - Ashley House Chief Executive
- **Keith Floodgate** - Assistant Director of Business Development, Marie Curie
- **Katie Nicolls** - Marie Curie local community fundraiser
- **Phil Drouin** - Carden Surgery, Practice Manager
- **Dr Rekha Shah** - Carden Surgery
- **Dr Naz Khan** - Warmdene Surgery
- **Chris Naylor** - Brighton and Hove PCT

Jonathan Holmes, Ashley House Chief Executive said: "I am really proud to launch this important partnership for Ashley House providing long term support for Marie Curie. We are excited by the opportunities this will offer Marie Curie to develop and build awareness of their services. The partnership with Marie Curie will also offer us and our people a great cause to raise funds for whilst having fun along the way"

Keith Floodgate, Marie Curie Cancer Care's Assistant Director Business Development said: "We're thrilled to be working with Ashley House plc. As well as raising vital funds, the partnership will provide us with the opportunity to develop and deliver services deeper into the local community. There are more than 2,000 Marie Curie Nurses across the UK providing care for thousands of terminally ill patients and giving support to their families but we know that many more people aren't getting the end of life care they need to allow them to die at home. By having access to the GP surgeries Ashley House builds we'll be able to advise health professionals on end of life care issues, and hopefully deliver more care and support to the local communities in which they operate."

Marie Curie was selected by Ashley House plc as its first Corporate Charity Partnership and is a key part of its drive to create improved healthcare in the community nationwide.

Further information on the charity can be found at www.mariecurie.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

179% of the population doesn't know if there is a Marie Curie Nursing Service available to them locally. Just under half (48%) responded – 'don't know' when asked how they would go about getting a Marie Curie Nurse. All figures are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2158 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between June 9-11 2009. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

About Ashley House plc

Ashley House plc was established in 1991 and specialises in the design, construction and management of primary and social care infrastructure. The pipeline of projects is substantial and includes new GP surgeries for partnerships with rent re-imbursed by the PCT through to major community hospital projects delivered through NHS LIFT.

Ashley House is a major participant in NHS LIFT with interests in 7 of the 47 NHS LIFT companies which are public private partnerships where the private sector partners with local PCT and the Dept of Health (via Community Health Partnerships) to deliver health and social care facilities.

Through Odyssey Healthcare, Ashley House is also one of only 7 private sector participants in Express LIFT.

Ashley House acquired Sapphire Primary Care Developments (SPCD) from Lloydspharmacy in November 2009. The 2 Sapphire offices and personnel based in Coventry and Glasgow are now part of the Ashley House group.

Ashley House is the asset manager of AH Medical Properties plc, a separate property investment company which owns a portfolio primary care assets, with a gross value of over £100m.

About Marie Curie Cancer Care

Marie Curie Cancer Care is one of the UK's largest charities. Employing more than 2,700 nurses, doctors and other healthcare professionals, it expects to provide care to around 29,000 terminally ill patients in the community and in its hospices this year and is the largest provider of hospice beds outside the NHS.

Funding

Around 70 per cent of the charity's income comes from the generous support of thousands of individuals, membership organisations and businesses, with the balance of our funds coming from the NHS.

Marie Curie Nurses

The charity is best known for its network of Marie Curie Nurses working in the community to provide end-of-life care, totally free for patients in their own homes.

Research

The charity has two centres for palliative care research, The Marie Curie Palliative Care Research Unit at University College London and The Marie Curie Palliative Care Institute in Liverpool. It also funds seven fundamental scientific research groups which investigate the causes and treatments of cancer. Until this year this research was carried out at the Marie Curie Research Institute in Oxted Surrey but from summer 2009 the groups will be located in universities around the country and will receive funding from the charity until 2012.

Supporting the choice to die at home

Research shows around 65 per cent of people would like to die at home if they had a terminal illness, with a sizeable minority opting for hospice care. However, more than 50 per cent of cancer deaths still occur in hospital, the place people say they would least like to be. Since 2004 Marie Curie Cancer Care has been campaigning for more patients to be able to make the choice to be cared for and die at home.