

**Ashgate Hospice Press Release**

**3rd December 2021**

**From North Derbyshire to the North Pole: Festive fundraising challenge launches to support Ashgate Hospice patients this Christmas**

People from across North Derbyshire are being invited to collectively run, walk, cycle or swim the distance between Ashgate Hospice and the North Pole, to help the charity be there for the families who need its support most this Christmas time.

The mammoth fundraising challenge, called ‘Ashgate to the North Pole’, will see participants race more than 2,167 miles before Christmas Day.

Whether you're setting yourself a target of running a couple of miles a day or heading out on a weekly cycle across the Peaks, taking part in the challenge will help fund the charity’s care for patients and their families living with a life-limiting illness.

Those who sign up to the free virtual event can compete against friends, family and colleagues in the online league table.

Savannah Redhead, Events Fundraiser at Ashgate Hospice, said: “We’re delighted to be able to launch our brand-new virtual Ashgate to the North Pole event!

“We're inviting you to join us on our collective trip to the North Pole so we can bring some festive cheer to our patients both at the hospice and in the community.

“Whether you’re an avid runner or prefer to take the bike out for a Sunday cycle, your efforts will mean so much to us and the families who need us.

“We rely on the generosity of our community to raise millions of pounds each year to help fund our specialist care. And at Christmas time that means helping our patients and their families to create precious memories together.

“So, what are you waiting for? Come and help us achieve our collective challenge of reaching 2,167 miles over the festive period – we know we can reach the goal with your support!”

Everyone who raises £50 in sponsorship or more will receive a festive treat that will be available to collect from the hospice.

Ashgate is hoping that fundraisers who take part will help fund a special gift on its Christmas list to Santa this year:

* £6 could pay for a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings for a patient.
* £15 could pay for a counselling or creative therapy session, to help guide a bereaved person through the darkest of times
* £18 could pay for a one-hour visit from a Community Nurse in a patient’s home over the festive period.

Participants can choose to use the mobile phone app Strava to track their activity or manually input their miles themselves – it’s entirely up to each individual.

Taking part in Ashgate to the North Pole will help families like Elaine Clarke’s, whose mum, Sheila Clarke, received Day Services support before spending her final days on the hospice’s Inpatient Unit.

Sheila died in October 2015, aged 78, after being diagnosed with vulval cancer the year before.

Elaine said: “I had a really hard time accepting my mum’s diagnosis but was able to receive support from Ashgate Hospice, who helped me through the whole experience tremendously.

“The care my mum had really was second-to-none; she was so well looked after, and I don’t know what we would have done without the support of the team at Ashgate.

“I’ll never forget my mum made a special friend with a lady in the next room to her.

“Over the weeks the friendship became so special between them both that the staff moved them out of the rooms and into a ward area where their beds could be placed side-by-side.

“That’s just one example of how everyone at Ashgate goes above and beyond for each and every family it cares for.”

To find out more about the Ashgate to the North Pole fundraising challenge and how you can take part go to [www.ashgatehospice.org.uk/events.](http://www.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk/events)

Alternatively, you can contact Ashgate’s Fundraising Team by calling 01246 567250 or by emailing [events@ashgatehospice.org.uk](mailto:events@ashgatehospice.org.uk).

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**Notes for editors:**

1. Ashgate Hospice, based in Chesterfield, provides specialist palliative and end of life care including a wide range of community-based care and support services for people with a life-limiting illness and their families across North Derbyshire and the High Peak and Dales. [www.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk](http://www.ashgatehospicecare.org.uk/)