

Our patients are inspiring...

“We’ve had so much support from PTHC.”

Nicky has also been to our drop-in *Breeze* sessions for lone parents, which are held at the Hospice at the same time as *Little Rays*. “*Breeze is really just parents getting together and chatting,*” she explains. “*We talk about the everyday ups and downs and struggles of being a single parent. It’s helpful to meet other people in the same situation, because they understand what you’re going through, juggling dealing with your grief and single parenting.*”

Nicky, James and Hannah have also dedicated a leaf to Torben on our Memory Tree, a beautiful handmade copper sculpture which is situated in a quiet, private part of the Hospice garden. From its branches hang individually-crafted, delicate copper leaves, each engraved with the name of a loved one who is gone but never forgotten. “*We came last month and hung a leaf on the Tree in memory of Torben,*” says Nicky. “*It was quite emotional but it’s important to do things to remember him.*”



“*We’ve had so much support from Phyllis Tuckwell, and that’s really just what Torben wanted, that support and aftercare. I feel really grateful for the help we’ve received. Just knowing that there are people there for you, and that if things get too bad I can pick up the phone and say ‘can I talk to somebody’. I haven’t needed to do that, but knowing that people are there if I do, has been a huge blessing and a real support.*”

We are privileged to care for people like Nicky and her family, at probably the most difficult time in their lives, but we can only do this with the generosity of our local community.

We have to raise over £20,000 every day in order to provide care, free of charge, to our patients and their relatives.

For further information about how to support Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care, contact our Fundraising team on:

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support@pth.org.uk

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Nicky and her family’s Story

Receiving care on our In-Patient Unit and bereavement support for spouses & children.

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Phyllis Tuckwell[®]
Hospice Care
...because every day is precious



Nicky and her family's Story



Living locally, Nicky and her family had heard of Phyllis Tuckwell, so when her husband Torben was referred to our care the family quickly agreed that they would like him to come and stay on our In-Patient Unit (IPU).

*"Torben was really keen on it," says Nicky. "My dad had died five months before at another hospice in a different area and we'd seen the great care that he'd received there, so **Torben really wanted to come to Phyllis Tuckwell.** We were really lucky that he got a bed here the day after he was referred, because otherwise he may not have been well enough to move. Things progressed very quickly at that stage. He'd been in hospital for three weeks when they told us that his cancer was terminal and arranged for him to be transferred to the Hospice, and he died on the In-Patient Unit less than a week later."*



*"**It was easy to visit Torben at the Hospice because we could come and go whenever we wanted,**" continues Nicky. "The IPU is open for visitors 24 hours a day, so we didn't have to arrive and leave at certain times. Torben had*

a room to himself, which was really nice, and I was able to stay overnight in the relatives' room on the last night, which is just down the corridor from the IPU. Torben's sisters came over from Denmark to see him and they were able to stay in the relatives' room one night too, which made things easier for them."

*"**As well as looking after Torben, Phyllis Tuckwell staff also cared for me and our two children, James and Hannah,**" says Nicky. "Torben wanted the three of us to get the care and support we needed; it was really important to him. We met with the counsellors when we got here and that was helpful, but everything happened so quickly, we didn't have long here before he died. Since then we've been offered bereavement support and it has really helped all three of us."*

Nicky came along to our bereavement group *First Steps*, which runs fortnightly over six sessions. It is a small group, organised and facilitated by one of our counsellors and a volunteer, and helps those in the first stage of bereavement understand what they are going through and identify what may help them. *Second Steps* follows on from *First Steps*, and is aimed at those who are further along in their grief journey helping them to consider what they now need in order to live with their loss.



*"**First and Second Steps were really helpful,**" says Nicky. "There were about 10 of us at *First Steps*, all of whom had been widowed. We met in the Dove Lounge at the Hospice. Both groups are led by a counsellor and cover certain things each week. They encouraged us to talk and be open with each other. **They were very friendly groups and it helped to talk to other people who were***

***in the same position as me.** When you're feeling down and struggling with things which aren't necessarily exactly what you expected to struggle with, just knowing that how you're feeling is not unusual really helps – it confirms that you're not going mad! **Hearing that other people are struggling with the same things too, and that what you're feeling is really common, makes you feel like you're not alone.** Some of us have met up outside of the group and been out for a meal and that sort of thing, which has been really nice."*

As well as supporting Nicky, we have also cared for James and Hannah. After Torben's death, Hannah started coming along to our *Little Rays* group for bereaved 5-12 year olds, while James went to *Storm*, which is for bereaved teenagers.



*"Little Rays supports children through crafts and storytelling," says Nicky. "Hannah put together a memory book, and she also made a lovely cushion with memories of her daddy on it. She used fabric pens to draw on it some of the things that he liked, like computers, photography, cheesecake and salt liquorice! It sits on the sofa at home, it's really lovely. Now she's a bit older she's joined *Storm*, and she and James have been to *Laser Quest* and to see the*

***Guildford Flames** ice hockey team. They've also been bowling and go-karting too. It's really helped them. James has made some good friends at *Storm*, there are a few boys there that he gets on really well with. **Just knowing that there are other people in the same situation as him, and that he's not the only one struggling without a parent, really helps.** We've also been on a family day, which Hannah absolutely loved. It was held at *Go Ape* and there were a lot of families there. It was only about a month or so after Torben died so we didn't really know anybody, but **everyone was very friendly** and we've seen some of them at other events since then, so that's been nice."*