because the body has time to recover from shift work.

**How did you change or improve your practice?**

After reading this article, I will ensure that I routinely ask patients how they have slept, and how their sleep environment and comfort could be improved. I also intend to ask patients about their sleep hygiene when they are admitted to the ward.

Since mobile phones and laptops have been found to disrupt the melatonin levels in the brain, I plan to advise patients who are having difficulty sleeping not to use electronic devices just before they go to bed, and instead suggest that they read a book or magazine to relax.

I will discuss improving the ward routine with my colleagues so that it is more sleep-friendly.

**How is this relevant to the Code?**

Select one or more themes: 
**Prioritise people, Practise effectively, Preserve safety, Promote professionalism and trust**

One theme of The Code is to practise effectively. This article has enabled me to update my knowledge about healthy sleep, and encouraged me to promote healthy night-time routines.

I can use this information to advise patients on how to improve their sleep, and also use it myself to enable me to work effectively.

**Georgina O’Reilly-Foley** is a nursing student at Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Essex

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**PATIENT VIEW**

**Head and neck cancer specialist offers us wonderful support**

**Kylee Green** explains how specialist nurse Sandra Jackson has made life manageable for herself and husband Jerry

My husband Jerry was diagnosed with mouth cancer in January 2014 aged 45. A month later he went in for an operation and had a radical neck dissection. The floor of his mouth was replaced with skin from his forearm and part of his tongue was removed.

He went on to have chemo and radiotherapy, and finished treatment in June 2014. But a fistula opened a few weeks later and he develops infections every six to eight weeks.

In May 2015 he was diagnosed with osteoradionecrosis. Macmillan head and neck specialist nurse Sandra Jackson was a great support and still is.

Head and neck cancer can give severe side effects, some short term and some permanent, including problems with eating and with speech, as well as changing a person’s appearance.

I can phone or email Sandra with any concern, and she will talk through the problem and answer my questions honestly.

**Positive thoughts**

Before Jerry was diagnosed with osteoradionecrosis he had many tests to rule out a recurrence – there is a 50% chance within two years – and it was difficult to stay positive.

But Sandra’s support made life much more manageable. She has replied to my emails outside her working hours, which shows her commitment to patients.

Sandra started the monthly Moving on from Head and Neck Cancer patient support group at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre in Northwood many years ago.

We attended the group and received practical support and advice from people who had been through the same situation.

We attend every month now and offer support to patients before treatment and just after. The group is meant to finish at 5.30pm but because Sandra has so many patients she does not leave until 6pm at the earliest, even though she has two children at home.

Sandra also runs a two-day Moving on from Head and Neck Cancer workshop. It consists of lectures and talks by healthcare professionals and a patient about recovering from treatment.

Sandra gives up her time to attend patients’ fundraisers, including a Saturday when she joined the support group for a Mouth Cancer Foundation 10km walk. She gives so much time to all of us. She truly is exceptional.