# BRCA Kent Newsletter December 2023

BRCA Kent
Experience.Support.Friendship

Hello Ladies,

I hope you and your families are keeping well and looking forward to all the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

It's been great to see so many of you at our monthly meetings, especially to meet some of our newest members. You are always so welcoming and kind to these ladies and it is very much appreciated by us all.

**Hospital & GP Packs**

We have continued to send out our hospital packs to our members having surgery over the past 12 months and have had some lovely messages saying how useful they have been. Sam is still sending these out and making sure everyone gets their pack in time for their surgery (do tell us when you get your surgery date). We are still asking members to take a GP pack away with them, so they can pass it on to their GP practice – a big thank you to everyone who has delivered a pack to their surgeries on our behalf.

**Website**

Our up-dated website is currently having its final amendments done and will be ready very soon – we'll let you know when it goes live!

**Community Events**

It's been a very busy and exciting few months promoting our group and increasing awareness of the BRCA gene alteration in our community. Suzannah and I had a lovely evening at the annual John Lewis Breast Cancer Community Event at Bluewater where we gave a talk and watched Zena and Karen model – they looked beautiful and wore some stunning outfits!

We were invited by KIMS Hospital to all 3 of their Breast Cancer Awareness Events organised by Breast & Oncoplastic Surgeons Mr Devalia and Mr Dani. It was an absolute honour to be asked to give a talk to GPs and local women in the audience. Thank you so much to Sam, Helen, Nicola and Kim for helping!

Thank you to those ladies who shared their stories with BBC Radio Kent in October, it was incredibly moving to hear you speaking up and sharing your experiences.

We are still working closely with the South East Genomic Medicine Alliance to increase awareness amongst our local GPs and healthcare professionals, and want to thank all of you who have shared your stories.

**Support Group Meetings**

We had a fantastic evening listening to Amy (specialist bra fitter) and Sara (medical tattooist) at our December support group meeting, where we all learnt so much. Thanks to everyone who came along and asked some brilliant questions! Amy will be producing an A5 leaflet for us with a summary of how to choose the right bra.

Our first meeting of 2024 will be held in **Margate on Wednesday 24 January**, so Suzannah and I look forward to seeing you there! Vickie and I are currently sorting out February's Maidstone meeting date and will confirm in the New Year. If there is anything in particular you'd like to discuss at our meetings, do get in touch beforehand so that we can make sure we leave sufficient time. These meetings are for you and a chance to ask questions/share concerns in a safe and caring space.

**Other**

A little reminder to get in touch if you would like us to 'buddy you up' with another member who has shared a similar experience to you. It may be pre-or post-surgery, so just let us know and we'll match you up!

Don't forget when you have a date for your surgery, let us know so we can send you a message to wish you well and our lovely Sam can post one of our hospital packs out to you.

And finally, thank you to all my incredible helpers who keep this lovely group going, we all appreciate everything that you do ladies!

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and Healthy New Year.

Elizabeth xx

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## Dates for your Diary!

Remember to look up all our events at the top of the closed Facebook Group Page under the 'Events' tab and to confirm your attendance:

- **Margate Meeting:** TBC for January
  7.00 pm – 9.00 pm (Viking Day Unit, QEQM)
- **Maidstone Meeting:** TBC for February
  7.00 pm – 9.00 pm (Academic Centre, Maidstone Hospital)