From Karen. March 24th 2020

Dear Friends

I’m not sure how to start this letter, but really to say I hope you are keeping well and safe, working in whatever capacity your organisation is allowing during these difficult times. I’ve become aware from people’s messages that there is huge variety of practices going on and each hospice is finding its own way through. There are a number of matters to comment on, so here goes.

**Conference.**

It’s with a heavy heart that the decision was made to cancel this year’s conference in May. We had a great line up of speakers and workshops presenting on the theme of communication, an essential tool for our box. We felt, however, that this was a necessary step to take and Margery Collin has been working hard to sort out repayments. The good news is that we have booked in for next year provisionally on 17th-19th May. This depends on whether or not the joint conference with CHCC and MHA goes ahead. If it does we still hope to use the time to offer a retreat event of some kind.

**Regional Groups**

My hope is that you are in contact with each other in your regional group and sharing ideas and resources for your hospice website. Our group is setting up a WhatsApp group to keep in touch and sharing ideas for patients and staff to use. Hopefully this is happening where you are, and in the true spirit of AHPCC, that there is willingness to share with the wider community. Please send resources to editor@ahppc.org.uk.

**Keeping safe**

My understanding is that Chaplains are part of the clinical team and therefore can be called on to administer spiritual and religious care to patients as needed. Most of us are now working from home and in contact with our teams by phone and email. The position at our hospice is that we can be called in to the unit if required and will be provided with necessary PPE. Please see the guidance prepared by UKBHC for further information.

**Resources**

Please keep looking at the resources page as people send in useful material to share. I particularly want to draw you attention to the daily posting by Tom Gordon who was going to be our conference chaplain this year. Tom is a great writer and story teller, generously sharing his wisdom with us to use as we wish. I’ve also asked Bob Whorton to think about setting up a virtual labyrinth walk. I’ve to design an idea supported by a picture that will go to the website but I’m sure there’s something out there in the ether of technology.

If anything good is coming from this, it’s that our use of technology is developing… but it’s making me awfully stressed, Luddite that I am.

So my friends, please keep in touch with me and with the executive team, with each other and with your local colleagues. Lots of well-known phrases are being bandied about but perhaps one to share is ‘this too will pass’.

Keep safe and well, very best wishes, Karen