

## HOSPICE CARE: FIT FOR THE FUTURE - ORAL PRESENTATIONS

### Conference Papers 1

#### 01 OUR DEEDS DETERMINE US, AS MUCH AS WE DETERMINE OUR DEEDS

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**Introduction** In March 2012 Willowbrook started to support the rehabilitation of currently serving offenders by offering volunteer placements in our Warehouse. This was a very bold move by the Hospice which had previously relied on traditional volunteering methods.

**Aims** The Hospice's Strategic Business plan is to broaden the diversity of its volunteering by giving volunteer opportunities to young people who may not have come across the Hospice movement in their lives. Willowbrook could provide work experience to prisoner's approaching the end of their sentence supporting the Prisons Outreach Placement programme and raise extra funds to provide for patient care.

**Methods** The views of all the participants needed to be taken into account - a visit to the prison arranged meeting with the Prison Placement Officer, a business case was proposed to the Hospice Trustees, Senior Managers and Warehouse Staff. In May 2012 the first prisoners arrived at the warehouse.

**Results** For the Hospice - over the 18 months the 10 prisoners have made a fantastic contribution with over 5000 hours of support the warehouse has been able to increase its contribution to patient care by 12%, all the prisoners have settled in quickly with both Hospice staff and existing volunteers.

For the Prison Service - Willowbrook is a highly reputable organisation, they know the prisoners will be supervised and provided with training.

For the Prisoner - they feel more fulfilled and have more skills to take them back into 'normal' life.

**Conclusions** The Hospice Prison Volunteer Placement programme continues to be a highly successful partnership between the Prison Service, prisoners and the Hospice. The hospice gains more volunteering time and funds, the prisoners have gained confidence, team working and independence skills that they can utilise outside the prison and the Prison Service has a professional, reliable organisation to work with.

#### 02 VOLUNTEERING IN PARTNERSHIP (VIP): PROMOTING COMPASSION

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This DOH funded project aimed to increase the volunteering capacity and the personalisation agenda in 3 organisations which support those with long term conditions, the frail elderly and individuals who are at the end of life.

The project sought to create new volunteering opportunities for young people aged 16-18 by challenging the paternalistic and risk adverse attitudes of care providers who were reluctant to let young people volunteer with patients.

Project management methodology was used to deliver the project. The organisations held meetings with current staff/volunteers and literature was provided to explain the nature of the project and to answer any questions.

All VIPs received comprehensive training which promoted the values of compassion, dignity, communication skills and care supporting tasks, eg assisting people at mealtimes.

This first stage of the VIP project has been highly successful and has introduced young volunteers into areas that have not previously been available to them. The key outcome is that, with the right support and training, young people can make a very positive contribution to the personalisation agenda of caring and support. The feedback from staff, patients and the young people themselves has been very positive and they appreciate the employability benefits of being part of the VIP scheme.

The project has benefited the hospice in a number of ways, saving money and time eg escorting patients to health appointments etc. However, the wider gains have been the proactive engagement of the hospice in the local community, working with schools and colleges, supporting young people to gain employability skills. By creating volunteering opportunities for young people in these areas, stereotypical attitudes and perceptions can be changed as young people become more informed about how to support personalised, compassionate care for the elderly and dying.

#### 03 VOLUNTEERS – SUSTAINING HOSPICES?

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Volunteers have historically played a vital role in the founding and on-going development of independent hospices. The governance of these voluntary organisations is also the responsibility of volunteer trustees, however, it is not clear whether volunteering is considered as strategic resource. This study aimed to explore how volunteering perceived strategically in independent hospices throughout the UK.

##### Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to study the link between volunteering and hospice sustainability by:

- Exploring how volunteering is understood by UK hospice senior staff, volunteers and trustees.
- Considering the influence of volunteers on four key UK hospice sustainability factors: governance; service delivery; hospice economy; and community engagement.
- Explore whether there is a link between volunteering and hospice sustainability.

**Methods** Using a mixed methods approach a self-administered online survey which was sent to hospices across the UK. The questionnaire included both Likert Scale and free text questions. As this study sought to the strategic context of volunteering, the views of senior staff, trustees and volunteers were sought. Thirty one hospices took part with responses from 58 senior staff 56 trustees and 181 volunteers.

##### Findings

- No recognition of the role of volunteers in governance.
- Volunteers viewed as a strategic resource but not engaged in strategy development.
- Lack of planning for volunteer involvement.