



Press release

28 August 2014

Charity cyclists take on colossal coast-to-coast challenge

A father and son team are to take on an epic charity challenge by cycling more than 400 miles from coast-to-coast to raise funds for a new centre which will offer vital support to people with life-limiting illnesses.

Halesworth GP Richard Kell and his son Jon will saddle up in St David's in Pembrokeshire on the Welsh coast at around 8am on Sunday 14 September, and spend six days cycling across the country before arriving in Southwold on Friday 19 September.

The ride will be extra challenging as Richard has suffered from spinal arthritis since his teens, for which he still receives regular treatment, while despite keeping fit in the gym, Jon has not cycled for a year.

The daring duo are taking on the mammoth test of their pedal power to raise funds towards a new Information and Support Centre (ISC), which aims to bring a full range of holistic services closer to home for people with cancer and other life-limiting illnesses. The project is being spearheaded by Halesworth Community Nursing Care Fund (HCNCF), of which Richard is the chairman.

"We hardly do any cycling normally – eight miles would have been a long journey for me!" said Richard, 59, who has been a GP in Halesworth for nearly 30 years. "But as I've had arthritis of the spine since I was 13, cycling is probably the only long distance challenge I could do, as my joints wouldn't like it if I ran a marathon!"

"I am really looking forward to sharing a big challenge with Jon, the excitement of cycling across a beautiful country and enjoying a pint and a comfortable bed each night.

"But I'm apprehensive about going over the Brecon Beacons, which are certainly a lot hillier than Suffolk. I also hope my arthritis doesn't let me down, as that would also let my sponsors down.

"Covering 400 miles will certainly be a challenge – but I'm sure the pain will be worth the gain if people give generously to support this very worthwhile cause."

Richard and Jon have already raised more than £4,100 towards their £5,000 target, but have pledged to ride the entire distance in pink tutus if they can hit the £10,000 mark.

The money will go towards an ongoing campaign to raise £714,000 to build the ISC to benefit patients in north east Suffolk and south Norfolk, their carers and families. It will be

available to around 50,000 people who live within a 15 mile radius of Halesworth, who currently have to travel up to 30 miles to a major town or city to access support.

Earmarked for land next to Cutlers Hill Surgery in Halesworth, the ISC will offer a full range of services, including help understanding a diagnosis, counselling, bereavement support, financial and benefits advice, wig-fitting and complementary therapies such as acupuncture and massage.

"I can't resist a challenge and when Dad asked me to join him on the ride, I couldn't turn it down," said Jon, 31, who lives in London and works in marketing. "It's raising money for an awesome charity, run by insanely dedicated volunteers who do such admirable work.

"The charity needs an injection of funds to help pay for the ISC, so we want to raise as much as we possibly can to help."

Anyone who would like to sponsor Richard and Jon for the ride can visit mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/richardandjon

For more information about the project, or to make a donation, visit www.halesworthhealth.org/information-and-support-centre

Ends

Halesworth Community Nursing Care Fund is a local charity (charity number 1155419) which was set up 25 years ago to support people with life-limiting illnesses who wish to die in the comfort and security of their own homes.

It works alongside the NHS and social services to provide extra equipment and 24 hour care in the last days of life along with emotional, physical and practical support at the time when people need it the most.

For more information, please visit www.halesworthhealth.org/nursing-care-fund, 'like' us on Facebook at "information and support centre fundraising campaign" or follow us on Twitter @Suffolk_ISC

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