

## Noel's Story

I married [Alwyn] in 1968 after a short romance [laughing], four children, and eight grandchildren, and she was just my strength, my soulmate. [Alwyn] was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in June. She spent a couple of weeks in hospital and then got out, and then she was taken back in again, and she got back out again after about three or four weeks, and I cared for her for three weeks. She was taken back in on 10<sup>th</sup> December and, em, she went to the Royal that time, and she died on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

I had, eh, a girl called Claire, from the Marie Curie people, who was absolutely – to be quite honest, she was like an angel to me, like I'd ring Marie Curie [at a lost/and ask] and she would have rang me back right away and asked me what the problem was, and she was at my house – it looked like 10 minutes, maybe it was a wee bit longer, but it looked like 10 minutes, and she would sort whatever problem I had.

The cancer specialist at the Mater was...more than brilliant. She was like an angel to me, and any time that I needed help or anything like that, I knew I could ring her, and she directed me in the right way.

After she died, when I got over the initial shock, it must have been about two months or so before I really realised that, you know, that she wasn't coming back. I set up a Facebook in her honour – it's called 'Kiss for [Alwyn]', and I found it really, really, really good because it helps me communicate with other people as well, because people would write things on it and posts and things like that, and I'd be able to answer them and keep in touch with them.

Somehow like, when somebody dies, and the room could be full of about a hundred people, and you'd be still lonely. I found myself searching for her, even on the bus or when I go to the shop. She used to have a wee trolley, and I look for people with trolleys and things like that, and I think that she's just going to walk round the corner.

To date, I've raised £1,500 for the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund through different things that we've done. My son keeps snakes [laughing] in the house, and I put up a thing, if we reach £1,000 on this page, I'll hold one of these snakes. I do not like snakes, and it hit £1,000 and I had to hold this rather huge boa and get a photograph taken of myself and put it up on Facebook to show what I'd done [laughing], to prove to people that I'd done it.

I come to Pancreatic Cancer Action every month. I get a lot out of it. There's a lot of people who are now, I would say, more than good friends to me. They're also on Facebook and can be easily contacted, and if I have a problem or if I'm feeling down or anything like that, all I have to do is send them a wee message and they'll talk to me or ring me up and talk to me, which is a great...great, great thing. I would personally advise anybody that has a bereavement to get involved in a group such as the one I'm in. It is a great help and the support that you get and you meet other people, and it is important that you do meet other people, although sometimes you feel as if you don't want to do that, but believe you me, it is really, really good that you do it.