



St Joseph's Hospice

University of Westminster Acupuncture Graduates at St Joseph's Hospice Hackney

Of the 16 acupuncturists volunteering at St Joseph's Hospice 60% are graduates of the degree course at University of Westminster and account for 70% of all the complementary therapists providing supportive care at the hospice. The complementary therapy team offer around 150 treatments a week to patients, relatives and carers.

The acupuncturists support patients with symptom control and end of life care often seeing patients on a weekly basis right up until they die. The support is also offered to relatives during a loved one's illness and as a bereaved relative.

This work can be emotionally challenging; the therapists' clinical skills and professionalism help them to reflect on the process of death and to find support through the multi-disciplinary teams at the hospice, peer support and supervision.

St Joseph's hospice offers monthly supervision in the form of case study meetings, facilitated by the complementary therapy coordinator or one of the lead therapists, we discuss practical challenges, people who might require discharge from the service or signposting to another service, and particular cases that the therapists have been engaged with and have moved them or challenged them in some way. This offers the opportunity for some rich sharing of experience and reflections on some of the key issues involved with palliative and end of life care. There are regular seminars and reflective Schwartz Rounds

<http://www.stjh.org.uk/professionals/schwartz-rounds> workshops on various topics such as:

- Difficult conversations
- Emotional resilience
- Advance care planning
- Effects of life limiting conditions on well-being
- Loss & grief
- Safeguarding

Some patient quotes:

"I didn't know much about MND when I first came. My condition wasn't explained to me by my GP. I like coming for massage and acupuncture. You can always talk to people about how my condition is changing. I like the environment, a really friendly place".

"I am a 59 year old man living in Hackney with my wife and my children. I suffer from stomach cancer for more than 5 years and had a full gastrectomy in 2007. I underwent radiotherapy in 2008 and have just started my third course of chemotherapy since 2009.

St Joseph's Hospice, Mare Street, Hackney, London, E8 4SA.

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Founded in 1905 under the care of the Religious Sisters of Charity.



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I was advised to try acupuncture to help my symptoms of not being able to eat after having difficulty trying to digest food once I had my stomach removed in 2007.

The acupuncture experience at the St. Joseph's Hospice in East London was quite unique. At first I felt nervous, but was reassured that I had nothing to fear. I now have regular acupuncture sessions there since 2010 and in average once a fortnight and it feels this benefits me with my digestion.

This treatment has helped me with my eating and keeps my anger levels down and helps me with some symptoms from the chemotherapy. Also the advice they gave me helps me a lot. I can't really say that I had any negatives apart from my very first session when the very first needle went in.

You can feel the needles at times, but this is a small price to pay with the conditions I have. It also relaxes me, giving me energy, and pulsates through my body, giving me warmth within during the treatment.

When I don't have acupuncture for a month, I feel my inner self sluggish and slightly lethargic.

I'd like to carry on with my acupuncture on a regular basis as I really believe it benefits me".



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