



Mid Cheshire Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Innovation around Volunteering at MCHFT

Jo Newbrook – Voluntary Services Manager



# Who are we?



- Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (MCHFT) provides good quality, safe and effective healthcare to the people of Cheshire and beyond. The Trust, which manages Leighton Hospital in Crewe, Victoria Infirmary in Northwich, and Elmhurst Intermediate Care Centre in Winsford, was established as an NHS Trust in April 1991 and became a Foundation Trust in April 2008.
- We have over **300 active volunteers** providing assistance and support in a wide variety of roles as part of our well-established and forward thinking Volunteer service who contribute greatly to patient experience and supporting staff to deliver patient focussed person centred care. **All volunteers trust wide are identified by their volunteer lanyard (red) and ID badges.**
- Volunteers provide assistance on the wards, help in clinic and reception areas, provide administrative support and help patients and visitors find their way around our site. The hospital radio station is completely volunteer run and we have a very strong volunteer chaplaincy team. Volunteers also provide help with events being held by Mid Cheshire Hospitals Charity.



# Who are we? Voluntary Services Team



# Innovation of New Volunteer Roles



- **MCHFT voluntary services department has a proven track record of successfully launching new roles, in areas of pressure, in order to support staff and improving both staff and patient experience.**
- **Working with wards and departments from concept to launch, the Voluntary service manager ascertains the need and objectives for any new role, how it will support staff and patients, key duties, and the skills & experience required.**
- **There have been over 20 new volunteers roles / departments launched in the previous 12 months including;**
  - **Theatre Hand Holder (vascular line insertions)**
  - **Practice Educator Team (supporting international nurses)**
  - **Customer Care**
  - **Emergency Department Enquiries**
  - **Neo Natal Peer Supporters**
  - **E Learning Support**



# Innovation of New Volunteer Roles



- **The volunteers sit within multidisciplinary teams across the organisation.**
- **Through the innovation of the voluntary service managers and the engagement with services across the trust, real tangible benefits to patients and staff have been demonstrated.**
- **As this model is transferrable. The benefits which have been felt here at MCHFT through the role out of these volunteer roles can be replicated at other acute trusts.**
- **As the model is also sustainable. By unleashing the potential within volunteering roles across the organisation, volunteer can both feel fulfilled in their supportive function and the benefit they offer to services is demonstrable and measurable.**
- **There have been real tangible improvement for patients and cost and efficiency saving for the service.**
- **This project has demonstrated proven measurable success.**
- **In order to meet the growing demand of the population we serve as an acute trust, we have fostered the support of volunteers and used this in an innovative way to create real sustainable benefit to patients and the workforce**



# ED Enquiries Volunteers



The role was first trialled in March 2019 following the 90 Day streaming project in the Emergency department. From a waiting room observation exercise it was determined that 1 hour, 10% of staff time is spent giving directions to patients & visitors looking for various departments & locations on site. A gap for a role to be delivered by volunteers was identified.

- ED Enquiries Volunteers based in the main entrance to the ED department.
- First contact point on the patients' entrance to the department.
- Act as a filter before patients sign in via the receptionists on the main desk.
- Ascertaining the reason for coming into the area and signposting / redirecting patients as per their need.
- Deal with general enquiries, directions to other departments / areas, car park payments, location of wheelchairs.
- Provide practical and emotional support to ED attendees. Sitting with patients to keep them company in the waiting room when this need has been required. They can get patients drinks of water.
- Offer emotional and pastoral support to patients who can sometimes be alone and fearful.
- Support staff such as supporting with administrative tasks, making them refreshments, thus freeing staff up to work in a clinical capacity, and thus in doing so decreasing patient waiting times.
- Provide staff with an extra level of support and help, this thereby frees up staff for more clinical duties.



# ED Enquiries Volunteers



- We now have 9 volunteers trained and in post
- Good coverage over the week including partial evening and weekend cover.
- Expansion of this role to cover a wider shift pattern is planned over the coming year to cover more shifts.
- In a survey in December 2019, where ED volunteers were asked to indicate what duties they had been involved in during their shift, indicated that diversity of requested that they were able to help with and support:

Signposting External areas	Signposting within ED	Wheelchair support	Car park Q's	Refreshments	Emotional / Wellbeing	Other / Misc
22%	23%	18%	14%	8%	12%	2%





This role used to be undertaken by paid staff in the theatres department. In some hospitals this is still the case, however the role here at MCHFT is undertaken by a rota of eye theatre hand holders. We currently have 5 volunteer hand holders in post who play a vital role in the eye theatre.

- The Hand holder volunteer supports patients in eye theatre who are undergoing procedures under local anaesthetic, for example Cataract operations.
- Provides calm and reassurance to the patient. They will talk to the patient before the procedure, helping to put them at ease. During the procedure the patient needs to lie very still and remain quiet, the smallest of movements could be serious.
- Acting as the communicator between the patient and the surgeon. If the patient needs the surgeon to stop, perhaps to cough or sneeze, the patient squeezes the volunteers' hand. The volunteer will then ask the surgeon to stop the procedure. This removes the need for the patient to speak and therefore prevents movement of the face.
- Integrated into the theatre team, playing a key role which would need to be carried out by a member of staff otherwise.





# Hand Holders Volunteers – Eye Theatre and Vascular Line Insertion



- The role has been further developed and a second role, supporting theatre for vascular line insertion, was subsequently launched in November '19.
- **This role works in the same way as the eye theatre role, providing reassurance to the patient whilst the line is fitted. However, in this instance the volunteer can continue to chat to the patient throughout, providing reassurance and a welcome distraction.**
- The Volunteers' service was approached having had proven track record in eye theatre, by Dr Claire Hammel – (Critical care Consultant) to see if the service could provide volunteers for this other service.



# Dining Companion Volunteers



The dining companion role has been developed and promoted following the results from the National Inpatient survey in 2017. In 2017 there was a significant reduction in the patient response to the question - Did you get enough help from your staff to eat your meals? The national inpatient survey action planning group have worked with the volunteers services to recruit volunteers to assist with help to eat meals to try and increase support in this area to ensure that patients are getting the support they need.

- **Volunteers after attending the required training can assist patients at meal times.**
- **This can simply be giving encouraging the patient to eat or opening packets for them, to feeding the patient.**
- **This is a valuable role as it saves staff time having to do this and allows staff to concentrate on clinical duties. It significantly improves patient experience as the patients can enjoy their meal whilst it is still hot and enjoy the company of the volunteer whilst eating.**
- **It has been proven that receiving such encouragement and having the social element at meal times has a positive effect on a person's appetite and willingness to eat. Such encouragement and assistance is particularly important for confused patients and those with dementia.**



# Dining Companion Volunteers



- Volunteer dining companions attend the HCA training on patient feeding run by speech and language therapy and dietetics.
- The Numbers of volunteers trained in this role currently stands at 55 for 2019.
- The benefit of the recruitment and implementation of this volunteer role was clearly demonstrated by the 2018 National inpatient survey results whereby the performance on the question - Did you get enough help from your staff to eat your meals? Increased from 6.9 (2017) to 8.1 (2018), an increase deemed to be statistically significant.
- Additionally the CQC benchmark report deemed our score on this measure to be 'better than other trusts'. This quantitative figure clearly demonstrated the impact that this initiative has had on the patient, improving their experience by supporting their nutrition whilst hospital inpatients.



# Staff Feedback



***“Ward 10 have a lot of volunteers and we are grateful for every single visit. They help with our tea rounds which is great to ensure our patients get a nice warm drink. We appreciate the time they take to visit our ward and they are an important part of the team”.*** – Ward Manager, Ward 10 Orthopaedic Trauma Unit

***“We have had volunteers on Ward 4 for some time now. They have proved to be invaluable to both patients and staff. I have witnessed how they interact with our patients and it's truly fabulous to see how receptive our patients are to having someone to talk to, have a cup of tea with, watch TV in the day room. We would be lost without them now. They are quite literally part of the ward 4 family! Thank you for all of the dedication you show to our patients”.*** - Rachel Wilkinson, Matron Ward 4

***“The introduction of volunteers in the waiting room of Emergency Department has been invaluable. They support the ED staff by providing non- clinical information to patients and their relatives in a timely manner. They reassure patients and support them in vulnerable times, offering them friendly advice and care. They are an absolute credit and fantastic addition to the team.”*** - Belinda Dean, Head of Nursing Urgent and Emergency Care

***“The benefit of having volunteers in eye theatres, it is a valuable role they perform in calming the patient and being their line of non-verbal communication by holding their hand during the surgery under microscope, so the patient does not move.”***- Jo Goodwin, Senior Theatre Practitioner





## Roles currently being looked into for future role out and development;

- **Response / Bleep volunteers**
- **Oral history volunteers**
- **Speech and language one to one support volunteers**
- **End of life volunteers**
- **ED corridor**



# Recognition of Volunteers



“Under the  
Spotlight”  
Newsletter  
Feature

Annual  
Volunteer  
Celebration

Volunteer  
Newsletter

Volunteers  
Experience  
Video

Helpforce  
Programme /  
Daily Mail

Promotion  
Events

EPEG Reports

Social Media  
Platform

“Alltogether”  
Trust News  
Feature

National  
Volunteers’  
Week Events

“Do you want  
to be a  
doctor” events

Local Schools  
and Collage  
Experience

Long Services  
Awards

Hospital Radio  
Broadcasts

Recognition  
Certificates





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Thankyou for your attention  
Any Questions?



Jo Newbrook – Voluntary Services Manager

