

Summer 2022



Sussex Community
NHS Foundation Trust

newsletter



Welcome

We hope you are by now enjoying the long days of summer and can get rest and relaxation where you can. Our Summer Newsletter will hopefully provide some interesting reading for you. We thank all our Volunteers who have said they would like to stay in touch to receive regular communication from us and further opportunities to volunteer. There is information below about further opportunities to volunteer in all our Intermediate Care Beds (ICU), we have also been working hard on new training to ensure all volunteers feel well supported and informed in their roles. Recent Volunteer Evaluation has shown us that nearly 70% of you have felt well supported in your placement which is tremendous. Your contribution continues to be remarkable, and our thanks go out to you all for doing what you do so brilliantly. Photo above Left to right: Paul, Frances, Sue, Lisa, Deb, Mandy, David

Aphasia Befrienders

Many of you may have heard or become familiar with Aphasia with the recent news of Bruce Willis' (actor) diagnosis.

SCFT Aphasia Befrienders are volunteers who have Aphasia, which is normally caused by a stroke, brain hemorrhage, head injury or a brain tumor. Aphasia makes it difficult to read, write or speak. It affects people differently.

Our Befrienders, who have just completed their 6-week speech and language therapy sessions after their Aphasia Diagnosis, will be offering support, companionship, and conversation to other similar service users. This will either be in a client's home or a local meeting point. This type of peer support of shared experience is invaluable.

The volunteers can also use the drop-in centres provided by [Say Aphasia](#), an organisation our Trust works closely with.

If you would like to know more about Aphasia, please look at [Say Aphasia](#) charity website as above.



A group of Befriender volunteers

Update of Activity

Since the Winter 2021 newsletter, Voluntary Services have continued with our 'Reset 2' work of reopening placements which were shut due to C19. We have built on the good work of returning volunteers to Intermediate Care Units and have been able to reopen some non-patient facing administrative roles, volunteering roles within hospitality settings and befriending in patient's homes. We can't thank enough the patience and understanding of some of our longstanding volunteers who have had to wait for a significant period to return when safe to do so.

At the time of writing, 50% of our original pre C19 workforce has returned, and we continue to rebuild.

The continuously changing C19 landscape has continued to disturb the reopening of some placements and is a challenge when it comes to risk assessing roles and returning people safely. For example, many roles which were due to go live at the beginning of 2022 had to be delayed due to the prevalence of the Omicron variant of the virus. Daily we monitor Trust and national guidance on C19 and update and issue new guidance to active volunteers around PPE, c19 testing and self-isolation if a positive contact or living with one as required. Again, thanks to you all for adapting to new requirements. This demonstrates a tangible commitment to keep patients, staff, visitors, and yourselves as safe as possible.

Volunteering Recruitment Fairs



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend took a few of the team out to join the Saturday street fair in Rustington. The bunting, colour co-ordinated costumes and live music all added to the celebratory mood. Meeting existing volunteers and chatting to locals who wanted to hear more about the volunteering opportunities at Zachary Merton Hospital made for a busy morning! Zachary Merton is an intermediate care unit and current volunteer roles include Ward Helpers, Ward Administrator, League of Friends' Shop Trolley, and Chaplaincy with new opportunities including a Ward Helper role. It was such a pleasure to meet so many who are interested in supporting their local NHS.



Sussex Community Trust (SCFT) volunteering service are always looking at ways to recruit volunteers. Arundel hospital like most of our other Intermediate Care Units (ICU) need volunteers to support on the wards, with this in mind we decided to attend the well-established and popular Arundel Farmers Market. We were fortunate enough to have a stand free of charge in April. We took up this opportunity and along with SCFT [Charity \(sussexcommunity.nhs.uk\)](https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk) spent the morning in the sunshine talking to prospective volunteers.

We wandered amongst the crowds talking to people about their local hospital. We talked about the different roles we have available including Ward Helper, Meal time Support and Discharge Support. People were interested to know more detail about the roles and how they would make a difference to the patients

If you would like more information about volunteering at any of our ICU's, please email us via sc-tr.voluntary-services@nhs.net

Volunteer Voice

We are pleased to announce on **Monday 19th September from 4pm to 5.30pm** our first 'Volunteer Voice' forum to listen to the most important people when it comes to Volunteering: You!

We are launching this three monthly forum to listen to feedback and ideas from our highly skilled and experienced volunteer work force, in order to maximise SCFT volunteering opportunities for all existing and new volunteers. We would also like to include ideas to improve SCFT patient experience through volunteering activities.

We are appreciative that even though some volunteers chose not to return after the pandemic, we still have a high number of fantastic volunteers operating throughout East and West Sussex. They do this in a variety of services providing an extraordinary level of support to staff and patients. We really want to harness your thoughts and experiences at our Volunteer Voice to maximise our volunteering offer at SCFT. As we know it's good to talk!

Our two brilliant Volunteer Governors: Elaine and Anne will be attending to share their experiences of being front line volunteers at a variety of services. Jane Corser: Deputy Chief Nurse will also be speaking to give an operational update.

As we are trying to maximise volunteer attendance the forum will be delivered via Zoom. If you are interested in attending please email sc-tr.voluntary-services@nhs.net to register an interest in the first instance. However if you do not have email access please call (01273) 242191. We hope as many of you as possible can attend and look forward to what should be an informative and rewarding session for all participants.

Volunteer Focus – Terry Day

Hi, I am Terry. I started volunteering for SCFT when they opened the vaccination hub in Chichester. The NHS seemed to be under pressure and like lots of people, I was looking to help. I worked in a team guiding people through the vaccination process. They were careful to match volunteers' skills with what needed to be done with lots of support on offer. It was busy at times but that made it a great environment to work in with everybody pulling together.

When the hub closed, I carried on volunteering and started my placement at Bognor hospital, having one to one conversations with patients. It was a new post and they wanted somebody independent to get feedback on the patient's experience. It involved phoning or meeting with patients and talking about their experiences. They are a great team to work with, I get to use my previous working skills, and everybody is appreciative that volunteers give up their time to help.



Twiddle Muffs

Do you enjoy knitting or sewing? Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust's (SCFT's) Dementia Team is asking for help from staff, their families and friends, and members of the public to create sensory twiddle muffs for patients living with dementia. A twiddle muff is a knitted hand warmer with sensory items attached. It contains strands of textured ribbons, beads and various fabrics which may be on both the inside and outside. If some of the bits and bobs – such as buttons, beads, tassels, and ribbons – are on the inside of the twiddle muff, hands can be kept active and warm at the same time. E mail us for more information and where to send your creations!

[Download this printable PDF guide](#) on how to make a twiddle muff.

Getting to know you



Helen was formerly in marketing and has volunteered for 7 months supporting the Occupational Therapy/Physio teams. Helen: "I love being part of a wonderful team dedicated to the wellbeing and recovery of patients. I enjoy using my skills to add new dimensions to the team."

Fin: Rehab Support Worker "Helen is a real asset in the gym with her great observation and comfortable manner with everyone."

Michael: Physio Team Leader "Helen provides support to the seated exercise group and is a great addition and asset to the entire team."

Long Service Recognition

Recognition and appreciation of volunteers is very important to us here at Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, as it gives us an opportunity to officially thank you for all that you do to support our patients and our staff.

In view of this you we are pleased to say (with the aid of Sussex Community NHS Charity) [Charity \(sussexcommunity.nhs.uk\)](https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk) over the next few weeks we will start to distribute badges for 1, 5 and 10 years service.

These will be in bronze (1 year), silver (5 years) and gold (10 years) which we hope you will wear proudly on your polo shirts and tabards! One per volunteer will be distributed dependent on where you are on your volunteer journey.

Plus, along with the gold 10-year badge will be a commemoration plaque. We hope you like these small tokens of our thanks for all that you do.

Longstanding volunteer Maureen receiving her 10year badge and plaque



Going Home Initiative

In June we launched our Going Home Boxes Project which is a simple and effective initiative that positively contributes to patient mental health and emotional wellbeing at a time that is, for some, a very anxious transition from hospital services back into the home environment. A Going Home Box contains food and toiletry items as many of the patients will have been treated on the wards for a number of weeks and lack essential provisions at home.

The initiative was originally funded by our Sussex Community NHS Charity and more recently funded by an ASDA Foundation Charity grant. The process is managed by our Voluntary Services team with volunteers packing and delivering the boxes to the wards, where the ward staff identify appropriate patients nearing the point of discharge.

The referral to receive a Going Home box is focused on patients who might be housebound, live alone, have mobility issues or are socially isolated. When the patient is discharged, the Going Home box is transported with them on the ambulance from SCAS (South Central Ambulance Service) who are kindly supporting us in this brilliant initiative.



Volunteers Week & Thank You Events

During Volunteer's Week (1-7 June) members of our Trust executives came to thank our volunteers for their continued support and help in so many of our services. Jane Corser, Deputy Chief Nurse, visited Zachary Merton Hospital and the Chichester Vaccination Centre. Donna Lamb, Chief Nurse, and Kate Pilcher both went to the Brighton Vaccination Centre and Lewes Hospital. The Executive Team really enjoyed meeting our volunteers, seeing them in action and recognising the immense contribution they make. With the easing of restrictions, we were finally able to hold Thank You Events for the first time in two years due to the generosity of our Hospital [Charity \(sussexcommunity.nhs.uk\)](https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk). Three events were held in June, and we worked closely with community partners to deliver tea parties at Graylingwell Chapel in Chichester, Eastbourne College and BHASVIC college in Brighton. Volunteers had afternoon tea and the chance to chat and catch up in a relaxed environment. The events were also attended by our Chair Peter Horn, Public Governors and staff who all spent an enjoyable few hours thanking our volunteers.





Photo: Christine Howard

Walk for Wards

Thanks to our volunteers who supported the 'Walk for Wards' event arranged by Sussex Partnership NHS Trust at Glynde Place on a sunny day in June. Participants were invited to walk, jog, or run 5km or 10 km to raise money for the Sussex NHS charity of their choice. SCFT volunteers acted as stewards and undertook activities such as checking people in, providing refreshments, guiding people around the route to promote a well-run and enjoyable day for all participants.



Covid Vaccination Programme

We've had a busy year with the vaccination programme, moving from 5 sites in January 2021 down to just three this year – Brighton, Crawley and Chichester.

Our amazing volunteers really stepped up over Christmas and the New Year to support delivery of over 110,000 vaccinations in December and January. Then after a quieter few weeks, we were again busy with spring boosters for the over 75's as well as supporting vaccinations for all age groups from 5 years upwards. Their professionalism, flexibility and good humour has not gone unnoticed; during our recent Volunteers' Week we received many wonderful comments from members of the public and staff working alongside our volunteers:

"Thank you for all your help kindness, every one of you has been just lovely," "Thank you! You have all been so lovely to work alongside, we wouldn't have been able to get through this without you all."

"Such a warm-hearted bunch of volunteers, we have been blessed."

The volunteers are taking a well-earned rest over the summer as their contribution has been phenomenal!

Photo: Fiona, one of our Covid Vaccine Programme volunteers



Befriending and New Roles

Our Befriending project continues to have a positive impact on the lives of both referred clients and volunteers. "I do so enjoy my weekly chat" and "It's great to have someone to chat to, outside of the family" continue to be in the feedback we receive. This service has seen volunteers offer both a listening ear and sign post other organisations who may be able to offer practical support and assistance. Some clients have sought out the services of Social Prescribers who have been able to offer additional support through their service.

Having delivered a successful volunteer programme through the pandemic and gained a greater understanding on why people want to volunteer for SCFT we took the decision that we needed to harness their enthusiasm. What we learnt is volunteers like to help, they like to be kept busy and they like interesting roles where they can make a difference. With this in mind, we have created some interesting new roles that are multi-skilled. For example, we have a Ward Helper role that integrates some aspects of existing roles with the addition of music and reminiscence`



Photo Above:

Befriending at its best!

Medical Devices

Thanks to our volunteers who helped SCFT's Medical Devices Team to replace blood glucose monitors by unpacking approximately 1400 boxes and then repacking new components to be distributed to services trust wide. A fantastic help which was greatly appreciated!

Claiming travel expenses

If you travel via car, bus/train to your volunteering placement and would like to claim travel expenses (up to 15 miles each way) & parking, please get in touch so you we can set you up on the new online claim system:

SC-TR.Voluntary-Services@nhs.net



Contact Us: If you want to get in touch, please do not hesitate to drop us an email: SC-TR.Voluntary-services@nhs.net