



The Wills Family Foundation supporting Cancer Help (Preston) Ltd

The impact of the Wills Family Foundation on Vine House, a local cancer support centre, and a family who accessed our services.

We had the pleasure of meeting Steve Wills through a conversation with a colleague, Laura Stephenson, at the Rosemere Cancer Foundation. Steve wanted to develop relationships with organisations that could identify local people affected by cancer who would benefit from some support. This was not necessarily about financial support but about helping provide equipment that might make things easier at home, or arranging for a special event that a family could be involved in.

For us, as a local independent cancer support Charity we were delighted to be approached. The Foundation's donation meant that we were able to re-furbish one of our existing rooms and create a second small counselling room. This in turn has had the added benefit that all of our therapy services can now take place upstairs away from the distractions and noise of the reception area and our crafting and meeting rooms.

We have received really positive feedback from the teams using the new spaces as the rooms are much improved and more appropriate to provide clinical services and treatments. Our own Therapy team is very pleased with the small counselling room which has a relaxed and comfortable feel. Please see the photos – complete with a bunch of very happy Therapists.

We were also privileged to be able to suggest a family who would benefit from some of the support that the Foundation could offer to help them create some special memories at an incredibly difficult time.

The patient had been ill for some time and her condition was worsening. Her husband and children were obviously finding things difficult and her 10 year old son in particular, was struggling. Through Steve's business connections he was able to arrange a special event for the father and son. They attended a fundraising dinner for the class of '92. For many non-football followers, this probably doesn't mean very much but in fact it is one of the most successful and famous line-ups of Manchester United players. They were looked after by Phil Neville for the night which meant that the two of them have some fantastic memories (and photographs) of the day.

Unfortunately the mum continued to deteriorate, and was accessing services at St Catherine's Hospice, but was able to come to Vine House with her younger children and do some important memory box work which will be important for the children to look back on as they get older. Her children have ongoing bereavement support through a schools project, facilitated by the children's bereavement service at CancerHelp.

Often there are difficulties with Charities working together but in this instance four separate charities came together to help a family at a very difficult time in their lives, all of which was possible only because of the Wills Family Foundation.

Jeanette Smalley
General Manager, Cancer Help (Preston) Ltd
March 2015