

P82 **PARTNERSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN PALLIATIVE CARE**

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**Introduction** This Project is an attempt to diversify the hospice volunteer base using volunteers from ages 16–25 years in a specifically designed programme. Managed within the constraints of the National Curriculum the programme is an opportunity for volunteers interested in a Health and Social Care career to experience palliative care.

**Aim** The main aim of the project is to promote the principles of palliative care provision to a wider audience within the community. The programme is keen to encourage young people from a variety of diverse backgrounds to volunteer and to create new intergenerational links with patients and their families while enhancing a CV or improving job prospects.

**Method** A number of new volunteer roles and a Volunteer Induction Programme were developed. Young volunteers were recruited through schools, colleges and various agencies working in the community. Placements have been facilitated using established volunteers as mentors and were monitored and supported on an ongoing basis.

**Results** Patients have benefited enormously from the involvement of young people with opportunities to learn new skills from volunteers some with additional needs. The link with a younger generation has offered a forum for sharing stories and experiences.

Volunteers have been able to access places at university, gain employment and build their skill base citing their experience of palliative care in a hospice setting.

**Discussion** The project has been monitored throughout and evaluated on a yearly basis measuring personal outcomes and benefits to patients, staff and families. It has exceeded expectations in terms of interest in the scheme and commitment of volunteers.

**Conclusion** Young people from a wide variety of backgrounds have made a worthwhile contribution to the quality of life of patients. They will take their experiences and spread the hospice message in the future.