



MEDIA ALERT - NEW LIFELINE FOR MOUTH CANCER PATIENTS

EMBARGO: 00:00 THURSDAY 1ST MAY 2008

Interviews available with Dr Vinod Joshi, Founder of the Mouth Cancer Foundation

To set up an interview please call Media Ambitions on 020 8940 2222.

Today, the country's leading mouth cancer charity, the **Mouth Cancer Foundation** is throwing a lifeline to mouth cancer patients, carers and survivors by launching a new telephone support helpline - 01924 950 950. From May 2008.

Patients and carers of people diagnosed with mouth cancer may suddenly find themselves at a loss to know what to do. The free of charge, round the clock, fully automated service, allows patients, carers and mouth cancer survivor's access to a menu of services, ranging from requesting information to speaking to a volunteer. The fully automated helpline service will send an email of the recorded message requesting the service to MCF office for triage. When there is a request to speak to a carer or survivor, a members of the MCF volunteer network will be contacting the caller at a convenient time of their choosing..

The helpline will offer a listening ear, and provide an invaluable service to those callers who are unable to access the MCF online support group or wish to speak to a person. It will provide callers with an opportunity to express their concerns and talk about the issues directly affecting them. All requests for access to a professional counselor received by the **Mouth Cancer Foundation** will be sent to the Cancer Counselling Trust.

The **Mouth Cancer Foundation's** Founder, Dr Vinod Joshi, says "When people call a helpline they are often in a state of emotional crisis. It takes courage and perhaps a state of desperation to phone an unknown service for help. The helpline should provide an invaluable service to those callers who are unable to access our online support group or wish to speak to a person. It will provide the sense of dignity that comes with being heard".

"XXXX" Cancer Counselling Trust. - talking about the initiative.

-ENDS-

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Mouth Cancer Foundation is a registered charity no. 1109298.

Cancer can occur in any part of the mouth, tongue, lips, throat, salivary glands, pharynx, larynx, sinus, and other sites located in the head and neck area. In its very early stages, Mouth Cancer can be almost invisible making it easy to ignore.

Symptoms include:

1. A sore or ulcer in the mouth that does not heal within 3 weeks
2. A lump or overgrowth of tissue anywhere in the mouth
3. A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, or lining of the mouth
4. Difficulty in swallowing, chewing or moving the jaw or tongue
5. Numbness of the tongue or other area of the mouth
6. A feeling that something is caught in the throat
7. A chronic sore throat or hoarseness that persists more than 6 weeks
8. Swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable
9. Neck swelling present for more than 3 weeks
10. Unexplained tooth mobility persisting for more than 3 weeks

More information about Mouth Cancer is available at the Mouth Cancer Foundation website www.mouthcancerfoundation.org or by emailing info@mouthcancerfoundation.org