



BURRENDALE HOTEL NI'S FIRST SPA TO CATER FOR CANCER PATIENTS

The Burrendale in Newcastle has become Northern Ireland's first hotel to offer a range of spa treatments and therapies specifically tailored to those affected by cancer.

Cancer patients can now relax and unwind in the stunning surroundings of the four star resort, thanks to the Burrendale's newly qualified therapists who have recently completed a fully accredited training course through the Open College Network. The bespoke course, which is funded by local charity Friends of the Cancer centre, equips each therapist with the enhanced skills and qualifications needed to treat people who have had a diagnosis of cancer. The spa can now provide a range of complementary therapies, including massage, reflexology and aromatherapy, which are aimed at promoting relaxation and wellbeing.

Looking forward to providing the new service at the hotel, Fiona McCabe, Country Club and Spa Manager at the Burrendale Hotel, said:

“We are absolutely delighted to now be able to offer people with cancer the opportunity to enjoy the relaxation that comes with complementary therapy. In the past, like many other local spas, we've unfortunately have had to turn people away when our medical consultation showed that they have, or have had, cancer. This has understandably been extremely difficult for both the client and our staff.

“That’s why we took it upon ourselves to look for a way that we would never have to turn someone away again. As soon as we heard that there was accredited training available that would allow us to treat clients who have cancer, we immediately decided to put a number of therapists forward. The girls have thoroughly enjoyed the course and they feel privileged that they can now help someone who is going through something as stressful as cancer. I would like to thank Friends of the Cancer Centre for funding such a wonderful training programme.”

The accredited training course is part of the wider Complementary Therapy Outreach Programme, which has been developed by Friends of the Cancer Centre and the Belfast Trust. The aim of the programme is to ensure that local cancer patients and carers of those with a diagnosis of cancer, who previously would have had to travel to Belfast to avail of the Belfast Trust complementary therapy service, can now access treatments much closer to home and often within their own communities. The therapies on offer are aimed at helping people cope with the anxiety, stress and physical side effects that a cancer diagnosis and treatment can often bring.

Patsy McDaniel, Complementary Therapist Facilitator funded by Friends of the Cancer Centre, guided the therapists at the Burrendale through the “Enhanced Complementary Therapy skills for treating cancer patients” training programme. She said:

“This is a landmark move by the team at the Burrendale as no other local hotel spa currently offers this service for cancer patients. The impact that this will have on local cancer patients is immense. Many people will understandably feel very anxious and stressed and many will have physical symptoms such as pain, insomnia, fatigue and nausea. To be able to use complementary therapy to ease these symptoms will have a huge impact on their lives.

“The Burrendale has become a leader in this area and we now have a number of other hotels across Northern Ireland currently putting therapists through the training programme. This is an extremely positive move, as it means that people with cancer have greater access to complementary therapy right in the heart of their own community. Our aim is to continue with the expansion of our outreach programme so that all hotels have trained therapists who can treat cancer patients and help them through their cancer journey.”

Complementary therapy is used alongside cancer treatment to help patients deal with the physical, mental and emotional toll a cancer diagnosis can have. As well as offering patients

an often rare opportunity to relax, complementary therapy can help to reduce stress, tension and anxiety as well as improve sleep and quality of life.

Friends of the Cancer Centre, which has funded the Complementary Therapy Service Outreach Project, is Northern Ireland's leading charity working to support cancer patients, their families and their carers across Northern Ireland. The service in the Burrendale is part of the charity's bid to bring complementary therapy to people right across Northern Ireland.

Colleen Shaw, CEO of Friends of the Cancer Centre, said:

“It's a privilege to be able to fund such a worthwhile training course and I would like to thank and congratulate the staff and graduates at the Burrendale for taking such an important step in making complementary therapy much more accessible to those affected by cancer.

“Over the last number of years, in partnership with the Belfast Health Trust, we have been working hard to extend the fantastic complementary therapy services available in Belfast, so that people across Northern Ireland can benefit right in their own community. We would call upon all spas to look at what the Burrendale has achieved and ask them to get behind the training on offer for the benefit of their local community.”

