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Support group gains momentum

Continuing to celebrate the short and very full life of their ten year old daughter Frances who sadly lost her battle against a malignant brain tumour at the end of last year, Rosemary and John Wormington are seeing the Worcestershire Brain Tumour Support Group (WBTSG), inspired by Frances, flourish and begin to gain momentum.

Said Rosemary: "When you're told that someone you love has a brain tumour all sorts of feelings and thoughts rush through your head. Everyone tries to be helpful and supportive, but most of the time you can't take it all in. You need time and a place and people to turn to when you are ready, which is why John and I set up the WBTSG as at the time Frances was diagnosed, our nearest support group was Bristol."

Working with a number of brain tumour charities including the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust and Hammer Out, WBTSG is hoping to raise the profile of their Worcestershire based support group and publicise the inadequacies of funding for research for brain tumours sufferers and the lack of progress this country has made compared to other EU countries.

"There is nothing quite like talking to other people, face to face, people who have been through what you are going through." said Rosemary. "Our neuro-oncology nurses from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham and the Walsgrave in Coventry provide us with support and deliver a vital clinical link as currently there are no neurosurgeries operating throughout the whole of Worcestershire, so patients at this time have to travel out of the area to gain specialist support and advice."

An area they are actively progressing is 'Buddying' and 'Befriending' to provide one-to-one support in addition to established group sessions. "We realise support groups aren't for everyone but the WBTSG has shown that there is a need for the type of support we offer. Still evolving we are already reaping the rewards with people contacting us so pleased to know that they are not alone. Our aim for the future is to reach more people throughout the West Midlands so that they too can receive the help and support they so desperately need."

The sad fact is that brain tumours account for more deaths amongst children and those under forty than any other cancer. Research has helped to reduce and improve the situation and outcome for brain tumour sufferers, but any operation on the brain can have the potential to affect so many body functions including sight, speech and hearing.

Said Rosemary: "To date our biggest challenge is publicity as we need to raise the profile of the WBTSG so that children and adults with brain tumours, their relatives, the general public and other organisations know we are here and what we can do to help support people from Worcestershire and the West Midlands."

WBTSG has a full diary of events and support group activities, and a variety of speakers, social and structured meetings planned right up to the end of this year with all information available on their website: www.wbtsg.org



Image L to R: Brave Frances, who inspired the launch of the WBTSG, together brother Alistair.

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