

# CORPORATE HEALTH BULLETIN



THE **PRINCESS GRACE** HOSPITAL

The Wellington Hospital

London Bridge Hospital

THE **LISTER** HOSPITAL  
chelsea

The Portland Hospital  
for Women and Children

THE HARLEY STREET CLINIC

Special Issue:

## Breast Cancer Awareness Month



This issue coincides with Breast Cancer Awareness Month and is mostly dedicated to providing information about the services we provide for London employers and their employees. By combining the resource and expertise of our six London hospitals and our US parent company, we have been able to create the largest cancer network outside the NHS, seeing 5,000 women every year with symptoms. Our patients can access the most advanced treatments, at a time and a place to suit them, delivered by consultants from the UK's top teaching hospitals.

We are also diverting our investment into the development of new cures for breast cancer as well as working to support NHS research programmes. Finally, I am delighted that we are supporting the important work of cancer charities with fundraising activities.



John Kausch,  
CEO,  
HCA International



## City workers choose same day clinics

300,000 women visit their GP every year with a breast lump.

Thankfully, 9 times out of 10 there is nothing to worry about, but waiting for a result often causes considerable stress in the meantime. It can also involve several visits to hospital.

With this in mind, HCA has set up specialist consultant-led breast care centres dedicated to providing rapid diagnosis and support in London's West End and the City.

The London Bridge Hospital opened its One Visit Breast Centre in January 2003 and

reports overwhelming response, particularly from women working in the City. Anything suspicious can usually be investigated on the same day and if further treatment is necessary, the patient can be offered immediate support and advice for ongoing treatment.

*“My GP said I would have to wait 2 weeks, it was very stressful, I couldn't think about anything else...”*

*I contacted the One Stop Clinic and saw them the following evening.  
Karen, 43, legal secretary*



### The Kylie Factor

*“There has been an increase in younger women contacting us since Kylie Minogue was diagnosed. But we take a responsible approach to screening and only investigate if we feel it necessary.”*

*Sue Milner, Superintendent of the Comprehensive Breast Care Centre at The Princess Grace Hospital*

▶ Clinics are held weekdays and evenings. Call HCA Connect on 020 7079 4344

**FIRST** in the private sector installed at  
**THE PRINCESS GRACE HOSPITAL**

## Digital screening enables breast cancer detection in under 50's

A significant advance in the detection and monitoring of breast abnormalities in women has been the introduction of digital mammography.

Mammograms or 'X' rays are the established method of detecting changes in breast tissue, but unlike traditional analogue systems, digital mammography provides an immediate and more detailed image. Furthermore, the resolution of digital mammography provides a more accurate view of breast tissue in the under 50's – which tends to be more dense than in older women.

Digital imaging is available to all patients of HCA hospitals. It is recognised by private health insurers and can also be purchased directly as part of an employee screening programme.



### Screening saves lives

“Numerous randomised controlled trials demonstrate conclusively that Breast Cancer screening using mammography reduces a woman's chance of dying of breast cancer by approximately 40%.

Digital mammography offers a superb new technology for screening and has been demonstrated to give superior results than conventional mammography.”

Dr Nick Perry, Consultant Radiologist and Clinical Director of the Comprehensive Breast Care Centre at The Princess Grace Hospital

### To find out more about breast cancer screening and clinics for your workforce

Please join us at one of our London corporate briefings in October

email: [hca@wallacehcl.com](mailto:hca@wallacehcl.com)



## Employers take active role in breast cancer prevention

Approximately 1 in 9 women in the UK will get breast cancer sometime during their life – one quarter of them before the age of 50. Cancer is also increasing amongst younger women, mainly due to environmental factors. At the same time, women are becoming more breast aware and more women than ever are visiting their GP with suspected lumps.

This has obvious consequences to employers. The extent of cover afforded by private

medical insurance is often unclear. Similarly, the existing agreements may not give the employee access to the best and most convenient treatments; or often the employee or their GP may not know where to find them.

Increasingly, employers are offering access to a breast clinic but others, such as Marks & Spencer, are providing screening programmes for their entire female workforce.

### Natural stress relief

Complimentary therapies, such as aromatherapy and reflexology are now widely recognised as an important part of the treatment of diseases such as cancer. At the Harley Street Clinic, patients are offered five sessions as part of their treatment programme and these are often given during chemotherapy sessions.



### New treatment reduces absenteeism

15% of women of childbearing age are affected by endometriosis, a chronic condition causing frequent and severe pelvic pain. Consultants at The Portland Hospital have pioneered a new form of endoscopic treatment that is minimally invasive and patients can look forward to a full and fast recovery from symptoms. For further details call our Patient Coordinator on 020 7390 8269.



# Breast Screening at work



Marks and Spencer sends most of its London based employees from the age of 40 upwards for breast screening at the Princess Grace's breast diagnostic centre. Currently around 28,000 employees from the M&S stores across the country are screened every two years. Should breast cancer be detected, it is therefore caught in the very early stages, massively increasing the chances of a quick and full recovery.

Janet Pain, the breast screening administrator of Marks and Spencer comments,

'The Princess Grace has always given an excellent service, not only with the thoroughness of the screening but also if any follow up is needed, they are extremely caring and sensitive during this anxious time.'

For details of our Corporate Screening Packages contact Sue Smith, Chief Executive on 020 7486 1234



## -The Future-

Thousands will live and work with cancer



Karol Sikora, Professor of Cancer Medicine and Advisor on Cancer to HCA International

Sadly, due to factors environmental and other, cancers such as breast cancer will increase before we find a cure. So, efforts in the meantime are equally focused on improving patient outcomes.

Better diagnostics and treatment will extend the quantity and quality of life and many patients will quite literally 'live and work with cancer'. They will be better informed and take a central role in their treatment and care plans. The information they receive will be based on genetic screening and predictions of exactly how and when their cancer will spread. They can choose when, where or how their treatment will happen without compromising the outcome. The treatment they receive will not only be close to home, but will 'feel' like home with a range of leisure facilities.

Already, HCA is looking at models for these centres, based on similar centres run by our parent company in the US, and talking to the NHS about joint ventures.



## Your search stops here

A recent survey showed that following diagnosis, more than 60% of people turn to the internet for more information. However, a search on Google turns up nearly 60 million websites offering information about Breast Cancer.

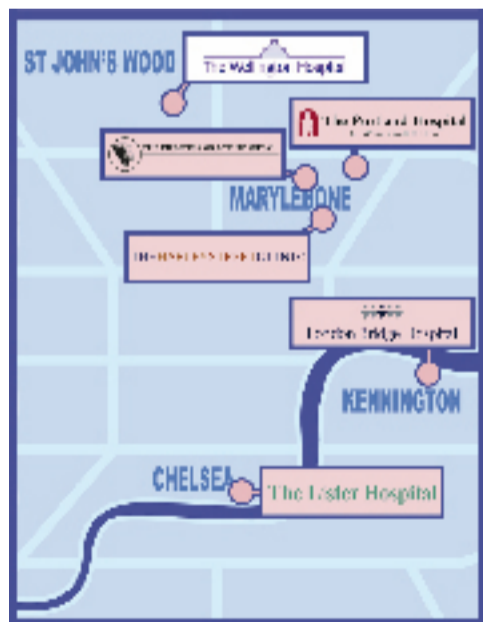
HCA hospitals have dedicated information libraries, staffed by breast care nurses, covering everything from clinical papers to complimentary therapies. All are 'vetted' by our Consultant Advisors.

In the meantime, our consultants do recommend the following web-sites:

- [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org)
- [www.cancerbacup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk)
- [www.breakthrough.org.uk](http://www.breakthrough.org.uk)
- [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)
- [www.londoncancergroup.com](http://www.londoncancergroup.com)

or contact the Harley Street Clinic Patient Information Centre at [karen.north@hcahealthcare.co.uk](mailto:karen.north@hcahealthcare.co.uk)

## HCA London Breast Units



Patients at any of our six hospitals in London have access to our breast cancer care services. Diagnostics and screening clinics are based at the hospitals highlighted in pink.

## Real Life Story

**Increasingly employees with cancer wish to continue working and treatments now enable them to take the minimum time off work. Here is one employee and her employer's experience of working through her cancer treatment.**



Nick Tuck is Care Director at Independent Age, a national Charity helping the elderly to live independently. Joann Bending is Administrator at the charity's Pines Residential Home in Hove.

### The employee's side of the story

When I was diagnosed with breast cancer at 39 I was full of despair. Then when I went to see Jerry Gilmore, my breast surgeon, and he said, 'Right Joann, let's sort this out', I suddenly felt 'It's going to be okay'. A week later I had a double mastectomy and reconstruction at The Princess Grace Hospital, but the nurses helped me through it – they were so sensitive and knew so much. It was as though they had all the time in the world, just for me.

My colleagues rely on me at work, but I felt no pressure to come back. After a while though they sensed I was a bit 'low' and called to say they needed me and sent a cab to collect me. It was what I needed to get back into work again.

When my chemotherapy began I could choose which day I had the treatment. I chose Friday so I had the weekend to recover. They also flushed the chemo drugs out of my system overnight so the recovery was much faster and I could return to work by Tuesday.

When you get cancer, you feel very vulnerable at work and feel that people are 'writing you off.'

At the time, our organisation was going through some major changes and my managers made sure I was involved in all the planning meetings. That was significant, I felt, 'my opinion about what we'll be doing in five years time is still worth something.'

Funnily enough, I found losing my hair and wearing a wig one of the hardest things. These are the physical signs that let everyone know you have cancer. I went on a management training day and was terrified about facing everyone, but my boss, Nick, had clearly briefed them well because no one said a thing!

I work in an organisation that is totally geared to caring for people. But it was a real eye opener for me to become ill myself and to see how easily that care could be switched to me. The support from work was hugely important to my recovery, but I wonder if companies in other industry sectors can provide that level of care so easily to their employees.

### The employer's side of the story

The most important role of an employer is to be supportive.

You may think that's a role for family and friends, but my experience is that someone in this situation needs the security of knowing that their employer really values and cares about them and believes that they can still do their job. At a practical level this entails making sure that their workload is relieved, which in Joann's case wasn't too easy due to the nature of her job; and ensuring that our policies on sickness and benefits are as effective as possible. On a psychological level, it means taking on board the seriousness of the condition and offering the fullest support possible. I really believe that in these instances somebody senior in the organisation should take on this supportive role.

I went to see Joann as soon as I found out about her cancer. I said, 'This is just a blip, it's curable, you can get over it and we'll help you'. I told her not to worry about work, but she is very conscientious so I knew I had to support her by helping her to continue to do it.

In the event, she took far less time off work than I had expected and although I did worry about her coming back too soon, I knew how therapeutic it was for her. She is very positive and brave and such a special person – I was just glad we could do something to help her through it.

## Leading specialists just a phone call away

A typical GP visit allows 8 minutes. If the patient has private health insurance, or requests a private referral, there isn't sufficient time for the GP to locate the best and appropriate specialist. Frequently patients are offered a referral letter and then have to search for their own specialist.

HCA-Connect, the central information and appointment service for the six HCA hospitals provides GP's and patients names of relevant specialists nearest to you with clinic times and will also make the appointment for you if you require. **Please call us if you would like these contact cards for your employees**

