



MU project - Comfort packs for relatives of patients in palliative care in hospital

Dear Members,

Following a recent meeting with the DP, Sally and representatives from Antrim Area Hospital and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, I am writing to seek your help and support for a new MU project which will be carried out in conjunction with these care agencies.

The project involves putting together a comfort pack of toiletries similar to the wash bags we already make for patients in hospital Accident and Emergency Units. There has now arisen a need, identified by staff in the hospitals, for 'comfort packs' to be provided for relatives of loved ones who are seriously ill or are in palliative care. The relatives often wish to stay with their loved ones in hospital and an overnight pack of essentials would be very welcome. The Health agencies have told us that they are in desperate need of comfort packs, especially before Christmas, but also throughout the year ahead.

I know this is a very busy time of year but, if possible, can I make a heartfelt plea to our branches to focus in particular on this project for 2020 and, if you happen to have the opportunity to make some packs even before Christmas, please deliver them to Fiona Gilmour in Antrim Area Hospital. You can do this individually or through your Branch Chair, Area Chair, Diocesan, Area or Branch Project Rep. It is important that you insert an MU prayer card in the bag and keep a record of items handed over so that the Diocesan Projects Rep can keep accurate and up to date figures. Our new Projects Rep for the Diocese from January 2020 is Rae Scott.

Just a reminder that ideally travel-size toiletries should be used for the comfort packs. A zip-topped freezer plastic bag can be used to contain the following suggested items:

- toothpaste and toothbrush
- deodorant
- face cloth
- dry shampoo
- moisturiser
- comb/small brush
- small packet of tissues
- packet of mints/sweets

Thank you so much for your help and support in this very worthwhile project. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Alison Skillen
(VP, Action & Outreach Unit)

January 2020