WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BISHOP, AN OT & THE MD OF A DEPARTMENT STORE ARE INVOLVED IN REBRANDING A HOSPICE?

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Branding for hospices was recently described as a ‘hot topic’ (Hospice UK, 2018) in an increasingly fast-paced as well as competitive environment for hospices and at a time when organisations are placing greater emphasis on brands to differentiate (Lee & Bourne, 2017; Chapleo, 2015; Stride & Lee, 2007; Lee, 2013). Balancing normative (social/mission driven) and utilitarian (business driven) identities (Lee & Bourne, 2017) hospice brands need to encapsulate a mission and represent a set of values (Stride & Lee, 2007; Kylnader & Sytone, 2012; Lee 2013) about a form of end of life care which they consider non-negotiable. Furthermore, a hospice brand is inherently complex needing to generate trust, foster a sense of pride amongst staff, volunteers and fundraisers, however carrying out this work can draw accusations of inappropriate business-like behaviour by critics who perceive such use of resources unnecessary (Lee & Bourne, 2017; Kylnader & Sytone, 2012). Whilst several hospices have undertaken branding work (Design Week, 2017) this paper addresses the paucity of studies which consider the particular challenges of undertaking this work at hospices. Outlining an eight-month project at St Helena Hospice and dissemination key insights gained from participant observation, this paper builds on a body of work which considers the specific tensions and reactions which emerge when working with an established brand in the not-for-profit sector (Lee, 2013) and, furthermore, how such a project became an opportunity to inform and re-educate stakeholders. Accordingly, this paper has relevance for a range of stakeholders including trustees and senior leaders showing the ‘doing of rebranding’ focusing on how St Helena Hospice incorporated and integrated its philosophical foundations with the values and emotions of numerous, diverse stakeholders. Facilitating conversations this project broadened ambitions, implemented a new vision and re- evaluated key priorities repositioning St Helena Hospice (Lucarelli & Hallin, 2015).

HOW CAN INSTITUTIONAL THEORY HELP HOSPICES PLAN FOR THE FUTURE?

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There is little written about UK hospices as organisations. Given the changing nature of care as hospices increase access significantly beyond cancer, it is important to explore models of change. This research aims to highlight key concepts within institutional theory and change, that may be of interest to hospice leaders in developing and delivering their future.