

# CASE STUDY

## PRINCESS ALICE HOSPICE

### About Princess Alice Hospice:

- One of the largest hospices in the UK
- Hospice aims to improve quality of life and well-being of people with a life-limiting or terminal illness
- Services include: in-patient care, large range of therapies, day services, community care, therapeutic care, social work, chaplaincy and bereavement care, education and research
- Catchment of 1.2 million people
- Approximately 800 patients supported in the community
- In patient unit for up to 24 patients with complex care issues
- Approximately 500 staff (including part time) and 1,200 volunteers
- Runs a comprehensive programme of education and training programme
- Income generated mainly by support from the community
- 46 shops developed by the Princess Alice Hospice retail team
- Highly regarded hospice, receiving 'Outstanding' in all five domains of the CQC inspection (2016)
- Established 32 years ago and based in Esher, Surrey: [www.pah.org.uk](http://www.pah.org.uk)

### What was the business challenge?

The Princess Alice Hospice has two charitable aims; patient care and education. In 2011, senior clinicians started to provide facilitated Advanced Communication Skills Training as part of the national 'Connected' training programme. It was at this point that senior management realised that there was no training offer to more junior and non-clinical members of staff and volunteers.



### Why was SAGE & THYME training the solution?

One of the trainers (Gill Thomas) working with the Hospice heard about SAGE & THYME from a nurse at the Royal Free Hospital - she attended a workshop in London, and then arranged a meeting with the lead developer of the training (Mike Connolly) and other organisations in the area.

### Why the Hospice chose SAGE & THYME:

- Had a clear link to the advanced communication skills training programme (as the Maguire Team from The Christie NHS Foundation Trust were involved in the development of the train-the-trainers course);
- User-friendly
- Evidence-based
- Provided training suitable for the rest of the workforce.

## How was the training adopted?

As the Hospice was expanding its educational offering to organisations and individuals in the area, and communication skills training was high priority. The funding to adopt SAGE & THYME (e.g. train up staff as SAGE & THYME facilitators, purchase a licence and packs) came from the general education budget with support from the Senior Management Team.

To get buy-in across the organisation, staff from different departments (e.g. therapy, medicine, community, education) were trained as SAGE & THYME facilitators. The Hospice made the training more cost-effective by hosting a SATFAC course locally, where staff from other organisations were also invited to take part in the training and share the cost.

A SAGE & THYME network licence was obtained to allow the Hospice to deliver the training to local collaborating organisations, as well as to its own staff and volunteers. The Hospice currently runs at least 10 SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshops per year (with 8 facilitators including some shared with other organisations). The training is attended by clinical and non-clinical staff, volunteers, retail workers, social care staff and drivers. Staff and volunteers receive SAGE and THYME training without charge as part of their development opportunities. Other individuals from external organisations pay for a place. The Hospice is in the process of making the SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshop mandatory for all staff.

## What are the benefits of the training?

- Gill Thomas, Lecturer and SAGE & THYME facilitator says "It has had a huge impact on lots of different groups of staff and volunteers."
- Junior clinical staff like the structure the SAGE & THYME model provides to a conversation.
- The clinical administration team, who receive all calls for the Hospice, often speak to highly distressed people and they offer SAGE & THYME aid memoire card by the phone.
- Volunteers who run the on-site coffee-shop, the charity shops and the drivers who collect donations, all come into contact with people (often bereaved) in a distressed state. The SAGE & THYME training has been invaluable to them all.
- Jane Berg, Deputy Director- Skills Knowledge and Research and SAGE & THYME facilitator says "To use an analogy, teaching SAGE & THYME is like teaching first-aid for people who are upset."

# TIPS

## What tips do you have for others wishing to run the SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshop?

1. Depending on the size of your organisation, consider collaborating with others to run the training.
2. Understand the time commitment required for staff to run one workshop per month.
3. Target influential people and get them to attend the workshop - they will then publicise the workshop for you.
4. Consider the logistics of running the workshop in terms of: rooms for training, administration, sending reminders to delegates, and ordering packs.
5. Create a box with all the materials needed to run the workshop, which trainers can pick up at the start of the day.



## About SAGE & THYME

The SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshop was created by staff and a patient at University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust, to teach all staff how to listen and respond to patients/clients or carers who are distressed or concerned. It places published research evidence about effective communication skills within a memorable structure for clinical practice.

To discuss how SAGE & THYME could benefit your organisation, please ring Rachael/Mandy on **0161 291 4210** or email [sageandthyme@uhsm.nhs.uk](mailto:sageandthyme@uhsm.nhs.uk).

Web site: [www.sageandthymetraining.org.uk](http://www.sageandthymetraining.org.uk)