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brand new
Velindre
Cancer Centre
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Welcome!

Welcome to our first Velindre Charity newsletter of 2024! We recognise the importance of showing our incredible supporters the benefit of their fundraising and donations, therefore we wanted to take this opportunity to share some incredible fundraising achievements that have taken place between January – March 2024 and show key highlights from the first quarter of the year.

A message from our Charity Director:

In this edition of our charity newsletter you will read of truly remarkable people raising vital funds for Velindre. Their physical and mental efforts are truly inspirational and I have huge admiration for each of them.

With one in two of us facing the possibility of cancer at some point in our lives, support for our charity is more crucial than ever and for many the ability to undertake significant physical challenges is not possible. I for one certainly fall into that category. So this year, as well as continuing to develop our renowned events, we are introducing a new regular donation campaign. By encouraging people to make regular small donations to our charity via direct debit, we can forward plan our work with greater security to make an even bigger difference.

Rest assured that the money is spent wisely and locally. By investing in opportunities beyond those normally funded by the NHS, the generous donations we receive are invaluable in allowing us to meet the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow. Our charity currently funds world-leading cancer research, patient and staff psychology services, 50% of all cancer clinical nurse specialists at Velindre, as well as our excellent patient support teams and children resources. This simply wouldn't happen without our supporters.

Thank you for being a supporter of our charity. Your kindness and generosity truly make a real difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.

If you would like to get involved, please do get in touch. We'd love to hear from you. Be that to donate, share your story or to answer any questions you may have. We're here to help.



Paul Wilkins



info@velindrefundraising.com



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[@velindre](https://twitter.com/velindre)



[@velindrefundraising](https://www.linkedin.com/company/velindrefundraising)

Go to page 16
for more
information on
becoming a
regular donor

Charity Highlights

During the first quarter of 2024 we have celebrated 4 very important awareness days at the charity; World Cancer Day, International Women's Day, Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Day and Complimentary Therapies Week. Each is important to the charity in its own way.

CNS Day - 15 March

We have a team of 26 CNS Nurses who provide expert care to patients when they need it the most. The charity funds 50% of CNS nurse roles at the cancer centre. The support and comfort the CNS team bring to our patients and their families is invaluable and is a credit to the work of the charity and our supporters.

"Words cannot express my thanks for the exceptional care, tenderness, constant support, even when off duty that you gave us. You will always hold a special place in my heart." - Velindre patient.

International Women's Day - 8 March

Here at Velindre, we are incredibly lucky to be surrounded by strong and powerful women every day. From our consultants to our patients and fundraisers. We celebrated this day by sharing the stories of some of the inspiring women we have here at Velindre.

World Cancer Day - 4 February

This years campaign helped us shine a light on the people and projects taking place at the cancer centre allowing us to provide excellent care to the 1.7 million people Velindre serves. Our people and projects bring value and new ways of supporting patients and their families in Wales and help to [#CloseTheCareGap](#) within the NHS.

Complimentary Therapies Week - 20-25 March

The complimentary therapy service at Velindre is 100% funded by the charity and a way for us to improve patient wellbeing during treatment. We know patients may feel worried, sad, angry and upset during treatment. The complimentary therapies team are on hand to help them through these times and find some relief and rest. The team provide a variety of therapies including aromatherapy, massage, reflexology, reiki, and sound therapy.



Making a difference...

To celebrate some of our incredible fundraisers in this section of the newsletter we highlight achievements and thank our supporters for their contribution to the charity. This quarter we recognise Sarah Draper who has tirelessly fundraised for us since 2012 and has just surpassed £100,000 raised! It's thanks to people like Sarah that we are able to go above and beyond for our patients, she is truly inspirational and we are very grateful to have her as a supporter of Velindre Charity. Sarah said:

"I started raising money for charity 17 years ago when I fell in love with running. I ran marathons year after year. I'd lost all my family when I was young and running gave me my confidence back after dealing with so much trauma as a child.

At the age of 5 I lost my father in a horrific car crash. In the years following, slowly I lost my entire family. My mother died when I was 19 and my brother at the young age of just 23. At 18, my cousin, whom I called "auntie," was diagnosed with breast cancer. I used to stay with her while my mother travelled. She was very unwell, and I remember going to Velindre to visit her when she was having treatment. She had 6 years after that before she had a brain tumour and passed. Between the ages of 5 to 25 years old, all I had experienced was loss and grief. The world was a very sad place for me back then, but fitness changed all that. The past 12 years I've helped raise over £100k for Velindre by doing various things.



Sarah on one of her many challenges



The Inspire Fitness Team



Wear Red 2024

Personally, I've taken on many challenges, marathons, Ironman triathlons, multi day ultra marathons in the arctic, Sahara Desert and in the jungle of Peru. I relay swam the English Channel, cycled north to south Wales and climbed the highest peaks in the Alps, the Grand Paradiso and Monte Rosa.

10 years ago, I completely changed career and opened a gym called Inspire Fitness, with the goal of transforming as many lives as possible. As a gym, we have helped to collect thousands for Velindre, through health challenges, undertaking an annual Welsh 3 Peaks challenge and the national 3 Peaks challenge, as well as Wear Red days, Battle Cancer competitions and in House competitions and races.

We are the first gym in the south Wales valleys to become a 'Battle Cancer' gym and I've qualified as a Battle Cancer coach to help those touched by cancer to recover from this awful disease."

"I've witnessed the fantastic work Velindre do and will continue to support them in any way I can."

02



Craig's Coastal Path Challenge

Following his terminal cancer diagnosis back in 2022, Velindre patient and fundraiser, Craig Maxwell has thrown himself into the world of fundraising to support him and his family during this time. The Maxwell Family Fund has been set up at Velindre Charity to enhance, improve and develop the cancer pathway in Wales and as a legacy for Craig and his family to continue in years to come. From the 14 February to the 10 March, Craig took on an epic challenge walking the entire length of Wales via the Wales Coastal Path. In a bid to raise £1 million for the Maxwell Family Fund at Velindre, Craig completed this walk and delivered the Six Nations match ball to the Wales v France game alongside his wife and children at the Principality Stadium, Cardiff. This was an incredible moment as Craig, Tracey, Isla and Zach walked out onto the pitch with a standing ovation from 71,000 fans in the stadium.

Scan here to read more about Craig's story and donate to The Maxwell Family Fund



Throughout his journey Craig was joined by over 600 walkers and Welsh celebrities, but also incredible support from people all around Wales cheering him on throughout the challenge. From kind donors to coffee shops offering free teas and coffees Craig, his family, and Velindre have been blown away by the support for this challenge and we are truly grateful.

“It’s been a huge challenge, I’ve never been as tired, worked as hard or been tested mentally and physically as much as I ever thought I would be. But there’s 600 people who walked with me and queues of others every day, encouraging me on is what has got me through it. A very close friend of mine said to me at the start of this journey, “this could be the end or the start of something”. For me and my family we hope it is the start of something that they will remember me by and give them strength in the years that I’m unfortunately not going to be there with them.”

Craig Maxwell

1 MAN

26 DAYS

600 WALKERS

780 MILES

Not only has Craig’s challenge and drive been a support to him and his family but he is also making a huge difference to other patients and families facing similar experiences. Nick, a current patient at Velindre said:

“I was diagnosed with a brain tumour in December and quickly had an operation to investigate its type. Unfortunately, it was diagnosed as an incurable grade 4 Glioblastoma. My world fell apart at this news but whilst waiting for my first chemotherapy treatment at Velindre I read about Craig’s situation. I knew I was not alone and immediately signed up to walk a stage with Craig. On meeting him I was truly inspired by his attitude and the enormity of his effort. I will remember the days walk (stage 18) for the rest of my life which I intend to spend well whatever the future holds. I owe this positive attitude to Craig and would like to thank him and wish him well for the future.”



Craig & Rhod Gilbert



Zach delivering the match ball



Craig & Sam Warburton



Peter's

TOGETHER,
LET'S MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!

Proud supporters of





WEAR RED

For Wales
And Velindre

GWISGO COCH

I Gymru
A Felindre

Sponsored by

Peter's

Our annual Wear Red for Wales and Velindre campaign was back for 2024 and we want to thank you for joining us in painting Wales Red and raising an incredible £80k making this a record breaking year for the campaign. Throughout the day it was amazing to see all of our wonderful supporters getting involved in their own way! From schools and workplaces wearing red and donating a £1 to red bake sales and quizzes, every one of you helped raise awareness and vital funds.

We were also extremely fortunate to be joined on the day by Love Island 2021 winner, Liam Reardon. The Wear Red day kicked off with a 6am workout at Inspire Gym, Merthyr Tydfil. Liam joined the 6am group in their signature Wear Red t-shirts and completed their Velindre themed sweaty workout, it was a perfect way to kick start the day!

Liam then joined us at the cancer centre and spoke with patients and staff, putting a smile on many faces and really making a difference to everyone at the centre. Thank you to everyone who shared their story with us, it truly puts into perspective why days like this are so important to the charity and patients we support.

This year's Wear Red was extra special as we were joined by, leading Welsh pastry baker Peter's, as they joined us in transforming from green to red and changed the colour of the packaging for the first time since their conception in 1970.

From the 2 February until the 31 March, Peter's sported the colour with pride as they released brand new red packaging for their products. The new packaging features a QR code where supporters can donate to directly to the Wear Red campaign, helping us towards our fundraising target.

Thank you for your support, Peter's!



"It's always such a pleasure to support the incredible work of Velindre. The charity has always been close to our hearts at Peter's, and so we take any opportunity we can to support them. This campaign has been a particularly exciting one as it is the first time we have changed our packaging in over 50 years!"

Mike Grimwood, Managing Director at Peter's.

Patient Story

Lisa Morgan



"I have always been a passionate supporter of Velindre as my mum and some very dear friends have been patients, however, I never imagined that I would end up being a patient of Velindre too.

I'm guessing my cancer journey started in December last year when my GP called me after a routine chest X-ray. The X-ray showed a shadow. They weren't sure what it was at that point and I was treated for a chest infection and then had to have a repeat X-ray in the new year. Following the second X-ray, the shadow hadn't gone so I was then referred for a CT to the rapid access lung unit in Llandough – this was done within a week. This was the beginning of February. I met with the Respiratory consultant and was told it looked like I had something nasty, lung cancer. The consultant was so reassuring. I then had PET scans, and a bronchoscopy. The hardest part of receiving a cancer diagnosis is thinking how on earth am I going to tell my children, my family and my friends. Witnessing their reaction was just heartbreaking. Because even though they try not to show it you can see deep down they are thinking the worst is going to happen. I was more concerned about the effect on my family. Several weeks later, the beginning of March, following the tests I met with my consultant again to be told the

bronchoscopy was inconclusive. It didn't look like cancer it was possibly something else and I would need to go back for another CT in 6 weeks. My husband and I were overjoyed and rushed back to share the good news to my family and friends!

So, April arrived and during this time we were in lockdown and the height of Covid. I was a little apprehensive about going to hospital for my scan, but I did.

The following day the consultant phoned me to say she wasn't happy the abnormality was still there, and I would need to go in for CT guided biopsy. By this time I did have a bit of a niggly cough. 2 weeks later I was given a definitive cancer diagnosis. The tumour was quite large, they were going to take a curative approach and I would need surgery and possibility chemotherapy. We were absolutely devastated. Always at the forefront of my mind was how this was going to affect my children.

I was going to kick the cancer where it hurts. I have the rest of my life to get on with!

During this time my brother was also diagnosed with lung cancer, with the tumour located in the same place as mine. A double blow of worry and concern for our family. Within a week of my cancer diagnosis, I had met the surgeon and was admitted to University Hospital of Wales for a lobectomy where they removed the lower right lobe of my lung. I really didn't have time to process what was happening, which I guess was a good thing!

The doctors and nurses were all absolutely amazing, caring for patients' surgical needs. They had to also battle an enemy they couldn't see – Covid. That fear and stress was almost tangible. It was tough and lonely during that time. Unable to have visits from my family I will never forget the overwhelming power and warmth of that nurse holding my hand tightly immediately after my surgery. I will be eternally grateful to them.

Following the successful excision of the tumour, several weeks later I then attended Velindre to discuss the option of adjuvant chemotherapy which would basically mop up any remaining cancer cells and reduce the recurrence of the cancer.

It was an anxious time, with the added threat of Covid looming. My husband was unable to attend my appointments too. However as soon as I arrived at Velindre, it felt I was being welcomed with one big reassuring cwtch.

From the reception to the phlebotomy nurses, to the consultant and the chemo nurses. Their calming caring manner just helped some of the anxiety melted away.

It was a very daunting and worrying time but the chemo nurses just made you feel at ease and they did make me laugh.

I think about the cancer every day, I do worry it might come back but I will not let it define me! I feel so much more positive that I have control of my life again.

Velindre is a very special place indeed. It is the hospital of hope!

I will forever be grateful for their kindness and compassion.

I am so passionate about all the fantastic work Velindre does. The support they provide to patients and their families, and I just want to say a massive thank you!

18 months after I finished treatment, I joined the Velindre team on a 5-day trek in Cuba. I was quite apprehensive about going but Kylie (Head of Fundraising), convinced me I should still do it. Along with one of my best pals Bethan. It was one of the hardest challenges I had ever done – in 25-degree heat and 90 percent humidity. We laughed, we cried, a lot and met some of the most inspirational people and made lifelong friends. We all supported each other, and I simply would not have got through the 5 days without them. We collectively raised over £260K for Velindre which was just amazing. It simply was a life-affirming experience for me.

Devastatingly my brother lost his battle in January 2023 – I will never get over his loss and miss him every single day. He was the coolest brother you could wish for. I will always be grateful to Velindre for trying to help him. I have now signed up, along with my daughter Mia Elin, and best friend Marion Williams to do the Patagonia trek with Rhod and the rest of the amazing trekkers. I will also be celebrating my 5 years of remission."



The difference you make...

Thanks to the work of our fundraisers and donors the charity is able to fund projects across the centre that allows us to go above and beyond for our patients, offering multiple services funded outside of the NHS.

Many patients worry about hair thinning or hair loss during their treatment as they see their hair as part of their personality. This can affect their confidence, self-esteem and act as a reminder of their treatment. Here at Velindre, we are able to provide support to patients and ease their worries by offering a range of support services including cold caps, free head scarfs and wig vouchers.

These services are 100% funded by the charity and implemented with the ambition of improving patient welfare whenever we can.

Every patient receiving chemotherapy at the centre will be offered a cold cap to wear during their appointment. The cold caps worn by patients are filled with a cold liquid which cools the scalp and slows blood flow to hair follicles. This can help prevent some chemotherapy drugs from reaching and damaging the hair follicles decreasing the chance of hair thinning and loss caused by treatment.

In addition to the cold caps to wear during treatment, if patients do experience hair thinning or hair loss the charity provides a £100 voucher to go towards the purchase of a wig or a free headscarf via the Headstrong service.

On average 540 patients a year redeem these vouchers and it's amazing how much of a difference it makes to their confidence and wellbeing. Thanks to you we have been able to continue to develop the provision of wigs for cancer patients and are working to increase the number of wig providers available on the service. This will give our patients more choice to find the wig that makes them feel great!



Your Wig Voucher Stories



Deb wearing her wig

Deb Phillips, Velindre Patient and Staff member:
“I was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2019. After the shock of my diagnosis, my thoughts turned to the chemotherapy that I would be receiving. One of the side effects was the hair loss, I found this particularly difficult and emotionally draining. With the help of the wig voucher, I received from Velindre, it made my ordeal slightly better, because I did not have to worry of the cost of my wig. The fitting of my wig was made a lot easier with the ladies in the shop, they made me feel completely at ease. Thank you to everyone who made this journey more bearable.”

On average 540 patients a year redeem their wig vouchers



Lorraine wearing her wig

Lorraine Berry, Velindre Patient and Ambassador:
“I used this to purchase a wig as I knew I was going to lose my hair through the chemotherapy and wasn't sure how I was going to manage without any hair. Wigs are very expensive and this voucher helped towards the cost. The salon that fitted me with my wig, were so caring and understanding and I couldn't believe that I got a wig that was near to the colour and style I had previously before diagnosis.

I ended up wearing my wig for special occasions. I've also donated my wig back to Velindre as there may be someone that I'm sure would make use of it.”



The New Velindre Cancer Centre

FIND OUT MORE



Final agreement has been reached between the Trust and Acorn consortium to design, build and maintain the new Velindre Cancer Centre, scheduled to open in 2027.

The new cancer centre will deliver a vital world-class facility within which we can deliver care and treatment for patients today and for future generations as more of us are diagnosed with cancer. The current Velindre Cancer Centre is more than 68 years old and serves the 1.7 million patient population of southeast Wales and some further afield. It delivers a range of non-surgical tertiary cancer services for the region in partnership with Aneurin Bevan, Cardiff and Vale, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Boards and Powys Teaching Health Board.

Construction will start in the coming weeks at the site in Whitchurch, Cardiff, with the opening scheduled for 2027.

Velindre University NHS Trust Chief Executive Steve Ham said: "This marks a major milestone in the project to build our much-needed new cancer centre. We are proud of the work our staff do day in, day out to treat, care and support patients from all over southeast Wales. Now, we will build a world-class NHS facility that will support our staff to deliver care of the highest standard for cancer patients across south Wales and beyond. It will be an inspiring workplace for our dedicated staff to thrive, and support internationally renowned cancer research and collaboration across the region."



A look inside the new cancer centre



To find out more, scan the QR code!



Upcoming Events

Jiffy's Annual Golf Day

5 September 2024

Join us for our annual Golf Day hosted by Velindre President Jonathan Davies at Radyr Golf Club, Cardiff on the 5 September 2024. The day consists of an 18-hole round of golf, dinner, raffle and prize session. It's a fab day out. Purchase a team of 4 for £500 and help raise vital funds for Velindre.

To book your place, please email fundraising.events@wales.nhs.uk



Castle 2 Castle Run

15 September 2024

We are thrilled to announce that our beloved Castle2Castle run is back and this year we are celebrating our 10th Anniversary!!

This 11-mile fun run between two of South Wales' most iconic castles - Caerphilly Castle to Cardiff Castle - has become one of South Wales' much loved running events but this year we're going bigger and better to celebrate this milestone event and we have some exciting plans that you won't want to miss! Registrations open May 2024.



Patagonia Trek

17 - 26 November 2025

Following the sell out of our Patagonia trek with Rhod Gilbert we have launched a second Patagonia trek lead by our patrons, Shane Williams and Sean Holley. We will be trekking the beautiful countryside of Patagonia to celebrate the 160th anniversary of Welsh pioneers who left Wales for Patagonia in 1865. Our Velindre trek will celebrate the unique culture, history and heritage of the Welsh connection with our friends in South America, walking with Rifleros over the same ground as our ancestors.





DONATE
HERE

More Ways to Get Involved

Here at Velindre Charity, we are proud to fund a wide range of roles, resources, and services at Velindre Cancer Centre and beyond with the goal of making a difference to cancer patients and their families in Wales. Your donations allow us to go above and beyond for patients at Velindre, providing value added services outside of NHS reach, this includes complementary therapies, counselling and children's services. Without your support, we wouldn't be able to fund all of these incredible offerings that truly help patients and families throughout their cancer journey.

Donate

There are multiple ways to donate and make a difference today.



Make a donation online via
our website
www.velindrefundraising.com



Send a cheque made payable
to 'Velindre Fundraising' and
post to Velindre Fundraising,
Velindre Cancer Centre, CF14
2TL. Please include your
contact details, address and
reason for your donation.



Call our fundraising team on:
02920 316211 and make a
donation over the phone. Our
team will be available
Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm.



BACS: To make a Bank
Transfer please contact us to
request our bank details and
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02920 316211
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Pay by cash, card or cheque
at the charity office. Our offices
are open Monday – Friday
9am to 4pm and a member
of our fundraising team will
be on hand to receive your
donation.



Find out more here:
www.velindrefundraising.com
[/donate](#) or contact our
fundraising team via:
Phone: 02920 316211.
Email:
info@velindrefundraising.com

Join #TeamVelindre

Would you like to do something in aid of Velindre in 2024? From running a marathon, cycling, swimming or hosting a bake sale, however you want to fundraise sign up to be part of #TeamVelindre and let us know what you have planned! By signing up you will receive dedicated support from our fundraising team.

Sign up to fundraise via our website today!
www.velindrefundraising.com/events



Shop

Would you like to purchase some Velindre Charity branded merchandise?

100% of profits come directly to the charity.

Shop via www.velindrefundraising.com/shop or scan the QR code.



Share your Story

If you can't donate but have an experience with Velindre then you can still give back by sharing your story with us. If you're a patient, relative, member of staff or supporter by sharing your story not only helps patients and families feel less alone during their time at Velindre but also hugely encourages more donations to the charity.

Send us your story by emailing fundraising.stories@wales.nhs.uk



Regular Giving

By becoming a regular donor at Velindre you play a vital role in providing the Charity with long-term security, enabling us to develop consistent and sustainable services that provide possibly life-changing results for cancer patients and their families.

Regular Giving donations are used to fund things over and above those provided by the NHS. It allows us to ensure best possible care to patients and the ability to provide value added services such as complimentary therapies, specialist nurses, clinical trials and children's resources.

1 in 2 people in Wales will be diagnosed with cancer within their lifetime. Now more than ever we need you to help us shape the future of cancer patients and their families in Wales.

You don't need to run a marathon to support Velindre Charity, it can be as simple as giving a small donation every month. On average a cup of coffee-shop coffee in the UK costs over £3. Imagine the impact you could have by donating this amount to Velindre via monthly donation. This would mean a donation of £36 a year which will fully-fund one of our memory boxes that help children keep memories of their loved ones safe.

"We all fear the word Cancer and what it means. Whether it be as a patient or a family member. But if we all work together, we can make a difference to a family or person going through a very traumatic time whether it be at diagnosis or during treatment." - Daughter of a Velindre patient.



Set up Regular Giving today!

To set up regular giving and become a monthly donor please contact the fundraising team and complete your sign up form.

Phone: 02920316211.

Email: info@velindrefundraising.com

Legacy Donations



“

When you discover you have cancer, your priorities change and one of the big things for me was knowing that you need to leave a legacy. A legacy that's important to your family, for your friends and something you can be proud of. Through my diagnosis I have come to realise there are very few things in life that are actually important, and legacy is one of them.

– Craig Maxwell, Velindre patient.

”

Leave a Gift in your Will

Many people choose to leave a gift in their will as a way of saying 'Thank You' for the care they or a loved one received from Velindre but also to provide vital support for other patients and families to benefit from. By leaving a gift in your will, you allow Velindre to plan for future projects and developments with confidence and deliver long term services on a bigger scale.

There are different types of 'gifts' you can leave in your will ranging from money to estate or even belongings. If when completing your will, you can spare a thought for Velindre, we would be eternally grateful to you.

To leave a gift in your will all you need to do is provide our Charity name (Velindre University NHS Trust) and our charity number (1052501) when meeting with your solicitor and they will complete your bequest.

Donating in Memory

Donating in someone's memory is a special and meaningful way of remembering a loved one and creating a lasting legacy. To donate in memory please make a donation and note the reason for donating or create a Tribute Fund fundraising page via JustGiving and continue collecting in-memory donations.

Funeral Collections

If you are considering accepting donations at a funeral in lieu of flowers, we can help provide physical donation envelopes for cash or help create a QR code for your online tribute fund page. A QR code can be added to obituaries to allow friends and family to access the page with ease.

If you would like to discuss your funeral collection with our team, we can help identify the best option for you and your family.



Thank you!

We want to say a huge thank you to every single person who supports the charity. Your incredible support allows us to continue making a difference to cancer patients and their families in Wales.



Contact us:



info@velindrefundraising.com



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