

City hotel adapts facilities for those with cancer

EDINBURGH'S largest independent hotel is adapting its facilities to accommodate guests who have been affected by cancer.

Ten Hill Place is making alterations to all disabled toilets in its 129-bedroom Old Town building to make its services easier to use for guests who have had surgery resulting in their using a stoma. A stoma is an opening on the stomach that has been made for a section of bowel to be brought through, so that waste to be collected in a pouch or bag that is attached to the skin. Stomas can be formed during surgery for bowel cancer or for other conditions such as Crohn's disease.

The hotel, which is managed by Surgeons Quarter – the commercial arm of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) – is adding a shelf and a hook behind the door of its toilets to enable visitors with stoma bags to be able to use them more comfortably.

These redesigns come as Surgeons Quarter embarks upon a yearlong partnership with Bowel Cancer UK to raise £50,000 in 2019.

Jo Paulson, Scotland Fundraising Manager at Bower Cancer UK, said: "Shockingly, most disabled toilets aren't actually equipped for people with stomas.

"Going to the toilet can be one of the everyday challenges faced by those affected by bowel cancer and people can often feel stigmatised when they're using disabled toilets because their stoma isn't visible.

“We’re thrilled that such an important hotel in the capital is making this key change to its services as we know that it’ll have such a positive impact on so many people.”

The RCSEd, which will be working with Surgeons Quarter to raise funds for Bowel Cancer UK this year, has also agreed to partner with the charity to help fund Scotland’s first Research Chair position focused on surgical research.

The appointment is set to bring important long-term benefits to people living with bowel cancer. In Scotland, 10 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer every day.

Scott Mitchell, Managing Director of Surgeons Quarter, said: “The adjustments we’ve made to the toilets really are minor – so there’s no excuse not to do it.

“These small changes probably won’t even be noticed by most visitors – but they will make a huge difference to those with stomas.

“We do all we can to look after all our guests and give them the best environment to relax in, and with this change we hope that we can improve the stays of a great number of people and inspire other organisations to do the same.”

Surgeons Quarter has created a calendar full of fundraising events in support of Bowel Cancer UK, which includes skydives, a 24-hour spinathon and bowel-friendly bake sales.

Customers at Surgeons Quarter’s Café 1505 and its Drinks & Dining restaurant will also have the option to donate by rounding up their bills, and visitors at Ten Hill Place will be asked if they’d like to make a small donation when they settle up at the end of their stay.

Star of Hope pin badges will also be available to purchase in reception areas. The Star of Hope is the international symbol for bowel cancer.

Surgeons Quarter promotes, sells and manages all commercial activities held within the RCSEd campus. All profits support the charitable aims of the College which are education, assessment and advancement in surgical standards worldwide.

Owned by the RCSEd, the hotel is operated by the college's commercial arm, Surgeons Quarter, and invests all profits into advancing surgical standards worldwide.

Surgeons trained and assessed through the College take their life-saving and life-changing skills all over the world.