

2022-2023

Volunteering Annual Report

The volunteering service has continued to grow and develop by building a diverse and inclusive community of volunteers.

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Foreword

Volunteering is invaluable to our NHS Fife services. It enhances not only the patient's journey and experience by offering support and helping to reduce loneliness and isolation. It can also offer a new focus and challenge to those who want to make a difference, sharing their experiences and sacrificing their own time for others. Volunteering creates opportunities to gain new skills and knowledge, helping to build confidence and resilience.

The last 12 months have continued to be challenging for our volunteering services. Our volunteering leads have been working hard to grow and remobilise our volunteers after the COVID-19 pandemic, redefining roles and engaging with services to explore new, exciting, meaningful opportunities for our volunteers and patients.

Our dedicated volunteers come from various backgrounds and locations across Fife. The Volunteer Leads worked alongside our Equality and Human Rights colleagues to launch a survey to better understand our volunteer demographics and identify areas to focus on for future recruitment and retention.

The Volunteer Leads have been focusing on reintroducing volunteers to the Hospice at Victoria Hospital and scoping the possibility of volunteers supporting our mental health teams. The Volunteer Leads have also been supporting the recruitment of the Community Listening Volunteers, who continue to deliver a vitally important service to those experiencing difficulties in their lives. They are excited to continue working alongside Spiritual Care to support and widen this service across our Fife communities.

We were delighted to relaunch the Volunteering Strategy Group, and we have had great support. The group aims to ensure that policies, guidelines, and best practices relating to volunteers are consistently followed and implemented across NHS Fife. We want to showcase and celebrate the tremendous contributions of volunteers, recognising and sharing their stories, efforts, and successes. We also hope to focus on and encourage the number of volunteers engaging with NHS Fife and explore how best to do this.

Although it has again been a busy year, we are delighted to continue working with our teams and volunteers and are excited to grow and develop the Volunteering service. We cannot emphasise enough the value of their commitment and contribution to NHS Fife and patients' lives. A huge, continued, heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers and teams for their dedication, support, and hard work.

Siobhan McIlroy

Head of Patient Experience

Introduction and Summary

This annual report for NHS Fife Volunteering Service covers the financial period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and details the volunteering activity throughout this period.

During this time, the Volunteering Service has continued to navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated infection control and prevention measures while actively promoting, growing, and developing the service.

National Guidance and Policy

Volunteering within NHSScotland is supported by the Scottish Government's Volunteering for All, Our National Framework, April 2019. The Framework sets the direction for Scotland's approach to volunteering over the next decade by focusing first and foremost on the volunteer, rooted in our national values of kindness, dignity and respect. It highlights and recognises the changes required to break down barriers to volunteering and to create more diverse and inclusive opportunities for everyone to engage in throughout their life.

Scottish Governments Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan, June 2022, seeks to build upon the Volunteering for All Framework and maximise the impact of volunteering. It aims to create an environment and a community of practice in which volunteering can adapt to changing priorities and continue to thrive. It seeks to establish accountability for ensuring that the needs of volunteers are at the centre of future decision-making.

NHS Fife's current policy was last reviewed in April 2021, with the next refresh due by April 2024. At the time of writing, it is undergoing review. Associated policy: NHS Fife Volunteer Expenses Procedure will also be reviewed upon receipt of anticipated Healthcare Improvement Scotland Volunteer Programme guidance, which will advocate for boards to increase the mileage rate for volunteers, as this has not been amended by Scottish Government for over 12 years and to move to best practice of 45p per mile in line with HMRC figures. Volunteer Leads are conscious of the impact of the increased cost of living on our volunteers and are apprehensive that this may become a barrier to entry for some.

Workforce and Support to Volunteering Services

The team consists of two Volunteer Leads (1.8 WTE) supported by one full-time administrative assistant (1.0 WTE). The service reports directly to the Head of Patient Experience (HoPE).

The Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme, delivered by Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), advances the volunteering agenda in NHSScotland through effective leadership, governance, consultancy, and expert advice. HIS offers a range of publications providing information, guidance, and best practices. The programme offers a package of support to volunteer managers, including peer networking sessions, practice development sessions, and access to a 'volunteering helpdesk' for support alongside a virtual Volunteering Community of Practice.

Fife Voluntary Action (FVA) is our local Third Sector Interface (TSI). It provides good practice guidance, training, and networking opportunities for the volunteering team and locally promotes volunteer opportunities and recruitment.

Remobilisation and Recruitment

Remobilisation from the COVID-19 pandemic has been slow, adapting to ongoing changes to reflect shielding, immunisation status, lateral flow testing, mask-wearing and social distancing. All acute and community volunteers who wished to return have now successfully remobilised, with the exception of those volunteering with Therapets. Volunteer Leads are in communication with Canine Concern, who are the registered body that train and regulate Therapets, infection control and health and safety colleagues to navigate their safe return to community settings. The service has received requests from patients, their families, and staff for this valuable volunteering to resume.

Volunteering within the palliative care service has yet to resume following the closure and refurbishment of the Victoria Hospital-based hospice and the change of service delivery, which has seen the dedicated hospice ward at Queen Margaret Hospital close and palliative care being delivered as an outreach model.

During this period, recruitment has been open, and a variety of roles have been promoted via the corporate website, corporate social media, attendance at school career fayres, and FVA.

Volunteer Demographic

NHS Fife Volunteering Services presently has 78 volunteers across 6 sites (Victoria Hospital, Queen Margaret Hospital, Adamson Hospital, Cameron Hospital, Glenrothes Hospital, and St Andrews Hospital) and 9 public partner volunteers engaging with groups across NHS Fife.

We are unable to adequately monitor our equality and diversity characteristics due to the limitations of the national Volunteer Information System. As such, with the current system constraints, the optimum solution was to conduct an annual anonymous survey of all active volunteers, with the results representing a snapshot of the volunteers taking part at that moment in time. In March 2023, the NHS Fife Volunteer cohort (Acute services, Community hospitals and public partner volunteers) was asked to participate in an equality monitoring survey, which yielded a 60% response rate. (see Appendix 1)

An inclusive volunteer service should reflect the community it serves. Where national census information was available for the Fife Health Board, this was used for comparative purposes.

The data tells us that males and people in the age brackets 26-35, 36-45 and 46-55 are unrepresented in our volunteer cohort.

The Volunteer Service is working with FVA colleagues and our Equality and Human Rights Team to understand and address these gaps.

Service Activity and Development

2022-2023 quarter 4 (Jan-Mar 2023) figures:

Number of new enquiries received	100
Number of application forms Returned	31
Total number of interviews held	18
Total number of orientations conducted	26
Total number of new volunteer placements	17
Total hours of volunteering delivered	2529

As part of a national reporting exercise to the Scottish Government, between April 2022 and March 2023 (inclusive), NHS Fife recorded an average of 50 volunteers delivering over 8500 hours of support across acute and community hospitals.

Volunteer Leads took part in "Make your mark" inclusive volunteering workshops facilitated by AAI Employability, an inclusive recruitment enterprise advocating good ethics and assisting businesses how to recruit more diversity to their workplace and how to enhance their inclusion practices. Resulting action plans have been produced, and the actions are in progress. The volunteer showcase, as Appendix 2, was one such action. The showcase feature allows prospective volunteers to see a range of volunteers across demographics. It promotes the ethos that volunteering is for all and should be representative of the community we serve.

NHS Fife is an anchor institution, a large organisation connected to our local area and community. Providing volunteering opportunities for the people of Fife enhances their own health and wellbeing, and supports access to education and employment. Employability can be increased by volunteers learning new skills and building their confidence to either enter or re-enter the workforce. It can also be the first step in the career pathway for those looking to pursue careers specifically within healthcare and the NHS. The volunteer service is actively building on this, linking with colleagues to attend high school career fairs and working with council partners to engage with employability clients.

The Volunteering Strategy Group has been relaunched with the purpose to:

- ensure that volunteering national policies, guidelines and best practice are implemented across NHS Fife and followed consistently.
- influence policy and practice in order to ensure that the volunteering service is adequately resourced and supported. To identify and resolve any obstacles to this.
- champion the volunteering service at both an operational and board level, recognising and celebrating the contribution of volunteers throughout NHS Fife.
- maximise the number of volunteers engaged with NHS Fife; striving to have a volunteering cohort reflective of the communities we serve.

The current spread of the volunteering service is not Fife Wide, with a notable absence within Mental Health Services. Volunteer Leads are currently engaging in a scoping exercise to understand what meaningful volunteer support would be like within mental health services.

Volunteers and our Community Listening Service

Our Community Listening Volunteers continue to provide an important service to the population of Fife. In the last year, they have provided a pivotal service that has allowed active listening and therapeutic service to help many people who were experiencing difficulty in their lives. This is a community assets-based type of approach. The result is that individuals are supported to make sense of their circumstances during periods of transition and change, helping them recognise and use their own and communal assets with a view to proactively developing their wellbeing. The recently published Scottish Government framework on Spiritual Care recognises the community listening service's significant contribution and recommends that it be widened across the community.

From the 1 April 2022 to the 31 March 2023, CCL received 318 new referrals and provided 1153 listening sessions.

We currently have 16 active listeners providing CCL in 15 GP Practices and to the Improving Cancer Journey Project. During 2023, a number of new volunteers undertook the National Formation Course, resulting in an increase of 7 volunteers being identified for NHS Fife. We hope these new volunteers will be appointed in the last quarter of 2023. As articulated within the new National Framework, the value of CCL has never been more recognised and is seen as being pivotal to the wellbeing of many patients across the Health and Social Care Partnership. There is a need for further growth and development, and this will be actively considered in the next year or so.

Celebrating Volunteering

NHS Fife participates annually in recognising and celebrating our volunteers during National Volunteers Week, which this year took place from 1 to 7 June. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to gather volunteers to mark the occasion, but we acknowledged this through thank you cards and a series of social media posts highlighting and thanking our volunteers.

Fortunately, local policy permitted us to gather the volunteers for a Christmas celebration, which was well attended and well received.



In November 2022, a memorial presentation of artwork took place in tribute to Helen Hagan. Helen volunteered as a play volunteer in the Children's Unit at the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy, for over 30 years, beginning in 1988. Helen provided vital support to the play staff by providing and supervising play opportunities within the play rooms.

The presentation was made to Helen's daughter, Mary Sparling, by NHS Fife Chief Executive Carol Potter and NHS Fife Chair Tricia Marwick. The painting was donated by the artist, John Gifford. The scene is of Dysart Harbour which was of personal significance to Helen.

“Sandra is an incredible volunteer; I can really see the impact she is trying to make with the patients in ward 7... I really appreciate her advice and guidance...I would love to shadow her again”

(New volunteer reflection on shadowing session with experienced volunteer)

“It’s been brilliant, first-hand experience”

(Volunteer reflection on volunteer experience in the ward, Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy)

“You made such a difference when you volunteered with us and the patients and staff adored you. You have been a pleasure to have in the ward”

(Senior Charge Nurse reflection to volunteer at the end of their volunteering, Cameron Hospital)

“I attended the Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline...at the front door I was met with professionalism... the friendly meeter and greeter at the door made me feel as though I was entering a top hotel”

(Patient Feedback via Care Opinion)

“All the staff welcomed me and helped me to get to know the place and helped me to get to know the patients.All the patients were super kind and I enjoyed talking to them all...overall an amazing first day and I can’t wait to go back”

(Volunteer reflection, Glenrothes Hospital)

“I always consider it a privilege to be a member of your team”

(Volunteer reflection, St.Andrews Hospital)

“

“Today was a really good volunteering day. A very nice elderly woman was deposited in a wheelchair near the hospital entrance after her clinic appointment. She asked me if I could help her on her phone to get a taxi. I did, there was to be a 20 minute wait and she decided she'd like a cup of tea while waiting. I wheeled her to Costa, returned her to wait on the taxi making sure she was ok and not in a draught, etc. She kept saying how helpful I'd been... how nice everyone was in the clinic too and how happy she'd been with all the people she'd met. A very happy customer! ”

(Meet and greet volunteer reflection, Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy)

Moving Forward 2023-2024

Strategy: A strategy and associated action plan is required to mobilise and realise our Volunteer Policy and reflect the aims of Volunteering for All, Our National Framework.

Developing roles: Working with colleagues and volunteer candidates to develop volunteer roles that are meaningful and purposeful, and allow people to get involved and stay involved. Increasing volunteering participation for all and addressing inequalities is vital to continuing to expand opportunities for more people to volunteer. Without taking action to engage and support people of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer, communities will lose out on their talents.

Associated Documents and Links

- Volunteering in NHSScotland Programme Annual Report 2022-23;
[Volunteering in NHS Scotland Annual Report 2022-23 | HIS Engage](#)
- NHS Fife Volunteering Policy;
[Volunteering Policy | NHS Fife](#)
- Volunteering for All: National Framework;
[Volunteering for All: national framework - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan;
[Volunteering action plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Appendix 1: Volunteering Equality and Diversity

SBAR

Situation

In March 2023 the NHS Fife Volunteer cohort (Acute services, Community hospitals and public partner volunteers) totalling 88, were asked to participate in an equality monitoring survey. 53 responses were received (60% response rate)

Background

Due to the inability of the national Volunteer Information System (VIS) to accurately and meaningfully record equality data from volunteers, NHS Fife have not been able to engage in any equality monitoring for a number of years. Healthcare Improvement Scotland's National Volunteer Programme are in the process of commissioning a new VIS; however it is likely to be at least 18 months until a new system is available. Anonymity is key to gathering this data; however this presents the greatest challenge to allow the data to be maintained. As such with the current system constraints the optimum solution is to conduct an annual anonymous survey of all active volunteers, with the results representing a snapshot of the volunteers taking part at that moment in time. The survey was administered via MSTEams, with the option of hard copy forms available.

Assessment

The survey and responses can be found in Appendix 2.

An inclusive volunteer service should be reflective of the community it serves. Where national census information is available for the Fife Health Board area these figures are shown as a percentage in the table for comparative purposes

The most notable variations between the volunteering cohort and that of general public in Fife are;

Sex

	Respondents	Fife
Female	77.4%	52%
Male	22.6%	48%
Non-Binary	0	Not represented in census
Prefer not to say	0	Not represented in census

The number of males represented within the volunteering cohort is 22.6%, which is over 50% less than the male population of Fife at 48%.

Age

	Respondents	Fife
16-25	34%	12.8%
26-35	3.8%	11.4%
36-45	1.9%	14.2%
46-55	5.7%	14.6%
56-65	20.8%	12.9%
66 and over	34%	16.5%

The most significant variations between participation and population by age are highlighted above in yellow, the most marked of these being in 36-44 age bracket.

Recommendations

The Volunteer Service will now seek to reduce these variations; to increase participation by males and those aged 26-55. In order to do this the service will conduct a scoping exercise in order to establish the barriers to these groups (including other health boards, Healthcare Improvement Scotlands Volunteer Programme and other voluntary organisations) Following this the volunteer service will produce an improvement plan to reduce barriers and promote entry to volunteering for underrepresented groups.

Appendix 2: Volunteer Stories

[Volunteer stories | NHS Fife](#)



Volunteer Name: Suleman Khan

Volunteering Role: Ward-based/ Meet & Greet

Place of Volunteering: Ward 1 & Reception QMH

How long have you been volunteering/when did you start volunteering:

Started May 2022

Why did you get involved with volunteering?

I wanted to get involved in volunteering with NHS Fife to acquire hospital work experience to support my medical school applications. I also used the experiences to determine if healthcare is the industry I want to work in. Offering some form of help to the NHS, especially considering the strain its under, was also a big part of why I wanted to volunteer.

What do you get out of/enjoy about volunteering?

I have learnt quite a lot about myself and what a career in healthcare involves through my time as a volunteer. From the importance of strong communication skills, empathy and teamwork on patient outcomes, to what I would find to be the less glamorous parts of working in a hospital. Despite the challenges, the reward of being trusted to help individuals in my community during a vulnerable and scary time for them makes the work worth it.

Do you have any reflections you would share about your volunteering experience, and would you recommend volunteering to others?

The NHS Fife volunteering team is a fantastic and supportive bunch, so whether you want to offer a helping hand to your local hospital or build essential experiences to support your future aspirations then give them an email.



Volunteer name: Jack Wilson

Volunteering role: Response Volunteer

Place of volunteering: Ward 1, Glenrothes Hospital

How long have you been volunteering/when did you start volunteering?

Started in November 2022.

Why did you get involved with volunteering?

I had experience of the NHS and healthcare through family dealings, and I wanted to get experience volunteering in this.

What do you get out of/enjoy about volunteering?

I enjoy trying to make a difference to our patients' hospital stay and finding out a bit about each of the patients and what really matters to them.

Do you have any reflections you would share about your volunteering experience, and would you recommend volunteering to others?

If it is something you think you would enjoy definitely go for it! It is a great experience being a part of the ward and a part of the patients' hospital stay.

We provide accessible communication in a variety of formats including for people who are speakers of community languages, who need Easy Read versions, who speak BSL, read Braille or use Audio formats.

Our SMS text service number **07805800005** is available for people who have a hearing or speech impairment.


To find out more about accessible formats contact:

fife.EqualityandHumanRights@nhs.scot or phone **01592 729130**

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