

# News Release

12 April 2011

## Heart Failure Awareness Day

Cardiology staff at Dorset County Hospital are urging people to watch out for the signs of heart failure as part of a Europe-wide awareness campaign.

Heart Failure Nurse Specialist Tracey Dare is co-ordinating a series of events and promotions across South and West Dorset to highlight European Heart Failure Awareness Day on 6 May 2011.

“The campaign is designed to raise awareness of heart failure, including possible symptoms, and the importance of early and accurate diagnosis,” said Tracey.

“Symptoms can include unexplained shortness of breath and swollen ankles. If you have any of the signs you should see your GP as soon as possible.”

Local community hospitals and GP surgeries will be hosting displays and the cardiology department at DCH is offering a wealth of information and leaflets for people to take away.

The hospital is staging a study day for heart professionals and a public awareness event is being held on Portland on 3 May 2011 from 10am to 12pm at the Community Centre at 6 Straits in Easton in partnership with Synergy Housing Association.

Attractions at the event include free health checks, stalls, educational stands and advice on stopping smoking.

You can find out more about heart failure on the campaign website at [www.heartfailurematters.org](http://www.heartfailurematters.org)

Heart failure can be managed well with the right treatment and lifestyle adjustments. However, it is important to monitor all your symptoms on a regular basis as heart failure can progress slowly.

You should call for help immediately if you experience:

- Persistent chest pain
- Severe and persistent shortness of breath
- Fainting

You should inform your doctor as soon as possible if you experience:

- Increasing shortness of breath
- Frequent awakenings due to shortness of breath
- Needing more pillows to sleep comfortably
- Rapid heart rate or worsening palpitations

And you should discuss any of the symptoms below with your doctor or nurse.

- Rapid weight gain
- Progressive swelling or pain in the abdomen
- Increased swelling of the legs or ankles
- Loss of appetite/nausea
- Increasing fatigue
- Worsening cough

**ENDS**

**MEDIA INVITATION / PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:**

**3 May 2011, 10am to 12pm**

**Community Centre, 6 Straits, Easton, Portland, DT5 1HG**

Heart failure public awareness event in conjunction with Synergy Housing Association, all proceeds to British Heart Foundation. Stalls, education stands, health checks.

**Consultant Cardiologist Dr Simon Winterton is also available for interview before the event.**

To arrange please contact Susie Palmer on 01305 254683, [susie.palmer@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:susie.palmer@dchft.nhs.uk) (Mon to Wed) or Stevie Pattison-Dick on 01305 255419, [stevie.pattison-dick@dchft.nhs.uk](mailto:stevie.pattison-dick@dchft.nhs.uk) (Thurs and Fri).