

people every day, if some go faster than us! Initially we were just going to do it as a walking holiday, as it was something we had both always wanted to do, but then I thought why not try to raise money while we're doing it - and because **I'm already connected to Phyllis Tuckwell, what better cause to do it for than that!**"

Pili and her husband will be leaving for Porto on 22nd May. "That part of Spain and Portugal is not as hot as other parts. We are expecting temperatures ranging from 10 to 11 degrees at night, up to 18 or 20 degrees in the day. It might rain because it's a wet area, but I'm hoping it doesn't rain too much, especially in the day when we're walking, and that it doesn't get too muddy either. I have started walking to the Hospice on the days I volunteer here. The maximum I have done in a day is about 13 miles, but I try to do a minimum of 4 or 5 a day, just to keep it going. I've had to nurse some blisters, and sometimes in the evening I ache all over, but I'm feeling prepared. My husband is supporting me and hopes to complete the whole walk too. When I'm at the Hospice, I meet patients who are on a journey to the end of their lives, and every day they face challenges and difficulties, but it is a path that they have to follow, to the end. For them, every day is precious. During my walk, when I feel tired or want to give up, **I will think of those patients and that will give me the courage to carry on** and enjoy the precious days that El Camino has to offer."

We are privileged to care for our patients and their families, at probably the most difficult time in their lives, but we can only do this with the help of people like Pili and 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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Our volunteers are inspiring...

**"I enjoy meeting
the patients."**



Pili's Story
Volunteering in Day Hospice

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

Pili's Story



Pili and her husband used to live in Bristol, where Pili worked as an NHS nurse for 30 years. When she took early retirement, they moved to Surrey to be closer to their daughter, and Pili started looking for a volunteering role.

*"I considered contacting the local hospitals to see if they had any vacancies for bank nurses," she says, "as I had initially planned to carry on doing a little bit of nursing. But in the end I decided against it and instead enquired about volunteering at Phyllis Tuckwell. I had experienced death and dying during my nursing carer, and had seen how the journey was not always smooth for patients. **I wanted to help.** Working with terminally ill people had been something I had always wanted to do, but circumstances had prevented me from moving into palliative care. After retiring from my Nurse Manager post in the NHS, I worked part-time in a Macmillan Unit, which brought me back to the essence of nursing. Then, once we had settled in Surrey, I decided to contact Phyllis Tuckwell and offer my help as a volunteer, so that I could continue to have some contact with patients, and give back something to society and to those on their final journey. Phyllis Tuckwell accepted me and provided me with training, and I've been volunteering ever since! It's been about two and a half years now."*

Pili started in our Home Support team, whose volunteers visit patients at home once a week, for three

hours. They offer companionship and help around the home, and can also take patients out to the shops or garden centre, or to a café for a cup of tea and a chat. She then moved to Day Hospice, where she now volunteers one day a week.

*"I enjoy meeting the patients, and the other volunteers and members of staff too. **We work as a team,** so there is an exchange of thoughts and ideas. The patients are given a happy time while they're here. **They forget about their illness, maybe not fully, but they come for a day that is enjoyable;** they get a massage, they get cups of tea, a little bit of wine if they wish, and a nice meal."*



Our Day Hospice sessions form part of our Living Well service, and offer patients a visit to the Hospice once a week, from 10am-3pm. Here, they enjoy a cooked lunch as well as refreshments throughout the day, and can attend a variety of sessions including Tai Chi and Social & Therapeutic Horticulture, as well as others which give tips on subjects such as relaxation techniques, getting a good night's sleep and how to cope with changes in taste. While they are here they can talk to our Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists,

Complementary Therapists, Social Work Advisors, Welfare Officers, Counsellors and Chaplains, and can also visit the Hospice Chapel for services, if they wish.

*"They enjoy it," says Pili, "and I think that perhaps what they enjoy the most is being in the company of other people, because I think that some of the people who come to Day Hospice maybe are quite lonely. Others have good family support, but it varies, and I think **it's a nice opportunity to be there for them, to give them some support and companionship, and be part of the wonderful team there.**"*

As well as giving her time to volunteer for Phyllis Tuckwell, Pili is also raising money to help fund our care. In May, she and her husband will be walking El Camino De Santiago (St James' Way) along a pilgrimage route which has drawn people to it for over a thousand years.

"I have wanted to do this for about 25 years," says Pili. "Santiago de Compostela is in Galicia, in North-West Spain, just north of Portugal. It is the place where St James is buried and there is a big cathedral there. Since the Middle Ages, people have been walking El Camino de Santiago from Europe, North Africa, everywhere. We are planning to walk there from Porto in Portugal, which is about 150 miles. We haven't got a strict timetable but are hoping to do it in two or three weeks. We have only booked our first night in a hotel in Porto - for the rest of the time you just walk the route and stay in hostels or bed and breakfasts. There are a lot of facilities for people along the way. Because it is a pilgrimage route, and you stop in hostels, I presume we will meet other people - the Pilgrim's Community - who are doing the same thing and will maybe end up walking in a group, or just meeting up with different