Welcome

I am delighted to have been asked to write the Welcome for this edition of Spotlight. It gives me the opportunity to thank all of you as, sometimes, I know many of you are unable to come to the Volunteers’ evenings which NHS Ayrshire & Arran holds each year.

All the volunteers whether working directly with the NHS or indirectly in other organisations supporting the work of NHS Ayrshire & Arran are valued and appreciated by patients and staff, making hospital stays more amenable and pleasant. Every time I am in one of our hospitals I am reminded of the amount of work put in by all of you. The Board is always aware that, across the community, the voluntary sector makes a significant difference to our society. For many of us it is a way of keeping involved and meeting friends. For others it is a means of putting something back into society to help others.

The new Woodland View facility located in Ayrshire Central Hospital now has a body of volunteers and it is heartening to see not just the well established groups but also that new volunteers come along and offer their services. Our volunteers come from all walks of life but they have one thing in common and that is the success of our highly valued NHS Ayrshire & Arran healthcare service.

I recently had a meeting with Ann Hunter, a Volunteer Scotland Assessor for Investing in Volunteers seeking assurances that we value our volunteers. I was able to assure her that we have annual evenings where NHS Ayrshire & Arran hosts our volunteers and that we have a dedicated resource in Gill Rogers and Linda Jones supporting our volunteers. I hope that we will know the outcome of the award renewal by early 2018.

I am proud to meet you and want to thank you for all you continue to do to support NHS Ayrshire & Arran and I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Spotlight.

Dr Martin Cheyne, Chairman, NHS Ayrshire & Arran

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NHS Ayrshire & Arran holds the Investing in Volunteers (IV) UK Quality Standard for organisations that involve volunteers.

Volunteers are not paid. Regardless of whether they are an NHS Ayrshire & Arran Direct volunteer or an Indirect volunteer with one of our voluntary organisations or community partners.... they are priceless!

The added value brought by volunteers through their gift of time - whether in hospital or community healthcare settings - impacts positively not only on our patients, but also on staff and on the volunteers themselves.

Become a volunteer and make a difference to our patients, staff – and yourself!
Meet Robbie - Therapy animal

Happiness is Robbie, a Border collie, who brings joy to patients and staff alike in Ailsa Hospital, where he and his owner Marylin, volunteer on alternative Thursday afternoons. Marylin got Robbie at 6 ½ weeks old, and he is now 7 years young.

In 2014, while at the Crufts dog show, Marylin recognised that Robbie's loving, caring nature, and love of meeting people was a real asset; Robbie could be a perfect therapy animal. Crufts, gave Marylin a Pets as Therapy application form and Robbie passed all their tests with flying colours, and that was the beginning of his animal therapy career.

A vacancy for a Therapy animal handler volunteer arose at Ailsa and Marylin was asked if she would be interested. Robbie was then re-assessed by Pets as Therapy for this hospital based role and again passed with flying colours making Marylin one proud owner.

As Marylin is used to dealing with people with learning difficulties and those living with dementia, she wanted to share Robbie’s warm and affectionate nature with patients. The happiness and joy he brings to the patients, and the excitement on their faces when they see him, is the best reward Marylin could get, and Robbie has formed a special bond with many of them. Marylin is always happy to give her time to volunteering as a Therapy animal handler volunteer; as she says, it could be her one day.

Marylin recalls ‘because of the bond he had formed with one of the patients, Robbie was asked by the relatives to attend the funeral, as he was considered a special friend.’ Another patient, who had never touched a dog before Robbie came into their life found this to be a new and rewarding experience. Marylin states ‘it’s not about my volunteering experience, it’s the happiness that Robbie brings to others; seeing him and the patients enjoying each other’s company makes me content.’

Margaret Milligan, Spotlight volunteer reporter

Editorial note: NHS Ayrshire & Arran now has an Animals In A Healthcare Setting policy. This means all Therapy animal handler volunteers must be registered with NHS Ayrshire & Arran who provide them with a yellow Volunteer lanyard and ID badge to wear. If you have an Animal therapy handler volunteer in your service area, or you are a Therapy animal handler, please contact gill.rogers@aapct.scot.nhs.uk for any registration queries.

Complementary therapy support volunteers

‘I’m sorry, you’ve got cancer’- words which most of us dread. I know because it happened to me. Obviously the first priority following diagnosis is to make sure you obtain the best medical treatment available as soon as possible but a cancer patient has other needs as well. How do you cope with the uncertainty, the anxiety, the sheer stress of it all? It is here that complementary therapy can help. Such therapy covers a number of areas but most commonly used ones are Reiki and Reflexology.

To find out more about the role of volunteers in this field, I went to see Shoana Connell, the Macmillan Transforming Care After Treatment Project Manager, a job title which itself indicates the circumstances in which complementary therapy is used. Shoana, who has substantial experience in cancer support services, told me that the Complementary therapy support volunteer role was set up by a former nurse consultant following discussions with Ayrshire Cancer Support and has been running for the past six years. Around four volunteers operate within oncology services at University Hospitals Ayr and Crosshouse.
Complementary therapy support volunteers (continued from page 2)

But in what way do the volunteers support complementary therapists? Shoana explained that the volunteers visit the patients about two days before the therapist to talk about the services available in a relaxed informal way. Patients can then decide whether they wish to take advantage of this opportunity and, if so, what therapies they would like to have. Using this background information, the therapist can visit the patient and deliver the chosen therapy without delay.

Sometimes volunteer support can take unexpected forms. Shoana recalled an occasion when a patient, who otherwise had no visitors, told a volunteer that he wanted to know the latest football scores. Once home, the volunteer made a check and phoned back with the results. This action certainly contributed to the patient’s wellbeing even though it did not form part of the volunteer’s role description!

Volunteers, of course, do not operate in a vacuum. Before they go on the wards, they receive training both from Ayrshire Cancer Support and NHS Ayrshire and Arran. Post training, they are supervised by a nurse consultant who checks how they are doing and addresses any concerns they might have.

So what would Shoana say to other services considering employing volunteers and is there not a danger of them interfering with the work of health care professionals? Shoana thinks that such concerns are misplaced. Staff should value volunteers who, in her experience, work hard to deliver the services for which they are responsible. Provided clear boundaries are set and appropriate support systems established thus ensuring that volunteers feel part of the team, they can be a considerable asset, indeed cancer services could not operate without them!

James McBroom, Spotlight volunteer reporter

Volunteer training

All NHS Ayrshire & Arran direct volunteers receive volunteers Induction training. Some volunteer roles will also have specific training that is essential for the role. For example, Ward volunteers have a full day’s training that covers boundaries, communication, patient contact hand hygiene as well as dementia whereas the Welcomers have a handbook with time alongside an experienced volunteer. Additional training can also be offered to volunteers. This has included:

- Basic alcohol awareness.
- Dealing with distress
- Drug awareness
- Mealtimes
- Volunteer Information System (VIS database)
- Wheelchair use

These opportunities are offered to volunteers but it is the volunteer’s choice as to whether they attend or not.

Anita McClelland, a Welcome desk and Spotlight admin volunteer has attended some of the additional training and has found all the training to be really informative and worthwhile. Anita says ‘It’s good to know what patients are experiencing and useful to understand how illness affects patients, their family & staff’. She also says ‘I would recommend that all volunteers and staff take the opportunity to go on these courses’

Editorial note: During 2018, Indirect volunteers, that is volunteers who are recruited or managed by a community; voluntary or other third sector organisation and give their time to the benefit of NHS services, will be offered the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Volunteers Corporate Induction training. This is to supplement, and not replace, Induction training which must be provided by the entity for which they directly volunteer.
Alex Dunsmuir, Heartstart volunteer trainer

Heartstart Ayrshire & Arran is a local charity partially funded by NHS Ayrshire & Arran, which is dedicated to training the public in Emergency Life Support skills, (ELS) including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, (CPR) management of the unconscious victim (recovery position), choking and bleeding, and introduction to Automatic External Defibrillator. (AED). Anecdotal evidence has shown at least 20 episodes where trainees or trainers have successfully utilised their skill, saving the lives of patients suffering cardiac arrest, choking or drowning. Heartstart training is open to everyone and currently 22 of 27 Secondary Schools and 47 of 139 Primary Schools are affiliated to Heartstart Ayrshire & Arran and provide the training within school.

In 1998, while working in the Local Authority, Alex trained as one of their 1st Aiders and it was then that he was introduced to Heartstart. He was so impressed with the charity he made a decision to become one of their volunteer trainers taking his first class in April 1999. Since then he has taken over 300 Heartstart training classes and has been involved in training over 4,800 people. He has received feedback confirming that lives have been saved as a result of the training he has provided.

Alex is also a Church Officer at St Andrew’s & St Marnock’s Parish Church and the Property Convener for the Church which also includes the Howard Centre. This gives him the opportunity to volunteer, along with his wife, at the Well Café in the Centre. Both properties are well insured, however upkeep can on occasion, be stressful …. especially considering the rainfall over this summer!

Alex’s weeks are therefore a mixture of Church business, Heartstart and volunteering in the Well Café and his week can go something like:

- Sundays & Mondays - church work, not to mention occasional weddings & funerals
- Tuesdays - Well Café in the Howard Centre
- Wednesday – Day out with his wife and
- The rest of the week - Heartstart classes arranged by Linda & Brenda.

Alex is a time served joiner and for the last 20 years of his working life he was a property officer with the local authority. Even though he retired two years ago he still uses his joinery skills to build rocking horses for children, treasuring his prototype – a rocking T Rex dinosaur!

Alex is most proud of his 18 years as a Heartstart Trainer and is now one of the charity’s Directors. Alex’s Heartstart ambitions for the future would be to raise funds for more practice manikins and encourage more people to attend Heartstart training, leading to every person in Ayrshire & Arran fully trained in Emergency Life Support.

Lee Weipers, Spotlight volunteer reporter

For information on Heartstart, email heartstart_ayrshire@hotmail.com or call 01294 323478

Staff fundraising — Dementia Awareness Week

Eglinton House staff and visitors enjoyed another Bake sale in June as part of Dementia Awareness Week 2017. As you can see, Dorothy and Kate, the organisers, had a baking success on their hands with a variety of cakes donated by staff.

“We wanted to help raise awareness of this illness that affects so many people, both those suffering and their loved ones. The baking soon disappeared, resulting in us raising a good amount for this well deserving charity”. A total of £76.01 was raised.
Dementia Awareness Week (continued from page 4)

Often this type of volunteering by staff can go unrecognised but Spotlight would still like to celebrate it. So let us know if your team or department have undertaken any fundraising activities, on or off NHS site for any health or social care organisations and we can ask one of our volunteers reporters to gather your story for the next issue.

Volunteering Improvement Group (VIG) update

Ayrshire & Arran’s Volunteering Improvement Group (VIP) (Membership includes NHS staff, volunteers and representatives from the Third Sector and East Ayrshire Local Authority)

The VIG has recently reviewed and finalised the ‘Managing volunteering activities in NHS Ayrshire & Arran’ and the ‘Reimbursement of ‘out of pocket’ expenses’ policies. There are no major changes to either document and both policies now have Equalities Standard Impact Assessments. A new guidance document titled ‘Creating collaborative volunteering opportunities with the Third Sector’ is now available.

VIG members are monitoring the Scottish Government’s recommendations following the Lampard report into Jimmy Savile’s volunteering activities within NHS England. One area that is under consideration is training, especially in relation to adult and child protection training for volunteers.

Volunteer promotion now includes ‘selfie’ volunteers photo posts on NHS Ayrshire & Arran’s Facebook page and thank you cards are being developed from the 2016 volunteer evening feedback from the ‘Why I volunteer’ cards. ‘Why I volunteer’ quotes can also be found in the Spotlight newsletter too!

Better Health Hub (formerly Health Information and Support Centre)

Do you have questions about your health and wellbeing? As a volunteer, we can support you. If you are looking for help with your health and wellbeing we are here to support you. At the Hub we will talk about what matters to you and work with you to take positive steps to better health. We can provide support and information on: stopping smoking, being more active, healthy weight, alcohol and drugs, managing stress and looking after your mental wellbeing, money advice, housing and home energy, caring for relatives or friends, local activities, groups and services.

We are open Monday - Friday, 10am – 4pm, Main Entrance, University Hospital, Crosshouse

Call us on: 01563 825611 or email: AA-UHB.InfoandSupport@nhs.net

For more information visit: http://www.nhsaaa.net/services-a-z/h-health-information-and-support-centre.aspx

Our selfie stars found here are:

Patricia Gray & Maureen McGregor
Robert Palmer
Christine Miles
William McClure
Volunteering in the Voluntary Sector

Our voluntary sector partners in East, North and South Ayrshire also have a variety of volunteer roles that might interest you. You can contact them direct to find out more about the roles they have to offer.

Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire
Email: maureen.murphy@eav.org.uk
Call: 01563 544765

The Ayrshire Community Trust (North Ayrshire)
Email: info@theayrshirecommunitytrust.co.uk
Call: 01294 443044

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire
Email: hazel@vasa.scot
Call: 01292 437335

The Participation Network

NHS Ayrshire & Arran engages with a virtual group of patients, carers, members of the public and community groups who have an interest in health and social care services, collectively known as the Participation Network. Members are provided with information and opportunities to be involved on a wide variety of health related topics based on their health and social care interests. Volunteers are very welcome to join NHS Ayrshire & Arran’s Participation Network.

The Participation Network have recently formed a working group to help support and promote public engagement across Ayrshire.

Every member of the Participation Network also receives a member’s card which they can use to access discounts and special offers from a variety of businesses and services across Ayrshire.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Participation Network please telephone 01563 575416 or email: ParticipationNetwork@aapct.scot.nhs.uk

Have your details changed?
We have to ensure that all our records are kept up to date. Have you recently changed your address or telephone number or even got married? You need to inform us of these changes so we can update our database.

It is also important that you notify Gill Rogers if you have stopped volunteering or have been absent for longer than 3 months. At this stage we will ask you to complete a leaving questionnaire and return your ID badge and any uniform you might have been given.

There were three finalists for the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Achieves 2017 Volunteer of the year award and they were:

- Marty Graham, Volunteer Peer Worker
- Recovery at work
- Welcome Desk Volunteers, Woodland View

The overall winner of the award, Recovery at work, was announced at the awards ceremony held in the University Hospital Ayr at the end of June.

Quote from NHS Ayrshire & Arran Volunteer attending 2016 Volunteers evening

Question: Why do you volunteer?
Answer: “We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone”

Editorial group info (see photo opposite)
The Editorial group comprises:

- James McBroom (Volunteer)
- Anita McClelland (Volunteer)
- Margaret Milligan (Volunteer)
- Lee Weipers (Volunteer)

Supported by Gill Rogers, Person Centred Care Officer (Volunteering)

Please note:
All articles are either written or edited and approved by volunteers. This means there may be errors and/or misinterpretation. If this does happen, please let us know by contacting Gill Rogers by email gill.rogers@aapct.scot.nhs.uk or phone 01292 513669