**Presentation from Chief Executive of Beaumond House Community Hospice for October Annual Public Meeting 2108**

What an amazing year it has been – it’s been a year of continuous quality improvement some of which we have already shared with you. So much has happened and yet the year seems to have gone by so very quick. I do wonder whether we could learn from that wonderful poem which goes something like

* **What is this world if full of care I have no time to stand and stare**

When people have a life limiting illness or are approaching the end of life, suddenly time takes on a new meaning both for the person themselves and for their family and friends. People often find themselves reflecting back on what they have done and what they haven’t done and perhaps would still like to do.

When I read about the experiences of people facing their mortality and indeed when people share their most precious inner world with us, they tell us that

* they **don’t want to die alone**,
* they **don’t want to die in pain**, and if they do want a choice of where they spend their last days which is unlikely to be **on a noisy hospital ward** where busy staff don’t have sufficient time to help them get to a peaceful place.

For me that’s what is so special about Beaumond House, we can help with all those things, each of us in different ways no matter what our role is. There are so many people to thank that it is always risky to single out any particular people but I do want to pay homage to the wonderful care team that we have who visit people at home, see people in day therapy or help people in our inpatient service.

Staff and volunteers work with their hands, and their heads but also their hearts – I don’t know what it takes to be able to sit with someone as they leave this world and truly be with them, their fears, their hopes and dreams, and still be compassionate but our care team do that and do it so well. They know there is only one chance to get it right for patients and they really do go the extra mile to make it as peaceful as possible for the patient and for their loved ones.

So, why am I saying that – well, 30 years ago, it wasn’t like that and a local GP was so disheartened with the lack of care and support to a patient and their family that he got together with a group of like minded people and resolved to ensure that never happened again for people in Newark and Southwell and other surrounding towns and villages. From their vision emerged Beaumond House and it gradually developed to offer the suite of care and support that it currently provides as a gift to the communities it serves.

Why do we need a hospice here? I think Julie and Louise have eloquently articulated that and if I could sum up it would be about ensuring people having a choice about what support and care they want, where they want it and how they wish that care to be delivered. For patients and their families, it is imperative there is something local. We regularly hear that Mansfield and Nottingham and Lincoln are too far away. The last point in defence of why Beaumond House and why here is that 95% of people who complete our survey said that they would highly recommend us to their family and friends and that is a statistic we are rightly proud of.

In looking forward, we want to continue providing those services free of charge locally. Would it matter if we didn’t, well take a look at these statistics and if for a moment we think about what the experiences of those people would be like if we weren’t here – for me that is resounding evidence to support our continuing to help when needed. And we are probably going to be needed even more in the future, new housing developments are being built all around us meaning that there are more people who may need to use our services.

So having heard the above, and the figures from Ian, what can we do? People seem to think that because Beaumond House is often in the paper and that people do wonderful things for us, that we don’t need their continued support. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our fundraising team do a fabulous job in working with people in the community who do terrific things to raise funds for us and local businesses continue to be supportive too. But and it’s a big but that we really need to get the message across about

We need approximately £700 thousand pounds year on year and as Joanna said last year, we unashamedly make that ask because it is not for us, its for the people and their families who experience life limiting illnesses and face their mortality. Yes, we will all have to do that one day, and I really hope that when we do that Beaumond House Community Hospice is still here to provide outstanding support not just next year or the year after but for the next 30 years and beyond . With your help we can leave a gift for the future. Thank you.