

Voluntary Services

Annual Report 2017/2018

1. **INTRODUCTION**

It has been another successful and busy year for Voluntary Services and I am delighted to present my first Voluntary Services Annual Report since my recent appointment into the role of Voluntary Services Manager in April 2018. The annual report of 2017/2018 gives an insight into the scope of volunteering at the Trust and the work undertaken by the Voluntary Services Department. The annual report also presents an opportunity to recognise the incredible contribution made by volunteers at St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

1. **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Voluntary Services Department is to encourage involvement of local people in the day to day running of our services. There are currently 297 volunteers in the Trust who provide invaluable support to paid staff and service users. Recruitment of volunteers has been steady and since April 2017 we have welcomed 85 new volunteers into a number of roles including Chaplaincy Volunteers, Mealtime Assistants and Administration Volunteers. Of the 85 Volunteers recruited since April 2017, 72 are still actively volunteering in a variety of roles. It is fantastic that we are retaining such a high percentage of volunteers after the mandatory six month commitment that they make, and this shows that our volunteers are proud of the work that they do, are made to feel valued and it reflects the quality of working relationships between staff and volunteers.

We aim to:

* Meet the needs of our service users though the involvement of volunteers.
* Continue to promote Trust Values.
* To offer a rewarding experience to our volunteers.
* To ensure safe and effective volunteer recruitment by adhering to our policy on The Involvement of Volunteers within St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.
* To offer recognition for the achievements of volunteers.

Some examples of volunteer roles are:

* **Volunteer Assistance at Mealtimes Programme** – Their role is to assist, help, and encourage patients at mealtimes having received full training and completed competencies.
* **Information desks and corridor staffing** – Welcoming patients and visitors and directing and escorting them around the site.
* **Patient surveys** - Promoting patient and public involvement within the Trust and listening closely to what our users say in order to promote and improve services.
* **Clerical and administrative tasks** - across the Trust**.**
* **Trolley services** – Patient library for the wards, tea for the clinics, sweet trolley.
* **Day Surgery Unit** – Offering refreshments to patients after procedures and prior to discharge from the unit.
* **Outpatient reception assistance** – Meeting and greeting patients and providing guidance to use the self-check-in kiosks.
* **Pets As Therapy (PAT) Dogs** – PAT dogs visit the wards once a week to improve the health and wellbeing of patients.
* **Emergency Department** - Offering support to staff and non-medical assistance to patients accessing our emergency services.

There are a further 37 newly recruited Volunteers pending pre-employment checks who will be joining the Voluntary Services team over the coming weeks. They will be joining us in a number of new and exciting roles such as our Emergency Department Volunteer Scheme, Young Onset Dementia Support, Therapies Meet & Greet and Outpatient Clinic Patient Flow Volunteers.

1. **VOLUNTEERS IN NUMBERS**

Each year we celebrate Volunteers’ Week to acknowledge and celebrate the work of our volunteers and this year’s Volunteers’ Week was about volunteering for all and celebrating the huge range of people who give their time in so many ways. This is pivotal as Voluntary Services at St George’s strives to be inclusive by embracing equality and diversity to provide voluntary opportunities for all. **We believe that young people can make all the difference to their communities and their lives through volunteering and** 2017/2018 has seen an increase in the number of young volunteers (age 18-25) offering their time to volunteer at the Trust. This has been achieved by expanding our voluntary opportunities.

We have introduced roles such as Emergency Department Volunteer and the St George’s Dragon Scheme which have attracted a high number of applicants from the younger generation. We have also expanded our roles outside of the traditional 9-5 hours to give those who are unable to commit due to full time work or education an opportunity to volunteer. Our volunteers reflect the diversity of the local community and we will continue to provide our volunteers with a safe, supportive and welcoming environment. I have provided demographic details relating to active volunteers which provide an insight into the diversity of volunteers at the Trust, together with length of service to show the commitment that volunteers make to the Trust.

Age range of volunteers at the Trust -

Ethnicity of volunteers at the Trust -

Length of service -

Our volunteers participate in a wide range of roles across the Trust, offering their valuable time and skills to support staff and enrich the experience of our service users. The following chart highlights the number of volunteers per role and the total number of hours committed to that role per week.

Number of volunteers per placement

This chart reflects the number of volunteers per placement across the Trust and the total number of hours committed to each role per week (P/W) in brackets.

**4.0 ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES**

During 2017/2018 volunteers were engaged in a number of activities and initiatives including:

* Since April 2017 we have welcomed 87 volunteers on to our induction programme. After collating the evaluations it showed that 89% of the attendees thought the training was excellent and the other 11% thought it was good, none rating it average, poor or very poor. Some of the feedback following volunteer induction has included: *“All the topics covered & discussed were very interesting, important and practical. They were also discussed & presented perfectly”* and *“Excellent Induction – I feel very welcomed as a volunteer and well prepared”.*
* Volunteers’ Week was celebrated during the first week of June. There was an information stand in the main entrance where people could view volunteer profiles, speak to current volunteers and sign up to join the team. Volunteers’ Week also gave us an opportunity to thank our volunteers and they were grateful to receive this recognition from Chief Executive Jacqueline Totterdell who said: “*What would we do without our volunteers? Wherever I go around our organisation I often bump into them whether it be helping patients (and me) find where to go in our (not always easy to navigate) sites or organising sing songs for some of our older patients with dementia. Whatever they do is always with the best interests of our patients, our staff and our hospitals. And this week is a celebration of their kindness, dedication and overall dedication to supporting us at St George’s. They are superstars*”.
* Volunteers are assisting the Head of Nursing for Outpatients & Diagnostics with the re-launch of the Friends and Family Test (FFT) in the outpatient clinics.
* A group of volunteers helped at the PAN London Student Nurse Congress greeting visitors, issuing name badges and assisting with the smooth running of the day by escorting over 150 visitors between lectures.
* Seven volunteers received their 10 years long service award, they all attended the celebratory afternoon tea organised by the Trust.
* One of our Dementia Support Volunteers was named ‘Volunteer of the Year’ after being nominated by her volunteer supervisor for her outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of dementia patients on Rodney Smith Ward.
* Volunteers assisted at the Macmillan coffee morning by sourcing raffle prizes and serving tea & coffee which helped to raise over £2429.32 for Macmillan.
* The Macmillan Information and Support Centre manage a team of volunteers and have retained their volunteers for many years. Since April 2017 three volunteers have received Macmillan Long Service Awards for five years of volunteering. The Macmillan Information and Support Centre team has said: *“We are fortunate that our volunteers are always enthusiastic in providing excellent care, and are very supportive of each other. The majority of our volunteers have been with us for over two years. We are hugely appreciative of our team of volunteers!”*
* Two newly recruited volunteers have attended the Sage & Thyme Level 1 course at St George’s, the Macmillan Listening & Responding course and the Macmillan Cancer Awareness course as part of Macmillan Volunteering Quality Standards.
* One of our volunteers became a mentor in her department for Project Search, supporting young adults with learning difficulties in gaining work experiences.
* Two volunteers are active members of Voice and the group is chaired by one of our volunteers. Voice is an independent group of cancer patients, carers and family members working together to improve the experience of cancer patients at St George’s. They are in the process of developing a new telephone helpline for cancer patients and carers at St George’s which will be serviced by volunteers. It is scheduled to be launched in partnership with the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre in early 2019.
* The Trust has 5000 emergency admissions of dementia patients each year and volunteers can provide significant support for the person with dementia and their carers. I am currently reviewing the Dementia Volunteer Scheme with the Dementia & Delirium Nurses to increase the involvement of volunteers with dementia patients, and discussions are in place to develop a dementia hub.
* Plans are in place to re-launch the Spiritual Care Volunteer Scheme in collaboration with the new Head of Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care, The Rev Christopher van D’Arque. Christopher and I have reviewed the scheme and will begin an imminent recruitment drive using new social media platforms.
* Our volunteers often go above and beyond and have been on hand offering extra time outside of their normal placements to volunteer at events when required. They have helped the Arts Department at numerous events throughout 2017/2018 by directing guests, serving refreshments and assisting the musicians and artists. Volunteers have also helped the St George’s Hospital Charity at numerous fundraising events throughout the year, such as bag packing at Tesco, fundraising with charity tins, information stands in the community and helping our runners at the London Marathon.
* As a small thank you to our volunteers a summer trip was organised in 2017 to Littlehampton and a trip to St Albans in 2018 with travel and lunch kindly paid for by St George’s Hospital Charity. Christmas lunch and a thank you tea party were also arranged for those who were unable to attend the outings.
* I completed recruitment checks for a further cohort of Volunteers recruited by the Deputy Chief Nurse to join the newly formed Patient Partnership and Experience Group. I have been invited to become a member and will work alongside the Patient Partnership and Experience Group to continue to build Voluntary Services and to ensure good coverage of volunteers across the Trust, particularly in Outpatient Clinics and our Emergency Department.

1. **FUTURE PLANS**

* Develop and implement a Volunteering Strategy.
* To further increase volunteer involvement within the Trust with the on-going support from our health care teams. This will be achieved by raising the profile of Voluntary Services across the Trust and actively going to wards and departments to meet staff to develop new roles.
* To be part of the continued strategic ambitions of the Trust - ‘To provide Outstanding Care, Every Time for all of our patients’.
* **To continue to expand our voluntary roles to provide more opportunities for people in the local community, this will include introducing more voluntary roles during the evenings and weekends.**
* To work alongside the Patient Partnership and Experience Group to continue to build Voluntary Services and to ensure good coverage of volunteers across the Trust.
* To investigate the possibility of developing a dementia hub serviced by volunteers in partnership with the Dementia and Delirium Nurses.

**Author: Alexandra Dennis, Voluntary Services Manager Date: October 2018**