

Welcome

By Kaddy Benyon

I get up at 5:30am and off I go walking my dog, the sun rising and a new day beginning, the feeling of sunshine on the skin. I love walking, blowing dandelions and using my phone to capture moments like how the cyclists have to stop to edge around the cows on Midsummer Common. I have a photo

of my favourite view on my office wall: sunrise on the hills. It helps me to remember there is a world outside the hospital. As a nurse, I go up and down to the 7th and 8th floors to look out over the Gog Magog hills. I took a patient up there to show her the yellow fields, she couldn't talk

but I think it was a view worth having. It is hard to be in hospital, all the bewildering equipment: catheters, cannulas, intravenous ghastliness. In an open bay with 6 beds, sometimes patients talk: the former ballet dancer who drank with Nureyev; the man who worked as a water boy on a farm;

a centenarian's memory of Queen Victoria passing by. All these come to light drawing, playing bingo, painting or perhaps whilst in the gardens for qigong exercises as a woodpecker delves busily in the cherry tree. When physical escape isn't possible, some swim back in memory to summer two years ago, the rain

and that lovely earthy smell, the little spot you climb down to a riggety-raggety bridge like a troll bridge. I love being in water, there's an unclutteredness to it, that feeling of gliding through the greens and natural light. I didn't know how wet I'd get, but it was gentle and fun and made me feel things were still possible.

Happy, I think, is happening all the time; is a smile on a young face, a laugh with a stranger, a 20-second hug, a chuckle, being trusted, cuddles from staff. You don't go home with a dry eye. Home is getting out of hospital mode and becoming mum again; after a shift, my baby on my lap – I just smell that baby smell from his hair.

Welcome to Addenbrooke's, a community in itself,
a place of deep & loving care where everyone makes
a difference. The staff here are very kind,
they really look after you, it's just so human
how everybody works together in this space
made available for any of us to come & come well.

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