

MDS UK Patient Support Group

This year I have decided to donate the profits from Dance Fever 2012 to the MDS UK Patient Support Group.

The MyeloDysplastic syndromes (MDS) are a family of similar diseases which result in bone marrow failure and affect tens of thousands of individuals worldwide. These disorders are a primary disease of the bone marrow and in most cases lead to an acute form of leukemia/ blood cancer.

MDS can only be managed, not cured, unless a bone marrow donor is found. Even then a bone marrow transplant is a very risky procedure which can only be carried out if the patient meets certain requirements on age and health and unfortunately even if the bone marrow transplant is successful it doesn't always cure the patient and recovery can take months, even years.

There are over 200 different types of cancer and although all cancer research and support charities deserve funding and support MDS is considered one of the more obscure cancers, and because of this support, information and treatment can be very hard to find.

I have chosen MDS UK because of the role they have been playing in my life recently. My Dad was diagnosed with MDS in October 2010 and was told that he had a life expectancy of 3 years. We had never heard of MDS before and didn't understand what it all meant, all we heard were the words ' blood cancer' and 'terminal' but MDS UK have helped him and us (his family) every step of the way. They have helped us in understanding his prognoses, fighting for the drugs he needs, informing us of new drug trials and putting us in contact with leading MDS specialists and they continued to support us as Dad deteriorated and his MDS developed into an acute form of leukemia. Dad was lucky enough to find a bone marrow donor and is currently in Addenbrookes Hospital recovering from the transplant and we are still waiting to see if the procedure was a success.

Dad has been to every Dance Fever here at MVC since I started in 2007 (plus many other shows) as my official photographer and I know he would have loved to have been here tonight, so this is my way of including him and my way of saying thank you to MDS UK for their continuing kindness, support and help.



*MDS: Rare diseases require
a special level of support.*