

Volunteer News

Join the Trust and make a difference

Issue 5 | Autumn/Winter 2012

Welcome

A big hello to all our volunteers, and staff who support them...



Welcome to our autumn/winter newsletter, featuring articles on the varied and creative volunteer roles within our services. Also included is a great feature on a member of staff who recently volunteered at the Olympics.

As ever, we welcome your articles and ideas for features that promote the work of volunteers in the Trust. To contact us, see the details on the back page of this newsletter.

Allison, Naheed and Michael
Volunteer Coordinators

Events assistant volunteers

The Volunteer Service has often been approached by staff and services for volunteers to support their events. As this was happening on a regular basis, we decided to develop this ad-hoc opportunity into a more dedicated role.

This has proved to be a real benefit to both volunteers and services alike.

We have recruited 19 volunteer events assistants from our existing volunteers, who undertake various helpful tasks including meeting and greeting, facilitating stands and dealing with queries. The feedback from staff and services that have utilised these volunteers has been fantastic. Not only is the Trust benefitting from having more people to support the events open to the public, it is also a great way for the volunteers to be involved and informed about events that matter to their community.

It's clear already that this role will be utilised more and more, and volunteers will have the opportunity to develop their skills and benefit from a greater understanding of the developments and services provided by the Trust.

A poem from one of our events assistants supervisors

Thank you so much to our events assistants
For everything you do
You are generous with your time
Helping with our projects to see them through
You are patient, kind, cheerful and dedicated
Kar, Zaheen and Rob to name a few
We want you to know how appreciated you are
Not just today but all year through

Pamela Upton
PA to John Schofield, Chairman

In the spotlight

I normally volunteer for Oxfam at the Glastonbury Festival every year, so two years ago, when we discovered it wasn't happening this year because of the Olympics, my daughter and I decided to volunteer for the Olympics instead. We've been volunteering at festivals for years, and I had volunteered at the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games, so I was fairly confident I knew what the role would involve. I completed the online application form in October 2010 and hit send...then the waiting began as I knew decisions weren't going to be made for months.

Out of the blue, I had an email from LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games) asking me if I'd like to help with the recruitment of volunteer team leaders at Salford Quays in March last year. Next I had an email asking me to come for my interview – I'd passed the first hurdle!

I went for training in recruitment and selection techniques – all the interviews were very structured and we had to stick closely to a script; then the interviews began. I met some absolutely amazing people who wanted to volunteer, one of them was a widower, left with two small children to bring-up. He'd got involved in the sports they played, trained to be a coach and wanted to volunteer. There was also a young woman whose mum had breast cancer; she'd got into sports to raise money for cancer research and the day before her interview, her mum had the all clear, we both cried with joy. The whole process was very emotional, people were just incredible. One woman had even flown from Hong Kong for her interview!

I was interviewed by one of the LOCOG staff; it was so positive, I was sure I'd be picked. Over 250,000 people applied to volunteer. 100,000 people were interviewed and 70,000 people were selected to volunteer. Both me and my daughter were

chosen - then our training began.

We travelled down to London for six training days over the course of the next nine months. The first was an orientation day, then we got down to role-specific and venue-specific training. I was placed at Greenwich Park, which I know and love, and my job was event services staffing. This meant I looked after all the event services volunteers in Greenwich Park, managing their work allocations, sorting out any problems they had, doing support work for the volunteer team leaders and LOCOG managers.

My days started very, very early, 5.30 am – 6.00 am most mornings, but this meant I was finished by 5.00 pm at the latest. I loved wearing my uniform, but it did sometimes have its disadvantages – one day I was on my way home (I stayed with my son) when someone stopped me to ask where there was a shoe shop – fortunately, I knew the answer to that one! People assumed we knew everything about everything just because we were wearing our Olympic uniforms. My journeys to and from Greenwich Park involved local people chatting to me, telling me how they'd initially thought the Olympics coming to London was a bad idea, but they were actually loving it!

Seeing people returning home after watching an event was wonderful – people brimming over with excitement, wanting to talk about what they'd seen, where they'd come from, what they were going to see next. One of my highlights was being at the dress rehearsal for the final ceremony, it was incredible. Another was watching Team GB winning the pretty horse dancing medal (or 'dressage'), we beat Germany who had



won it the previous eight times. I know nothing about dressage at all, but it looked amazing. I cried during the medal ceremony, and sang my heart out to 'God Save The Queen', I was so proud of our team.

I worked with all kinds of volunteers, who had come from all walks of life, with very different life experiences. As I'm disabled; LOCOG made sure I had all the support I needed to volunteer effectively, and used my feedback from the opening ceremony final dress rehearsal to improve accessibility for disabled spectators.

Part-way through my first week it became obvious that the 12-hour shifts were becoming too much for me, so my LOCOG manager tore my shift list up and worked with me to revise it, so that I could cope. I had to travel for 1½ hours before and after my shift, and she needed me there for 5.30 am – 6.00 am. It was decided I'd get a taxi there in the morning, and she reduced my hours to between seven and eight hours a day. I had wanted to try to work the same shifts as everyone else, but was relieved to have them shortened.

LOCOG threw a huge party for us on the Thursday before the games finished, once the park had closed to spectators. It was such a lovely surprise. We had a barbeque for 270 volunteers, I'm so glad I wasn't doing the cooking! My last shift finished on the final Saturday of the games, and I made it back to Manchester in time to watch the closing ceremony at home.

Volunteering at the Olympics has been a real highlight in my life, I'm so glad I did it. I've also found out that my brother might be competing at the Paralympics in Rio, so I'm already saving up and planning to apply to volunteer there!

Shirley Proctor

Learning and Development Facilitator,
Pennine Care

Volunteer breastfeeding peer support

Breastfeeding protects babies and mothers against many illnesses, improving care in the NHS, and has led to more women starting to breastfeed. However, a lack of support across society means that many mothers encounter problems that force them to stop before they want to. When breastfeeding goes wrong, as well as causing distress and misery for the families involved, there are also economic implications, more illnesses for babies, children and adults, more trips to the GP and more hospitalisation.

The volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters are local women who have been trained by the health visiting team to support breastfeeding in the community. They access mothers through local children's centres, attending antenatal sessions, baby clinics, breastfeeding support groups, and children's centre sessions, etc.

The volunteers are active in the boroughs of Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale in areas where there is low initiation and continuation of breastfeeding. They also support the borough's breastfeeding support groups.

The volunteers provide added value to the care provided by the health visiting team and improve the capacity of the local community to support each other. Some of the volunteers have gone on to find careers after gaining confidence through working as a volunteer.

For further information about the Breastfeeding Peer Support Programme contact **Val Rimmer on 01706 764 734.**

Recognising the time you give

To recognise the commitment of our volunteers, we have worked with the Communications Department, to produce badges which identify the number of years people have volunteered with us.



The bronze coloured badge recognises one year, the silver three years and the gold five years. We will be awarding the badges very soon and we hope you will wear them with pride. **Thank you, you make a difference.**

Volunteers have given 15,461 hours since our last edition. Thank you.

Bealey Community Hospital volunteers make a difference

Bealey Community Hospital currently has four volunteers, all of whom help us in different ways. Initially we sought volunteers to help with reception and to answer the telephone which would allow the nursing staff more time to provide hands-on patient care. After the staff approached Michael Garside, Community Services Volunteer Coordinator, he very quickly brought volunteers to meet us.

Our Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist also asked for volunteers to work with patients to form part of their rehabilitation programme. For example, walking with patients who are stable but need a little more confidence; sitting with them to play board games, cards or jigsaws which improve dexterity, cognitive function and social skills. We currently have two volunteers who fulfil this role and also act as 'befrienders' for patients who are lonely or anxious. Our patients really appreciate having one-to-one time with these volunteers, who bring them news and a sympathetic ear.

The volunteers at Bealey Community Hospital are considered to be part of our team and are very much appreciated by us all. Having volunteers has allowed our staff further opportunity to do their job and to ensure patients get the best quality care possible.

Alison O'Neal
Senior Sister, Pennine Care

Let's Be Clear – Get It Checked

Macmillan Cancer Support is funding a new and exciting project to help increase people's awareness of the signs and symptoms of breast, bowel and lung cancer. The team are developing relationships with targeted communities, community groups and health professionals to recruit and train a group of volunteers who will promote cancer awareness messages in their communities. They are working with people who are most at risk of developing cancer.

The project runs in partnership with The Christie. Oliver Barnes is the Macmillan Community Project Officer for Tameside and Glossop and is based at Tameside Third Sector Coalition. Alice Munby is covering Manchester and is based with the Macmillan Library Service. Amanda Peet is the Macmillan Community Project Manager with overall responsibility for the project, as well as delivering the project within Manchester.

For more information please contact:

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Expert Patient Programme scoops Rochdale pride award

The Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale Expert Patient Programme has won top prize for its volunteering programme at the Rochdale Pride Awards.

Volunteering with the Expert Patient Programme enables volunteers to get involved and:

- Obtain a national qualification with learning credits.
- Develop life-skills and coping strategies.
- Self-manage their own condition through supporting others.
- Increase confidence, motivation and self-efficacy.
- Encourage and support 'back-to-work'.
- Tutors can go on to train to peer assess and become lead trainers in self-management.

Well done to Julie Dawson and the team.

Date for your diary

Thank you lunch

The 2013 thank you lunch will again be held during National Volunteers' Week on 6th June. Further details to follow.

Do you love to sing?...

Join our choir

As part of the Trust's Health and Wellbeing strategy, we are setting up a choir for staff, patients/service users, carers and members of the public.

If you're a seasoned singer, someone who has never sung before, or even just someone who enjoys singing in the shower – why not get involved?

Our sessions will be run by a professional vocal coach so it's a great way to learn

how to sing or to build on your existing vocal talents within a group, covering a wide variety of musical styles. There's no audition and you don't need to be able to read music as we'll start by learning to sing Christmas carols by ear.

If you're interested, please register by emailing: choir.penninecare@nhs.net or ring 0161 716 3035. Look out for details of Christmas events, coming soon!

Sample of the current vacant roles

Computer Support Assistant Orchard House Day Hospital, Royton
Orchard House is an older people's day service for people with mental health problems.

They are looking for volunteers to support service users to access and use the computers.

X-PERT Patient Education Programme Administrator, Bury

To enhance the service offered to people with Diabetes, living within Bury, by assisting in the facilitation of the X-PERT Patient Education Programme.

Please share with others who might be interested or perhaps you are!

Prefer to receive your next issue by email? Please forward your name and email address to:
volunteering.penninecare@nhs.net

Contact us

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