

Charity aims to transform palliative care for patients

by Andrew Liddle

A DUNDEE charity aiming to transform hospital care for the seriously ill and dying has been launched at the city chambers.

PATCH — Palliation and the Caring Hospital — is based in Dundee and is the first charity to support full-time specialist palliative care for patients.

It was launched at a reception hosted by Lord Provost Bob Duncan.

PATCH chairman Sir Michael Nairn explained that the charity was inspired by the innovative acute palliative care unit at Ninewells Hospital, which provides specialist palliative care support for patients and their families.

"This unit was established as a result of charitable donations from throughout Tayside and is now funded by NHS Tayside," he said.

"Palliative care is the prevention and relief of patient and family suffering and it is vitally important to provide the best possible specialist palliative care to those who need it.

"A recent study by Glasgow University and published in the journal Palliative Medicine found that, in Scotland, a large number of patients, nearly one in three, are within their last year of life.

"Yet, at the moment, many hospitals only have access to specialist palliative care from Monday to Friday, 9am until 5pm.

"We are committed to supporting hospitals deliver high-quality palliative care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by



From left: Depute Lord Provost Christina Roberts, Dr Pamela Levack, Sir Michael Nairn, Trudy McLeay, Professor Alfred Cuschieri, patron; Ian Barnard, Bob Duncan, Mary Mackenzie, Angus Provost Helen Oswald and Jim Pickett.

Picture: Alan Richardson.

funding specialist staff or services, dedicated beds or, as in Ninewells Hospital, a dedicated palliative care unit."

The reception was attended by PATCH's board of directors and their guests.

The lord provost said: "The city of Dundee leads the way in so many fields of medicine and it is wonderful news that we were now also leading the way in

ensuring people who are very ill receive the best possible palliative care."

Dr Deans Buchanan, consultant and lead clinician in palliative medicine, NHS Tayside said: "I am very pleased to support the launch of PATCH, which brings a vision of improving care for patients in hospital with incurable conditions or distressing symptoms, and for those at the end of life.

"There is a need to focus resources to meet this challenge and PATCH has a unique vision to do this.

"Through this vision, I am hopeful that this national charity will be able to help improve care at the point of need throughout Scottish hospitals," he concluded.

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University staff union votes for strike action over job losses

A SIGNIFICANT majority of members of a Dundee University staff union have voted in favour of industrial action over proposed staff cuts.

Some 69% of University and College Union (UCU)

members balloted said they are willing to take strike action over the planned 120 job losses.

The timing and nature of any action will now be decided at a UCU branch meeting.

Janice Aitken, Dundee UCU branch representative, said that the result was "a vote of no confidence in the way that Dundee University is managing the situation."

"We will hold a meeting

of the branch and ask our members what action they want to take and when," she added.

The union had previously said it had agreed to a voluntary severance scheme on the condition

that it did not target specific posts.

However, at the most recent meeting of the university court, senior management pushed ahead with proposals for a programme of targeted

job losses, the UCU has revealed.

In answer to a second question, 83.5% of balloted UCU members said that they would agree to take action short of a strike.



The boys with their certificates and battalion president Colonel JR Hensman with the Hubert Scott Trophy.

BB trophy back in home city

THE ANGUS and Dundee battalion of the Boys' Brigade were successful at the Scottish cross-country championships held in Motherwell.

At the battalion annual meeting, the boys were presented with individual trophies and certificates commemorating their triumph.

The junior team won their race, bringing the Scott Trophy back to Dundee and Angus.

It was gifted to the competition many years ago by Hubert Scott, a former Dundee battalion president.

Presentations were also made to retiring officials, secretary Gary Miller and treasurer Alex Black.

A warm welcome was extended to brigade honorary president John Neil, who gave an illustrated talk on his world ambassador work.

IN BRIEF

Archives group

The Friends of Dundee City Archives held their 25th annual meeting at City Square.

Office-bearers elected were Richard Cullen as chairman, Hilary Deans as secretary, Norman Watson as treasurer and Iain D McIntosh as editor.

MS inspires artist's work

A Dundee artist who used her multiple sclerosis to inspire her art raised more than £1,000 for charity.

Kirsty Stevens, 20, launched a collection of MS-inspired artwork and held a silent auction of donated works on World MS Day. Her efforts raised £1,060 for the MS Society Scotland.

Art group

Ladies of the Cedarlea Art Group in Dundee presented £300 to Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Recorder sounds

The Scottish Recorder Orchestra is giving a concert in Dundee West Church Hall on Sunday at 6pm.

The orchestra has about 45 members from all parts of Scotland in sections playing soprano, descant, treble, tenor, bass, great bass and contrabass recorders, making a full orchestral sound.

Dementia awareness

A series of dementia awareness sessions are taking place in Invergowrie starting today.

They will be run by staff from NHS Tayside's Perth and Kinross Healthy Communities Collaborative and Alzheimer Scotland.

The sessions will take place in Invergowrie Church Hall today from 10am to noon; Tuesday, June 17 from 12.45pm to 2.45pm; and Tuesday, June 24, from 6pm to 8pm.

Quartet in concert

A free lunchtime recital by the Erskine String Quartet will take place in Dundee Central Library tomorrow at 1.15pm.

The quartet comprises four of Scotland's leading professional string players.