

## **Press Release**

31<sup>st</sup> May 2011

### **St Peter & St James Raises The Roof Again!**

This is the latest in St Peter & St James' development programme to make major improvements to hospice inpatient facilities. There soon will be six brand new, purpose-built hospice bedrooms for patients and their families – each with its unique design features to create a positive and uplifting environment. Patients will benefit from their own en-suite facilities, as well as double doors to a private patio and views across the South Downs. The rooms are spacious and have fold-down beds, enabling friends and relatives to stay comfortably overnight. The new facilities will also make life easier for the nursing staff – since all the rooms now have disabled access and overhead hoists to aid them in moving patients. The finishing touches are currently being added to the interior of the new extension, which represents the first phase of a two stage project.

The six new rooms have cost just under £800,000 to build and equip. St Peter & St James is especially grateful to the Department of Health for the generous £600,000 grant that has enabled these improvements to take place and to their Social Enterprise Investment Fund for a further £154,000 to complete this first phase. Our thanks also go to the trusts, individuals, local businesses and groups for the phenomenal response we have had to raise the shortfall required.

David Prail, chief executive of Help the Hospices, explains: "Although hospice care is more than just a building – with the majority of services being provided in people's homes – the building itself gives St Peter & St James an important physical presence in the community. This Department of Health capital grant programme has made a huge difference to the quality of hospice environments across the UK. The funds have enhanced living spaces and equipped hospices with some of the practical tools needed to meet the wide ranging needs of people with life limiting and terminal illness and their friends and family."

Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, said: "Hospices make an immense contribution in providing compassionate, quality care for people at the end of life. This is why the £40 million hospice capital grant scheme was so vital. I am delighted about the major improvements this funding has made possible at hospices across England. It is clear that the wellbeing of patients and their loved ones has been at the heart of these refurbishments."

The next step at St Peter & St James is to convert five of the existing hospice bedrooms into three spacious purpose-built rooms. These rooms will also have good views and en-suite toilet facilities, as well as convenient access to the nursing station and wheelchair accessible bathrooms. In addition, a new consulting room will provide a private space for relatives or carers to speak with our clinical staff. This second phase of the development is due to be complete in the Autumn and will bring the total cost of the project to just over £1,000,000. St Peter & St James Hospice Inpatient Unit will still have eight hospice rooms and one for outpatient needs, but all will have considerably enhanced facilities. Once the

project is complete, there will also be a relatives' room where people can take a few moments to have a cup of tea or have some quiet time.

Since St Peter & St James relies so heavily on charitable donations to provide these vital services, it is rare to have an opportunity such as this to make major tangible improvements to the hospice environment. It is hoped that everyone who uses the hospice building will be pleased with the new facilities and will see this as a further step towards the hospice achieving the very best standards of end-of-life care for patients and their families.

Gill Cronin, Head of Fundraising at St Peter & St James, said "Please consider helping us in whichever way you can – I know that times are very difficult and I am sure that you have a lot of Charities competing for your giving, but I ask you to think about this – at some point in our lives we will each know someone who needs Hospice care, either at their home or as an inpatient. Please help us to make sure that in the communities we serve, we will be here to help."

- ENDS -

**For further information:** Gill Cronin on 01444 471598

**Notes to Editors: About St Peter & St James Hospice & Continuing Care Centre**

Our mission as a registered charity is to provide specialist care, love and support for those living with progressive, life limiting illnesses from East and West Sussex. We will endeavour to meet the needs of each patient, their family and friends. We aim to encourage and enable all patients to live their lives to their full potential despite their illnesses.

We care for patients from Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath, Lewes, Uckfield and the surrounding villages. Last year we provided care for more than 400 patients and their families. All of our Hospice services are free of charge and we receive less than 17% of our funding from the Government. This means we have to raise more than £1.8 million every year through fundraising. That's £5,000 every single day.

If you are interested in working or volunteering at St Peter & St James please contact Human Resources on 01444 471598 or visit [www.stpeter-stjames.org.uk](http://www.stpeter-stjames.org.uk).

**Website:** [www.stpeter-stjames.org.uk](http://www.stpeter-stjames.org.uk)

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