

## Heart Pillow

### Community Outreach Project for WCQG

#### Cardiac Ward – St. Mary's General Hospital (SMGH)

These heart pillows are given to patients at SMGH who have experienced open heart surgery. Patients use these pillows to hold against their chests to support the area of the incision when they sneeze, cough, laugh, stand up or get out of bed. The pillows seem to lessen the stress on the incision.

SMGH gives 80 pillows per month to cardiac patients, most of whom are men.

The pillows measure 13 inches high, 14 inches wide, made of 100% cotton, stuffed with 3.5 oz. of fibrefill and have an appliqued red heart on the front. It is recommended that fabrics are gender neutral and darker in colour. Suggested fabrics include florals (for women), geometric patterns, batiks, fabrics with scenery, etc. No fabrics with political, religious, violence, sayings or commercial graphics are to be used on these pillows.



#### General Information for Making Heart Pillows

Kits can be picked up at Gatherings. Kits include fabric for the front and back of one pillow, a red fabric heart, and 3.5 oz. of fibrefill stuffing.

You can also use fabrics from your stash. A heart template is provided so you can cut your own red heart for the front. When using your own stash fabrics, you can return the completed pillow case without the stuffing to Gatherings – with an 5 inch opening *under* the heart for ease of stuffing. You can either pick up a bag of the stuffing at Gatherings so you can stuff and sew your pillow closed or leave the unstuffed completed pillow at Gatherings for someone else to stuff and stitch closed. You can also use your own fibre fill if you have some.

#### Instructions for Making Heart Pillows

Cut two pieces of fabrics 13 inches high and 14 inches wide. If using directional fabric please ensure these measurements reflect the direction.

Cut out a red heart using the provided template, use the heart provided in the kit or pick up a red heart shape at Gatherings.

Applique the heart to the centre of one side of the pillow using a zig zag, buttonhole or straight stitch. A fusible is not needed. If it's helpful, put a little bit of glue on the back of the heart shape as it is applied in place.

Put right sides of the pillow pieces together. Sew a ¼ inch seam around the pillow leaving a 5 inch opening *under* the heart so the stuffing opening is easy to find. Trim the four corners of the pillow to reduce bulk when turning the pillow right side out.

Turn the pillow right side out, pressing to flatten the pillow ensuring the corners are also flat and square.

Stuff the pillow with 3.5 oz. of fibrefill stuffing (provided by the guild or use your own, but it must be fibrefill). Sew the opening shut using a whip stitch or close with a machine stitch. Size and weight of the pillows must be consistent, which is why the stuffing needs to be weighed. Completed pillow should be approximately 4.5 – 5 oz.

*Tip to help when stuffing the pillows* – The fibre fill is tightly bunched up in your kit. Be sure to pull it apart gently and separate it somewhat. Then begin to stuff the pillow with small amounts at a time ensuring some of the fibre fill reaches each of the four corners. If the fibre fill is not separated it will bunch up and the pillow won't look as attractive or be as effective.

Bring completed heart pillows to Gatherings each month. Please also return the plastic bag to be reused to create new kits.

Pick up additional kits at Gatherings.

You can also use fabrics from your stash or consider using orphan blocks. If you are using orphan blocks place the heart shape on the other side of the pillow. Please also ensure the size of the pillow remains consistent.



Eighty pillows will be delivered to SMGH each month.

Thank you for supporting this new initiative which will make a difference in the lives of these cardiac patients.

If you have any questions, please contact Cathy Jurchuk, Joan Holland or Inge Ford