

**Ashgate Hospice Press Release**

**8th July 2022**

**“I’m not afraid of death or dying anymore”: Volunteering at Ashgate Hospice helps cancer patient Sam cope with diagnosis**

Being a volunteer receptionist at Ashgate Hospice has helped Sam Nicklin – who is receiving cancer treatment – feel much more content with her diagnosis.

The 48-year-old, from Sheffield, first encountered the North Derbyshire hospice 15 years ago when she visited family friend, Roger Clitheroe, who was receiving care.

Roger was being cared for on Ashgate’s “beautiful” Inpatient Unit in Old Brampton, Chesterfield at the end of his life

To give something back, Sam started volunteering a year ago and enjoys welcoming guests and dealing with phone calls on the hospice’s Inpatient Unit and Main Reception.

Sam, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in June 2009, is currently taking hormone drugs and attends three monthly MRI scans but remains positive about her future.

“I am a cancer patient myself and understand how important it is for families to be looked after in a warm and caring environment,” said Sam, who has worked in hospitality all her life.

“A friend of our family, Roger Clitheroe, was cared for at Ashgate and when I came to visit him, I thought it was such a beautiful I place.

“I knew wanted to give something back to this amazing place not only for Roger, but in recognition of all the amazing care I have received throughout my illness.”

As a receptionist, Sam is the first point of contact for many patients, families and professionals who visit Ashgate.

She has also helped implement the hospice’s Covid guidelines and procedures over the past year, ensuring everyone who visits the hospice – whether for work or to receive care – is as safe as they can be.

Sam says she feels “proud” to be able to represent the charity, which cares for families not only on its Inpatient Unit but across the North Derbyshire community too.

She added: “I absolutely love volunteering at Ashgate. The hospice is very special – everyone makes it the nicest environment possible for the families who come here and the nurses are angels.

“It’s a place where we all come together ensure the patients are as comfortable as they can be in the last days of life.

“The hospice has made me feel much better about my own health situation too and I would say I am not afraid of dying or death anymore.

“I feel proud that I have been able to volunteer and to provide support to the nurses, doctors, healthcare assistants and other professionals as and when I can.”

Sam is urging other people with spare time to join Ashgate Hospice as a volunteer. To find out more about volunteering at the charity call 01246 568801 or go to [ashgatehospice.org.uk/volunteering](http://ashgatehospice.org.uk/volunteering)

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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.ashgatehospice.org.uk