

What is the challenge?

This challenge is an open water swimming challenge taking you from the comfort of your sofa to the sea. The programme will run in partnership with Heathwood Swimming, led by Head Coach and Velindre Ambassador Dave Tonge. With the support of Heathwood swimming coaches and Velindre Fundraising, participants will be guided through their individual journey towards taking the plunge.

What is included?

You will receive 10 hours of individual tuition and training sessions from a qualified swim coach which will either be delivered in the format of 10 x 60 mins or 20 x 30 mins depending on your swimming ability. If you would like more sessions, you can arrange these directly with Heathwood Swimming at your own cost. From past experience, coaches have been able to take a beginner from sofa to sea in this time frame.

All participants will receive a bespoke training plan detailing when and what they should be practicing in-between sessions.

You all also receive 1-2-1 fundraising support from a member of Velindre Fundraising Team, a welcome pack complete with branded t-shirt and swimming cap and a free ticket to the Big C Swim gala evening 6 weeks prior to the main swim event.

Post event, you will get a medal and your journey will be captured on camera for you to look back on or share with your friends & family.

What difference will I make?

Your fundraising efforts and donations help us continue to be the leading provider of radiotherapy and other specialised anti-cancer treatments in Wales. It allows us to fund projects which improve the experience and outcomes of patients receiving care and support here.

With your support, we are able to offer better quality of care through complex treatment pathways, earlier access to cutting edge treatments, research into new treatments, purchase specialist equipment, fund invaluable support services and resources along with ensuring our staff have access to the most up to date training and techniques available.

It really is difficult to overstate the difference fundraising makes here at Velindre, but the benefits are invaluable.

We also hope you will join us and take pride in inspiring someone else to take the plunge.

Am I right for this challenge?

The challenge is suitable for anyone looking to support Velindre.

We welcome all abilities of swimmers from beginners to advanced. All we ask, is that you are able to fully commit to the programme which will include training and fundraising responsibilities.

(Please see section 'what is expected of me?' for more info).

What is expected of me?

Your commitment to the training programme is required to make sure you are ready for the event. This will include any additional homework or extra requirements advised by the coaches (this will be bespoke for every participant and will be explained after your initial session). You

will also be required to purchase your own equipment including swimming goggles, a nose peg (if required) and a wetsuit.

To raise a minimum of £1,200 - Your 1-2-1 Fundraiser is on hand to help you with this.

To appear on camera (at times when comfortable)

To be available for the final event on 15th JULY 2023.

What is the end goal?

To participate in the Swim To The Edge event on Saturday 15th July 2023. On the day you can swim either 1 mile or 2 miles. Highlights from last years event and route can be viewed here:

www.muuk-adventures.com



Have another question?

If you have any questions about the event that you'd like to ask the team, please don't hesitate to call us on 029 2031 6211 or email amy.penketh@wales.nhs.uk.

Am I guaranteed a place on the programme?

We are currently welcoming expressions of interest for this programme via an online form which will close on 1st November. After 1st November, the panel of swimming coaches will review all applications and hand-select a team to take part in this unique training programme. The successful candidates will be selected based on a number of factors including, ability, fitness along with their story and the connection to Velindre. Our panel of coaches will be ensuring the group reflects a variety of ages, abilities and backgrounds etc.

Those who are not selected for this programme will still have the opportunity to take part in the event through a general entry space. Further details of what this includes will be shared direct to applicants.

A message from Head Coach, Dave Tonge:

"If you're up for a challenge which will inspire others and also raise vital funds for an amazing cause then get in touch with us and share your story.

Sea Swimming is something everyone should experience in their lifetime and our coaches at Heathwood Swimming will help you gain the confidence and skills needed to achieve your goal.

Last year saw a group of incredible people conquer their first ever sea swim for Velindre and for some, this was also the first time they had learnt to swim. We are very excited to support this new challenge and hope to welcome new swimmers annually to continue making a difference."

Sarah Goman's Story:

After being diagnosed with Breast Cancer at 49 and turning 50 in isolation after finishing chemo, I decided my 50th year would not be defined by my cancer. Something I had always wanted to do was learn to swim and so I contacted Dave and sorted lessons for when my treatment and recovery period was over.

Within a few lessons Dave told me he was doing a fundraiser for Velindre which involved a 1 mile sea swim in Solva - and he wanted me to do it with him. I ticked lots of boxes as Velindre was a big part of me, as I am a staff member and a patient, and I was complete novice at swimming. My immediate response was No Way! but fast forward 8 months and not only had I learned to swim, but I also completed the Solva Swim with Dave by my side and helped raise £10,000 for Velindre.

I'm not going to lie when I say it's one of my proudest ever achievements.

