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Volunteer News

The newsletter for Prospect Hospice volunteers

Autumn 2019



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Welcome from Su

Welcome to the autumn edition of your Volunteer News. In it we bring you news of some new additions to the Prospect Hospice team, as well as celebrating those who have been with us for much longer.

First and foremost, there's a chance to meet our new chief executive, Irene Watkins and learn about her aspirations for the hospice in the coming years. Irene's arrival has prompted a fresh look at almost every aspect of the organisation including resetting our approach to how we work with our service users, staff and volunteers and the local community.

You will know that the voluntary services team has also seen some change recently with the departure of Katie Stewart who will be much-missed. We were very sad to see her go, but subsequently delighted to welcome a new team colleague. Cally Harris has already settled in well and you can read more about her on page four.

At the other end of the scale, we celebrated the contribution of our long-standing volunteers at the long service awards. We've packed this edition with some pictures of the awards and of the summer social which took place on a mellow, enjoyable summer's afternoon at the beginning of September.

We hope you enjoy this edition and thank you all once again for your continued support and commitment.

With best wishes,

Su Starkey
Head of voluntary services

Introducing Irene Watkins

Irene joined us last year as chief operating officer and subsequently stepped into the role of chief executive following the departure of Angela Jordan.

Irene has been working hard to develop the organisation to ensure it is fit for the future and has spent a considerable amount of time getting to know staff and volunteers from all parts of the organisation. We sat down with her for a quick chat about her plans.

"My ambitions for Prospect Hospice are that we are the organisation our local community sees as providing a specialist professional service," said Irene. "We need to be the service that goes the extra mile in supporting our patients and those close to them, making the little things count because they are the issues that are so important to each person."

A key challenge for Irene is, of course, steering the organisation's response to the recent CQC inspection reports and, as she commented in a recent interview in the Swindon Advertiser, we're only at the beginning of the journey. "It's a long-term solution, not a quick fix, and we know what we have to do. It takes time to get things right and we need to be consistent and methodical in what we do."

We also need to keep abreast of developments in the world outside our organisation, and Irene cites two in particular as being key: "Changes in the way healthcare services are commissioned will have an impact on how we do things in the future and may bring opportunities as well as challenges. Secondly, the national lack of trained nurses means we will have to look differently at the way we provide our services and upskill our staff."

We asked Irene if she had a message specifically for our volunteers. "Our volunteers are our heart," she enthused. "Words cannot express how much our volunteers mean in enabling us to provide a quality service and I'd like to say a big thank you to each and every one of them."





Cally, Su and Graham

Meef our new team member...

Cally Harris joined Prospect Hospice as administration and projects officer in August to support our volunteers in their various roles. Here we find out a little more about her.

Name: Cally Harris

Born: Swindon

Joined Prospect Hospice: March 2019

Favourite food: Sushi, olives and pizza

Favourite film: It's tricky to pick just one. I've managed to only very recently watch Forrest Gump. I really enjoyed that film and am now working my way through Tom Hanks films.

Favourite book: My all time favourite and most read books would have to be the Harry Potter series - I've read them all about 12 times!

Favourite time of year: Definitely winter; I look forward to cold, but hopefully sunny days and of course Christmas.

Favourite holiday: Without a doubt New York. I've only been once but loved the sights, the atmosphere, the food, the people – everything about it really.

What attracted you to the role with volunteer services?

I went to a team meeting as part of my first induction (I was here in a temporary role at the time) and I really liked what they were about. Their dedication to ensuring that the volunteering experience is always an enjoyable one was immediately evident and something that I wanted to be a part of. I like that the role provides many opportunities to meet and interact with people, get involved in events and just generally be busy – so far it certainly has delivered.



Cally Harris

What are you most proud of? Learning to drive. It took me five years (of lessons on and off), three instructors and three tests but I passed in the end.

What motivates you? Working well with others and striving to provide the best service. It's always pleasing to know that you have helped and delivered a service that people are happy with.

Equality and diversity

We want to ensure that the hospice is welcoming to everyone in our community, whether they come into contact with us as patients, supporters, staff members or volunteers.

As part of our work looking at equality and diversity, we will be carrying out a survey looking at how diverse our staff and volunteer groups are, and take measures to reach out to any under-represented groups.

To help us, we'd appreciate it if you could take the time to complete the survey which we will send you by email shortly. Our aim is to get a more detailed picture to meet people's needs and encourage others to join us. The more people like ourselves we see in an organisation, the more likely we are to request their services, donate to it or volunteer.

Kathleen Sheridan

We were very sad to hear of the death of Kathleen Sheridan who was a volunteer at our Marlborough shop for a number of years.

Kathleen was a fantastic promoter of our Prospect Hospice lottery tickets and was able to raise over £16,000, as well as being quite a celebrity and attraction in the town of Marlborough, with many customers visiting the shop just to catch up with her. She had a gift for talking to people and was a brilliant sales woman.

As a senior nurse in her working life Kathleen was a great supporter of Prospect Hospice and we will all miss her very much.





Summer social

Our annual summer social took place in the grounds of the hospice on Sunday 1 September to celebrate the work of our volunteers and to say thank you for all their help and support. Afternoon tea was provided, together with music from local band "Sweet Nightingale".



Our volunteer support administration and projects officer, Cally Harris said: "It was a lovely day; we welcomed volunteers from our shops, warehouse, reception and cafe along with their families who expressed how much they enjoyed the event."

Long service

As part of our summer social we recognised 18 volunteers who have achieved long service milestones with Prospect Hospice, celebrating a total number of 270 years' service between them. Lunch was served in the marquee within the hospice gardens and our chief executive, Irene Watkins, met with them and presented their certificates alongside trustee Pradeep Bhardwaj.



Volunteer Lorraine Albright with chief executive Irene Watkins

Catering services manager Rob Tynan even found a temporary helper in chief executive Irene Watkins

Head of voluntary services, Su Starkey, gathered the volunteers for a group photograph to remember the occasion.



Garden Fete

We welcomed hundreds of people to this year's garden fete in the hospice gardens. Our catering team prepared delicious burgers, hot dogs and pasties which flew off the grill. A new feature this year was the dog show which proved to be popular - several dogs were seen walking around the gardens with their rosettes on.

A short spell of rain did not dampen spirits but it did contribute to an increase in refreshment sales! Overall we raised £11,000 towards delivering our services. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make our community event a success.



Training opportunities...

With the support of our education team, we run a free training programme for staff and volunteers who want to learn more about end-of-life care, raise awareness on topics like cultural beliefs or enhance their computer skills. These sessions are popular and each course has space for up to five volunteers. If you are interested in finding out more, get in touch with either Graham or Cally.

Friend and family referrals...

We are looking for help from our local community to support the services we provide and there can be no greater introduction than from an existing volunteer who really enjoys what they do.

If you know someone who would be interested in volunteering, please get in touch with our recruitment officer Graham on 01793 816193 or email grahambiggs@prospect-hospice.net.