

WELSH CANCER CHARITY PROVES SINGING IS GOOD FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Tenovus will be representing Wales, as the only Welsh based cancer charity, at this year's National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) conference to be held in Liverpool from the 7 -10 November. Tenovus will be presenting ground breaking research on the positive impact that singing has on cancer patients alongside the best in British and International research at the UK's largest cancer conference.

Tenovus Sing for Life choir was established as a research project to measure the health and psychosocial benefits of singing for cancer patients and has since developed into a strong support network for its members who meet on a weekly basis. This is one of many projects funded by Tenovus through its £1 million commitment to research. The 78 strong choir will be travelling from the South Wales valleys to Liverpool to perform at the opening of the NCRI conference, a huge honor for its members.

Dr Ian Lewis, Head of Research for Tenovus said,

"At Tenovus we are always looking for new and innovative ways to support people and families affected by cancer and the Tenovus Sing for Life Choir is a great example of this.

Tenovus' motivation for the choir was to give those who have been affected by cancer a space to come together in a fun, positive and energetic way and focus on something other than their cancer. Sing for Life is open to anyone who has experienced cancer; its members include family, carers and friends as well as cancer patients.

A diagnosis of cancer can bring with it a wide range of physical, practical and emotional issues, not only on the person diagnosed, but also for their friends and family. These issues don't always end when that person's treatment ends, sometimes the consequences of the disease can make it difficult for people to move on with their lives.

The choir has become something very special for all those involved and the results of the evaluation by Cardiff University reflect this."

Researchers at the School of Healthcare Studies at Cardiff University measured a range of physical and psychological factors to see how taking part in the choir affected the quality of life of the participants.

The results show remarkable improvements in members' vitality, social function and mental health as well as a reduction in bodily pain. There were also indications that the choir alleviated anxiety and depression in members who reported these symptoms before the choir started.

Nichola Gale, part of the research team at Cardiff University who carried out the evaluation said;

"This has been an amazing opportunity for me to be involved in undertaking research which really makes a difference to people who have had cancer and their supporters. It has been fascinating to gain an insight into the choir and its effect on patients I am pleased to be involved in this innovative project which will hopefully now be extended to sites across Wales."

Choir member, Jane Dines is one of the many patients that has benefitted from the choir since being diagnosed with cancer.

Jane said,

"I first felt that getting ready and actually doing something new was giving me a sense of embracing life again.

It has given all of us the opportunity, not just to sing and socialise but to also build new, positive self images. Being able to give to others and to contribute positively to life again means that I am more confident of my future and my ability to cope with life's testing times.

The Sing for Life choir has accelerated my journey, providing new horizons and life enhancement as I rationalise my experiences and emotions."

Dr Jane Cope, Director of the NCRI said:

"We are delighted that the Sing for Life choir have agreed to perform at the public event at this year's NCRI Conference. Many cancer patients find that their well-being is improved by involvement in the arts in some way. It is great to be able to demonstrate this is in a tangible way to an audience of professionals and public."

The choir is run in partnership with the motivation and team building company Sing and Inspire.

Andrea Beardshaw, co-founder and Managing Director of Sing and Inspire added:

"This has been a fantastically uplifting and positive experience for everyone involved. It's been incredible to see how some choir members, who started off at such a low point, have blossomed, grown stronger and performed in front of a live audience. They are an inspirational group of people and a real testament to the power of singing."

ENDS

For media enquiries please contact Emma Rigby in the NCRI press office on 020 3469 8318 or, out-of-hours, the duty press officer on 07050 264 059

Notes to editors:

The NCRI conference will be held at the BT Convention Centre, Liverpool. For more information please visit <http://www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference/>

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Tenovus is the official charity partner of Ryder Cup Wales 2010 Limited.

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