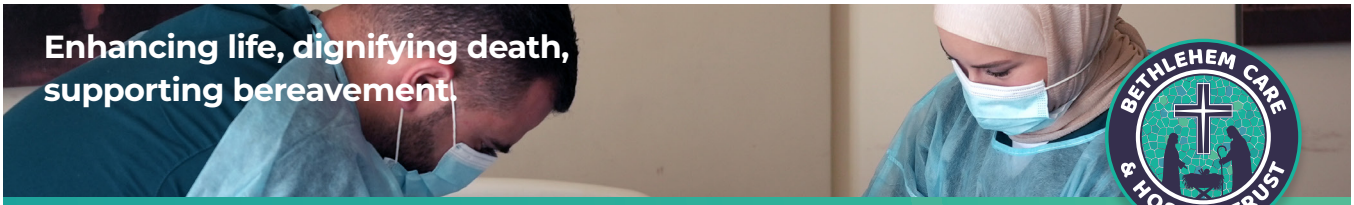

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ISSUE 1 | JULY 2025

Following my visit earlier this year to Bethlehem as Chair of Trustees of Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust I gained invaluable insights into the extraordinary work of our hospice team on the ground, the challenges they face, and the profound difference your support is making.

Providing Compassionate Care Amidst Conflict

Despite significant obstacles - including checkpoints, road closures, and security restrictions- our hospice team continues to deliver palliative care to some of the most vulnerable patients in the West Bank. During my visit, I accompanied the team on home visits, witnessing first-hand their dedication and compassion.

We visited patients in Beit Jala, Duheisha camp, and other areas of Bethlehem, each with complex medical and social needs. One elderly woman, bedridden for six years following a stroke, greeted the team with gratitude as they tended to her painful pressure sores and provided physiotherapy that has slowly improved her condition.

Another patient, a woman battling advanced breast and thyroid cancer, was struggling with pain, malnutrition, and overwhelming care-giving demands on her family. The hospice team's intervention helped stabilise her condition and prevented a potentially unnecessary hospital readmission, bringing much-needed support and reassurance to her loved ones.

We also met a middle-aged man in Duheisha camp suffering from multiple chronic illnesses and unable to afford essential medications. Despite the complexity of his care and the dire circumstances of his family - his son, a nursing student, recently shot in the leg - our team provided medical, emotional, and practical support.

These are just a few examples of the over 150 patients cared for so far, with more than 2,000 home visits completed since our service launched in 2023.

Building a Sustainable, High-Quality Service

I spent time with the hospice team discussing how we can strengthen sustainability and quality of care. I was encouraged by their openness to explore new ways of working more efficiently while maintaining high standards.

We also addressed operational challenges, including staffing dynamics and leadership development. To improve clinical oversight and governance, I proposed the formation

Professor Philip Hopkins with nursing staff and an elderly patient

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of a Clinical Sub-Committee within the Bethlehem Board - this was enthusiastically approved and will help formalize accountability and provide a forum for clinical issues and quality improvement.

Collaborating for Broader Impact

We met with key partners at the Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH) and others to discuss collaboration and coordination of care. Although there are differences in approach, we were able to clarify misunderstandings and reaffirm a shared commitment to serving patients with dignity and compassion.

We also explored opportunities to work with organizations such as the World Health Organization and the Palestinian Ministry of Health to advocate for integrated palliative care across the West Bank. Your support empowers us not only to deliver direct care but also to be a catalyst for systemic change.

A Message of Hope and Gratitude

Throughout the visit, I was struck by the resilience of our team, who continue to serve patients despite personal risks and the ongoing humanitarian crisis. I was deeply moved by the hospitality and solidarity of our partners and staff, who shared meals, stories, and their unwavering commitment to the mission of the hospice.

Your generosity makes this work possible. Every patient served, every family supported, and every moment of dignity offered is thanks to your belief in our cause.

As we look ahead, we face financial challenges, with sufficient funding projected until the end of 2025. We are actively exploring collaborations and partnerships to secure sustainable funding to ensure the hospice's future.

Thank you for standing with us and the people of Bethlehem.

Philip Hopkins
Chair of Trustees

YOUNG FUNDRAISER SPOTLIGHT

Bakers Rise to the Challenge

We were recently touched by the generosity of the White family in Sheffield, who chose to support the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust in a wonderful way.

After a family discussion about our work – delivering the only palliative care service available to people with life-limiting illnesses in Palestine – daughters Constance (9) and Patience (8) decided they wanted to help. Constance, a budding baker, came up with the idea of hosting a bake sale, and together with Patience, they set to work.

Their kitchen was soon filled with the smell of freshly baked treats, as the girls lovingly created a stunning selection of cakes and sweets – all beautifully presented and made with care. Mum and Dad were temporarily banned from the kitchen, only to be called back in to help clean up!

This donation will go directly towards helping patients in Bethlehem live their final days in comfort, dignity, and without pain. The White family's support is a beautiful example of compassion in action and the difference one family can make.

Joe McNally
Founder & President

Constance & Patience

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An Irish Pilgrim Finds Purpose in Hospice Care

While on a pilgrimage to Bethlehem, Donnacha Fahy an Irish pilgrim learned about the local hospice and its mission to provide compassionate end-of-life care. With a longstanding interest in welfare and community service, he sought to understand more about the work being done.

After making the necessary arrangements, he was graciously invited to accompany hospice nurses on their home visits. What he witnessed deeply moved him: the quiet dedication of the staff, the comfort they brought to patients and families, and the dignity with which care was delivered.

He was so impressed by what he experienced that he reported widely on his visit, sharing stories of hope, compassion, and the importance of hospice care with audiences back home. His words helped raise awareness and appreciation for hospice, not just locally, but across borders.

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Faith, fun and fundraising at Bethlehem Ball raised £9,300

The Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust held a Bethlehem Ball dinner and dance at the Niagara Conference Centre in Sheffield, drawing a crowd of 150 people from across the Diocese of Hallam in support of its vital work.

The event was a blend of dining, entertainment and generosity, with all proceeds going to aid hospice care initiatives in Bethlehem.

The evening began with grace by Fr Gus O'Reilly and welcome addresses by the chair of the organising committee Joe McNally and chairman of the trust Professor Philip Hopkins.

Attendees were then joined by Fr. Rami Asakreih OFM, parish priest of St Catherine's parish in Bethlehem, over Zoom. He outlined the importance of the trust's work in providing vital palliative care in the Holy Land.

Fr Rami's words set the tone for an event that celebrated both community and compassion across borders.

Guests enjoyed a three-course meal and a lively auction led by former All Saints headteacher Bob Sawyer who kept the room engaged with his humour, driving up bids for a variety of donated items.

Entertainment was provided by talented local band The Grand Plan who performed free of charge as their contribution to the cause and their lively set kept guests on the dancefloor all night.

The Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust, the only licensed palliative care service in Palestine plays a critical role in providing palliative care and support in Bethlehem, a mission made possible through fundraising efforts like this. Joe McNally thanked all attendees, donors and volunteers, emphasising the importance of their contributions in delivering pain relief to people who otherwise would be consigned to die in pain.

This year's dinner dance stands as a testament to the power of collective goodwill, uniting the Diocese of Hallam and Bethlehem in shared humanity.

A Heartfelt Thank You to St Albert's Catholic Chaplaincy, Edinburgh

We extend our sincere gratitude to the parish of St Albert's Catholic Chaplaincy in Edinburgh. In response to an appeal for help, the parish generously paused one of their own projects in order to support the hospice service in Bethlehem.

Their magnificent response raised an incredible **£4,750**, a sum that will go a long way in helping our medical team provide dignity and comfort to those in our care. **Your compassion and solidarity make a real difference – thank you.**

Heartfelt thanks to St Bede's Parish, Rotherham, for your continued and generous support in bringing care and comfort to Bethlehem's patients. **An amazing £4,430 has been raised so far.** Deepest thanks to Mgr Ryan and all at St Bede's.

St.Bede's Church Rotherham

A huge thank you to Nadine Carter for her amazing support of the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust this year!

By donating £1 from every sale of her beautiful handmade jewellery (available on her Etsy store) at the Sharrow Vale and Nether Edge Christmas and Easter Markets, Nadine has made a meaningful impact on the lives of those we care for. We're so grateful for Nadine's generosity and the difference she made this Christmas. We thank her for spreading kindness and cheer!

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Life Support Training Strengthens Hospice Team's Expertise

Back in early December 2024 our nursing team at Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust took their dedication to patient care to the next level by completing a comprehensive Basic Life Support (BLS) training course at Bethlehem University. The initiative, aimed at enhancing their already exceptional skillset, reinforces their ability to respond quickly and effectively to medical emergencies.

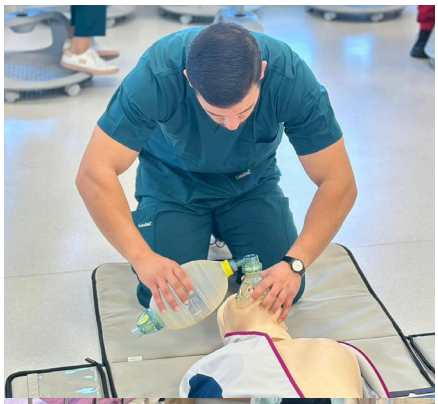
The training, which focused on techniques such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), equips the team with vital tools to save lives during critical moments. For patients, this means a higher level of safety and reassurance, particularly in sudden, life-threatening situations.

For the nursing staff, the course has strengthened their confidence and preparedness, ensuring they can act decisively when every second counts.

The Trust's management praised the team's commitment, noting that the course aligns with their mission to deliver compassionate, high-quality care. The updated training ensures the team is not only providing comfort but also potentially lifesaving interventions when required.

> **"This training sharpens our skills and reminds us why we do what we do – providing the best care for our patients when they need it most."**

With their dedication and enhanced expertise, the nursing team continues to set a gold standard in hospice care, proving that even the most skilled caregivers are never done learning.



MakeAWillOnline.co.uk

Leaving a Lasting Legacy

We are pleased to have partnered with makeawillonline.co.uk a free will making service. By leaving a gift in your will to Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust, you will be ensuring that our patients receive the care and support they deserve during their most vulnerable times. **Your generosity will make a lasting difference in their lives and the lives of their families.**

For more information on legacy giving please visit:

bcandht.org

or email: **info@bcandht.org**

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO CARE

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust has successfully concluded a ten session programme of psychological support and emotional debriefing, delivered by psychologist Mrs. Rania Mukarker from the Guidance and Training Center for the Child and Family (GTC). The sessions, which began on 31st October 2024, were part of a collaborative initiative between the two organisations to provide essential emotional and professional support to those working in palliative care.

The closing ceremony was attended by Mrs. Mariam Samara Awad, Chairperson of GTC's Board of Directors, and Mrs. Rasha Handal, Executive Director of Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust.

Both commended the programme's positive impact on the psychological wellbeing of staff and praised its role in strengthening long-term partnerships. These vital initiatives wouldn't be possible without the generosity of our supporters. Your donations directly fund the wellbeing of those who care for others – thank you for making a real difference.

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Catenian Support for Bethlehem

We are pleased to share an update on the support provided by Catenian Association Circles in Wakefield, Chester, Sheffield, and Manchester for the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust. This trust is the only hospice service in the Holy Land, specifically in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT).

The Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust was established in Bethlehem due to the high prevalence of cancer cases in the region. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the OPT, with a significant increase in reported cases over the past years. Shockingly, a high percentage of diagnosed cases are too late for treatment, making palliative care the most viable option.

The Catenian Circles mentioned have demonstrated their compassion and support for this cause by raising over £2500. This generous contribution directly aids the small medical team at the Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust in providing end-of-life care and comfort to those they serve.

We commend the Catenian Circles for their commitment to supporting this vital work and making a positive impact on the lives of those in need. Your generosity and compassion are truly making a difference in the lives of those facing challenging circumstances.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to this important cause.

Joe McNally
Founder & President

Harish Narotham Manchester Secretary presents cheque to BCHT's Joe McNally.

Mike Maxwell Chester President presents cheque to BCHT's John McDonald.

Wakefield Circle President Prof Phil Hopkins presents cheque to BCHT's Joe McNally

Prof Mike Campbell, Sheffield's President presents a cheque to BCHT's Joe McNally

THE HOLY LAND'S ONLY HOME HOSPICE NEEDS *YOUR* HELP!

Bethlehem has the highest cancer rates in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, with most patients diagnosed too late for treatment and lacking specialist care.

Bethlehem Care and Hospice Trust runs the only licensed home-based palliative care service in the region. Our small medical team made over 2,000 visits to 146 patients in the past year. But many more still need support. As a charity, we rely on your help to ease pain and bring dignity to those at the end of life. Your support will help ensure people with terminal illnesses can end their days pain free and with dignity.

thank you!

DONATE NOW

www.bcandht.org

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

IAHPC Member of the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care

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