

The power of storytelling: building up a team mindset to tell the Hospice story

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One of the biggest communications challenges for a Hospice is how to best inform, inspire, engage and involve its wide range of audiences. Such complex messaging to convey the significant impact its services have on individuals and communities.

Developing people stories from patients in the Hospice In-Patient Unit for social media and other external channels, was something the Hospice had some success with. However, the challenge was to engage all teams across the organisation to identify a story.

The focus was to develop a culture of storytelling across Strathcarron Hospice.



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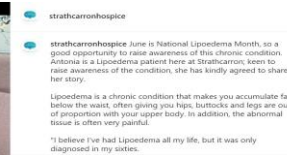
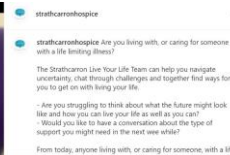
This poster is part of
the SPPC Poster
Parade 2022

A small logo for the Scottish Partnership for Patient Care (SPPC) is located in the bottom right corner, featuring a blue circular icon with a white outline of a person and the text "Scottish Partnership for Patient Care" below it.

How to develop a 'storytelling' mindset across the Hospice?

Telling the Hospice story previously focused on patients in the In-Patient Unit. The aim now is to:

1. Highlight stories of patients, and their families, as well as put the spotlight on staff and teams to promote their vital work.
2. Ensure people understand the breadth of palliative and end of care the Hospice is doing for individuals and local communities.
 - A **Communications Group** was set up, with one person representing each department to identify and build up a picture of the Hospice, with real life stories at the heart. This group also shared any department or Hospice 'wins'.
 - Developing a **case study process**. All staff openly discussed when it would be appropriate to ask a patient or their families when and if they would like to share personal experiences.
 - The realisation was that **people are empowered to share** their life, as well as it being their way of saying 'thank you' to the Hospice.



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Understanding our audiences

- Challenge accepted. **Staff become communications advocates**
 - **Collaborative working** in the Communications Group. 30mins per week in everyone's diary to share patient stories, successes and news.
 - These staff/team and patient/family stories regularly **distributed to target audiences**; a newly refreshed Website, supporter newsletter, social channels, Webinars and local and national media
 - Less than one year on, Communications Team is thriving and produces **at least 4-5 stories** per month.
 - With added statistics and figures, these powerful stories become visually engaging Impact Reports with the **purpose to inform and influence**. New Hospice Strategy and Covid Impact documents distributed successfully to key SMPs and local Councillors etc
 - **Increased photography** of our staff with patients, families – building authenticity and trust.
 - People stories being told. **As is their wish.**



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Impact across local communities (and national press)

Gary was identified by an Allied Health Professional in the community. As a man in his forties, his profile is not one that people identify as a Hospice patient. By Gary sharing his positive Hospice and community experience, we highlight some of our

key messages:

1. younger people come into the Hospice for symptom treatment
2. people get to go home
3. our Hospice supports the whole person, "what's important to you"

Real life Impact: One local woman, also in her early forties was so inspired by Gary's story after continually resisting treatment, has now agreed to have symptom management at the Hospice = early palliative care

Snapshot Communication Results: Strathcarron's social channels reach and engagement have grown significantly over the 6-12months. Facebook stats over the past 90 days: Organic Reach increased 102.5% (118.7k people), Organic engagement increased 73.8% (17.6k likes/shares/comments)

- Increase of 21% new users on our refreshed website and Patient Services now in top 5 pages.
- Readers now spend 2.25mins reading our content. Significant improvement.
- 3 patient stories were featured in the national Daily Mail Good Health section.



strathcarronhospice

strathcarronhospice Gary arrived in the Hospice yesterday for pain management. He has bowel cancer and his collapsed vertebrae is causing him severe discomfort.

He will be in the In-Patient Unit for a few days, which unfortunately means that he will miss his beloved Falkirk FC play Montrose this afternoon.

"It's the first time in 25 years that I'll miss a home game!" said Gary, "but my friends will keep me updated via phone and text!"

I was pretty anxious about coming into the Hospice, but now I'm here I am so reassured. It's nothing like I had expected. I thought

