



Dear Supporter

**Our patients urgently need specialist chairs to help prevent them getting pressure ulcers and let them do the things they love. In comfort.**

**Please can you help?**

My name is Emma, and I'm a Sister here on the Inpatient unit. Together with my team, I'm dedicated to caring for our patients, we make sure that everyone who stays with us receives excellent care and can make the most of every moment, surrounded by those they love.

I'm part of a great team here. Every day when I come to work, I feel that it's a real privilege to give support and comfort to our patients. I've been a nurse for nine years, and the most rewarding part of my job involves helping patients to live their lives to the full in the time they have left; making lasting and precious memories with their family.

Everyone here is so proud of the care we give, and I'd like to thank you for making that possible – it really is only with the kind support of our community that we can continue giving care. So, on behalf of colleagues, volunteers and patients, thank you so much!

One of most important parts of my job is helping patients to feel comfortable. But right now, that's a challenge – let me tell you why.

Most of the patients who stay with us are at high risk of pressure ulcers, as they are too weak to move. Pressure ulcers can develop very quickly with the potential - in extreme cases - to lead to severe complications, such as infection and sepsis.

Sitting in a regular chair also leads to a risk of oedema developing. Oedema is a build-up of fluid which creates swelling. Without proper support this can occur in a patient's legs resulting in a lot of pain and not being able to move. We have some reclining chairs, but they don't relieve pressure or provide appropriate support for our patients.

*continued overleaf*



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So, myself and my team here have decided to find a way to provide 17 new, high quality reclining chairs for our patients.

The chairs are designed specifically for patients like ours. They are lightweight, they tilt back so patients can adjust them to exactly the right position and the leg rest rises, providing adequate support. The chairs also tilt forward, helping people who are very weak to stand up so that they can go to the bathroom or get into bed, with more ease.

Crucially, they also relieve pressure on the body, meaning that the chance of developing pressure ulcers is much lower.

The chairs also mean that patients can join in more with what's going on around them, whether that's having dinner with their family, playing a game of cards or doing a crossword.

But because they are so highly specialised, they are not cheap. Each chair costs £2,681, and we simply can't buy them without your help. These chairs will give tremendous comfort to people suffering from lifelimiting illnesses. We estimate that 3,200 patients will use them in the next eight years alone.

Of course, if you would like to buy a chair outright, we'd be incredibly grateful, but I'm writing to ask if you would be part of a group who contributes to the full cost. You see, if we all group together, we can do it; For example, if 80 supporters just like you each gave £33.51, it would be enough to buy a chair.

Any contribution you can make to our appeal will make a huge difference to patients like Susie, who is being cared for after being diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Susie spends the majority of her time in a chair, and Leon, her 17-year-old son, has written a letter to tell you a bit about what the care and comfort we provide means to them, which I have enclosed.

Lying in bed when everyone around you is sitting or standing feels strange, doesn't it? It is hard to eat dinner or have a drink when in bed. Of course, most of us take it for granted that we can get up easily to eat or drink, but that's not always the case for people staying with us.

By helping patients to sit comfortably with family, you will make a huge difference to their wellbeing and quality of life. Your support today will mean that the little things most of us take for granted will be possible for those who are unwell.

These chairs mean that parents and grandparents will be able to enjoy sitting comfortably with children on their laps, they mean that patients are at eye-level with their visitors and can really feel part of what's going on. By joining in with our appeal and sending a gift, you'll be bringing a smile to the faces of our wonderful patients and their loved ones.

Ultimately, these chairs are much more than a piece of furniture. They mean that patients will be able to sit up and draw, read a magazine or spend time with their family in comfort... all the little things that make life worth living.

With my heartfelt thanks,



Sister Emma Fitzpatrick-Burke  
Thames Hospice

