

Sue Ryder Care - Manorlands hospice case study - The umbrella of care



Chris Gibson was only 27 years of age, when in May 2006, he was diagnosed as having a brain tumour. Sadly it was inoperable and treatment was not possible. Determined to put his Masters Degree in internet technology to good use he continued working as a trainee computer analyst and lived life as

normal as possible, including a holiday in Japan.

By July 2007 Chris was unable to continue and had to leave his employment, returning home to live with mum and dad, Sue and Richard. In August, Chris's health took a sudden turn for the worse when he suffered a seizure while on holiday at Whitby. Further medical investigations confirmed that Chris was very ill, he had a rare form of cancer and the prognosis was bleak.

It was at this time that Sue, his mother, asked if anything could be found to give Chris "A sense of purpose, something to focus on." Fortunately the nurse Sue was talking to knew of the facilities and support available at the local Sue Ryder Care hospice, Manorlands.

Thankfully for both Chris and Sue Ryder Care Chris was introduced to the day therapy unit where it was quickly realized that he could possibly help the fundraising team, using his IT skills. It was not long before Chris was attending Manorlands day therapy unit on a Thursday, as a patient and Monday as a volunteer in the fundraising section. "It made such a difference to him" continued Sue "It was wonderful to hear him say, on a Sunday evening, "Work again tomorrow mum".

Although this arrangement helped Chris and his parents, who acknowledge their son "Had a purpose in life again", it also helped Manorlands because Chris created the web site for the Mascot Gold Cup Race.

Sue and Richard talk with great affection of the benefits the whole family received from Sue Ryder Care. Sue describes it as “An umbrella of care” She explains “Even now when I go to the hospice I am still greeted with a cuddle and when Chris was there I would here the words “Come on lets have a talk”. Richard and Sue agree “It is not only the medical care that makes the place special, but the advice and counselling, the whole package, all wrapped up in warmth and love.” Sue is keen to stress “It is incredible to think Chris was involved with Manorlands for only about four months and yet we always felt we were among friends, in fact we still do.”

Towards the end of Chris’s life he chose to go Sue Ryder Care Manorlands as an in-patient. “His face just lit up when he found out there was a place for him” explains Sue. Both mum and dad agree “It was the right decision. The level of care given to Chris was unbelievable and we were helped so much to understand what was happening and what to expect. At every stage the doctors and nurses kept us informed. In addition his friends and relatives could visit at any time and were all made to feel so welcome.”

Finally, on 31 March 2008, Sue and Richard received an early morning phone call suggesting they go to the hospice quickly. Again Sue explains “We arrived about 5am and there was a nurse at Chris’s bedside, holding his hand. His brother and sister-in-law arrived and about 7.30am, we were offered tea and toast for breakfast, in Chris’s room. It was just like a family breakfast, we were all together. About 8.30am Chris gave a lovely sigh, almost one of contentment and finally left us. It is no exaggeration to say that his ending was so beautiful.” The whole family agree that everyone at Sue Ryder Care Manorlands contributed significantly to Chris’s life and peaceful ending.

It’s your donations that enable us to provide such special care – whether it be for four weeks, four months or four years – we couldn’t do it without you. Thank you for your continued support.

To offer your support to Manorlands hospice [visit their website](#), click on the donate tab and mention Manorlands in the “What prompted you to give today?” box.