



Improving lives **together**

Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System

# Volunteer to Career Programme

## Findings report

### Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board

June – 2024



Volunteer to Career

funded by NHS England

in partnership with

**helpforce**

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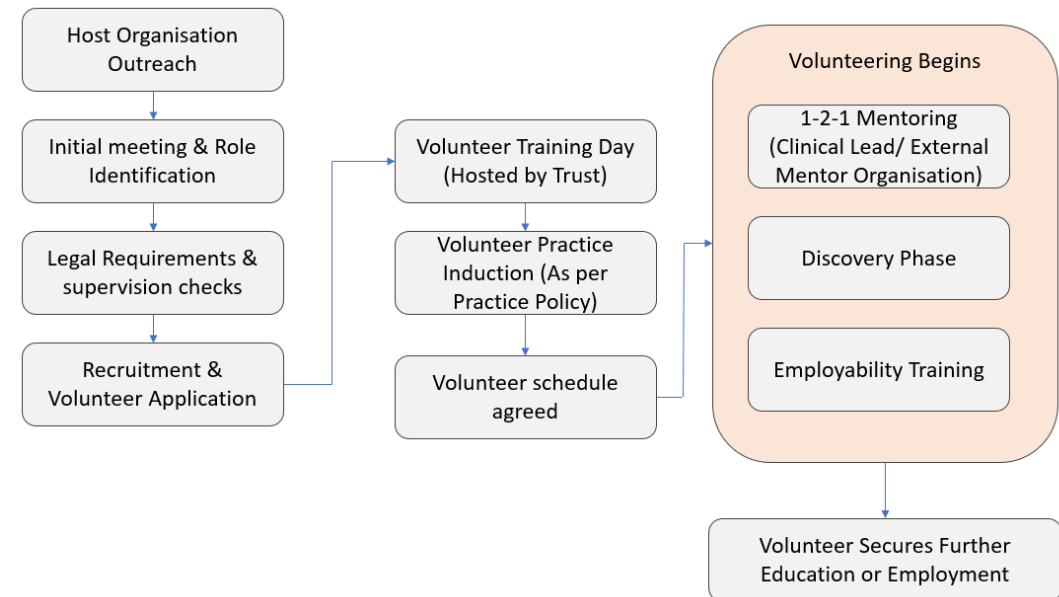
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# Our VtC Career Pathway

1. **Host Outreach & Initial Meetings:** Working with Practice Managers & GP Partners, an initial visit to the practice site to view the facilities; discussion over volunteer roles including what jobs are or are not suitable; overview of ICB support and agreement on organisation roles & Responsibilities; education on how to manage volunteers
2. **Legal Requirements & Supervision Checks:** Paperwork creation in line with legal requirements supported by ICB team; Internal HR checks and finalisation of job roles. Identification of discovery phase opportunities within practice and surrounding area. Identification of day-to-day volunteer supervisors.
3. **Recruitment & Volunteer Application:** Centralised application through NHS Volunteering website (beta tester) and GetInvolved Norfolk platform. Initial applications reviews and screened by OCB team. Second discussion with Practice, Volunteer and ICB team. Initial conversations conducted around career ambitions. All pre-employment checks and DBS undertaken. Volunteer signs volunteer agreement and is given resource pack.
4. **Volunteer training day:** Volunteers undertake formal volunteer training as part of Trust Volunteer induction. Specialised Primary Care scenarios developed for delivery on the course.
5. **Volunteer Practice Induction & Schedule:** Volunteer conducts in house induction; varies per organisation but includes GDPR and other essential training. Agreement of working hours over next 3 months.
6. **Volunteering:** Volunteer begins with a minimum of 2 hours a week. Volunteer roles develop over time with further roles and duties; any extra roles or duties discuss and agreed with ICB team. Practice holds overall responsibility for all actions of volunteer.
  1. **Mentoring:** Mentoring provided once a month by external organisation. Mentors are selected specifically for volunteer ambitions (ie potential medics given medic mentor).
  2. **Discovery:** Discussion held with ICB team on potential opportunities. May include visits to other organisations, shadow days or further education visits.
  3. **Employability Training:** Training budget allocated for any further training required. Team is linked with local council and other adult learning organisations to make full use of existing offers before procuring new training.
7. **Securing Further Education or employment:** Support given on career pathways and further soft skill training (CV writing/ interview practice) as required.

**Overview:** The Norfolk & Waveney ICB pathway has focussed on enabling volunteers in primary care settings with a focus on General Practices and Dentists. Before the programme, there were very limited opportunities for volunteering in Primary Care, with both employers and potential volunteers having no plan or intention to begin volunteering. In order to set up volunteering opportunities and the volunteer to career pathway, we have also had to set up a central ICB team that supports host organisation to develop their own volunteering capacity, role descriptions, legal requirements and recruitment pipelines. The team structure to deliver this programme included a programme lead, Clinical Lead (GP Fellow), Volunteer Project lead and Host Onboarding Project lead.



# Programme overview

•The **Helpforce Volunteer to Career (VtC) programme** is designed to support volunteers to take up a career in health and care. Helpforce has worked alongside health and care organisations to set up and implement volunteering projects which incorporate career pathways for volunteers. They have worked in partnership with organisations, such as ours, to implement the Volunteer to Career Pathway and to provide support in evaluating its impact. The VtC programme has been designed to support **organisational** improvement across **three key strategic components, identified as essential to achieving systemic change:**

- **Clinical/health and care leadership** - Developing a network of senior clinical/health and care leaders to harness their expertise to positively influence wider effective engagement, and ultimately adoption of, VtC projects.
- **Environment and culture** - utilise best practices to raise the value of the volunteer workforce in the health and care environment to enhance the likelihood of volunteers wanting to adopt a career in health and care.
- **Volunteer to Career Pathways** - Develop innovative and impactful volunteer roles and career pathways, linked to local recruitment needs, to encourage and enable volunteers to use this as a route to a career in the NHS.

## •Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board's programme overview and objectives :

- **The volunteering role(s) developed:** Volunteers participating in the Volunteer to Career pathway, undertook specific roles depending on their host location. This was a crucial element of flexibility, as it brought more host organisation on board and ensured that the tasks delivered by the volunteer added value to the organisation as a whole. Roles included Waiting Room Meet & Greet, back-office functions, PPG advertising and discussions alongside others. Please note, no volunteers were given any clinical roles.
- **An overview of the VtC programme.** The programme was able to provide simultaneous support to both host organisation in primary care, as well as developing a new model of volunteering that provided volunteers with support for personal and professional growth. However, a core tenant of the programme was that this was still a volunteering role rather than a “work experience”, and volunteers needed to make sure they treated the opportunity with respect and that the volunteers came first.
- **An overview of the benefits you anticipated the programme would have for the organisation.** The programme has resulted in 6 host sites starting to take on volunteers in primary care for the first time, as well as a steady number of applications starting to develop through the centralised recruitment process. This has brought in the start of a new workforce that was previously not in primary care, and will develop into a more robust pathway as it becomes BAU. Alongside this, we have expanded the concept of VtC to other organisation in Norfolk & Waveney, including two new roles in July 24 in the NNNUH Acute Trust.

# Our VtC programme objectives

The VtC programme began in March 2023, and the initial programme ran until May 2024. With programme management and evaluation support provided by [Helpforce](#), we implemented and delivered our VtC programme to achieve these programme objectives.

- 1. Create an onboarding process for Primary Care organisations**, with the long-term ambition of a dedicated “Volunteer to Career” Workforce Toolpack that can be easily picked up and delivered in house with minimal support by any primary care organisation. Through the onboarding of our current hosts, we have delivered a smooth process that combines evaluating potential host sites for suitability, training and education for the host sites to ensure they fully understand the requirements of hosting volunteers and the value they can contribute to their organisation and support to prepare them for their first volunteers. This is now in the process of being developed into a toolpack.
- 2. Develop a viable VtC pathway that can be integrated into individual organisation.** Due to the vast differences and priorities that individual primary care organisations can face, it is important to ensure that the VtC pathway is easy to integrate and can be adapted locally. We achieved this by taking away some of the more onerous tasks, including recruitment, mentoring and employment support which is managed and delivered by the ICB team, alongside developing bespoke role descriptions for each organisation.
- 3. Produce and distribute an advert for the volunteer role** that will provide the experience, exposure, skills and confidence needed to develop a pipeline of volunteers interested in a health and care career. Success measured included: role live, successful recruitment of volunteers, evidence of the role positively impacting volunteer career goals.
- 4. Organisational agreement to sustain** the VtC pathway following the completion of the initial delivery period, with ambitions to scale the programme to support wider workforce needs. VtC has been funded until Mar 25, and is now linked in with other health organisations within the system with the long-term aim of giving every volunteer in the system the opportunity to take part in the volunteer to career pathway.

# Helpforce's evaluation approach

Using its established *Insight and Impact* evaluation service, Helpforce follows a consistent methodology to determine the impact of volunteering roles on health outcomes. Target outcomes are identified across a range of beneficiaries representing the people and organisations involved, and then the necessary data is collected to prove and evidence the outcomes.

The evaluation sought to answer three key questions.

- What was the impact of the VtC programme on:
  - Corporate behaviours towards volunteering?
  - Enabling individual volunteers to progress towards a career in health and care?
  - The attitudes of front-line staff towards volunteer services?

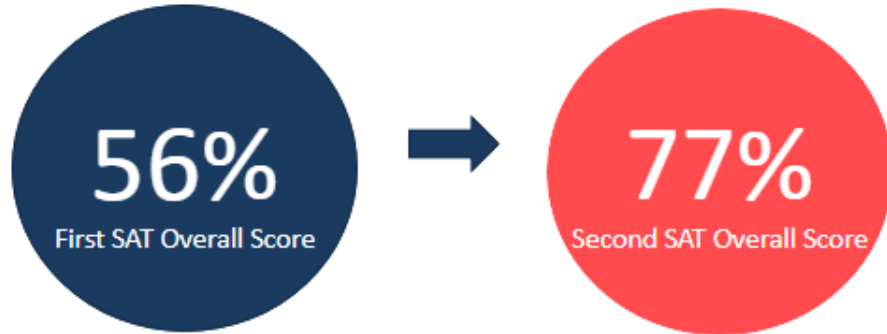
At the time of evaluation, no volunteers had been recruited to the VtC programme, therefore volunteer outcomes, staff outcomes, and some organisational outcomes have not been able to be evaluated.

Those that were measured were captured via a **'VtC Self-Assessment Tool'** (referred to as SAT) was completed by the project's clinical/health and care lead at the start and then again near the end of the project. The tool measures the organisation against a series of identified categories and questions associated with their volunteering strategy. Also, as part of the SAT, volunteers and staff are invited to complete some additional feedback surveys to provide insight into their perceptions of organisational change.

**Note:** The analysis in this report is provided by the Helpforce Insight and Impact team, and the contextual information has been provided by Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board's Volunteer to Career team.



# Evaluation findings: organisation

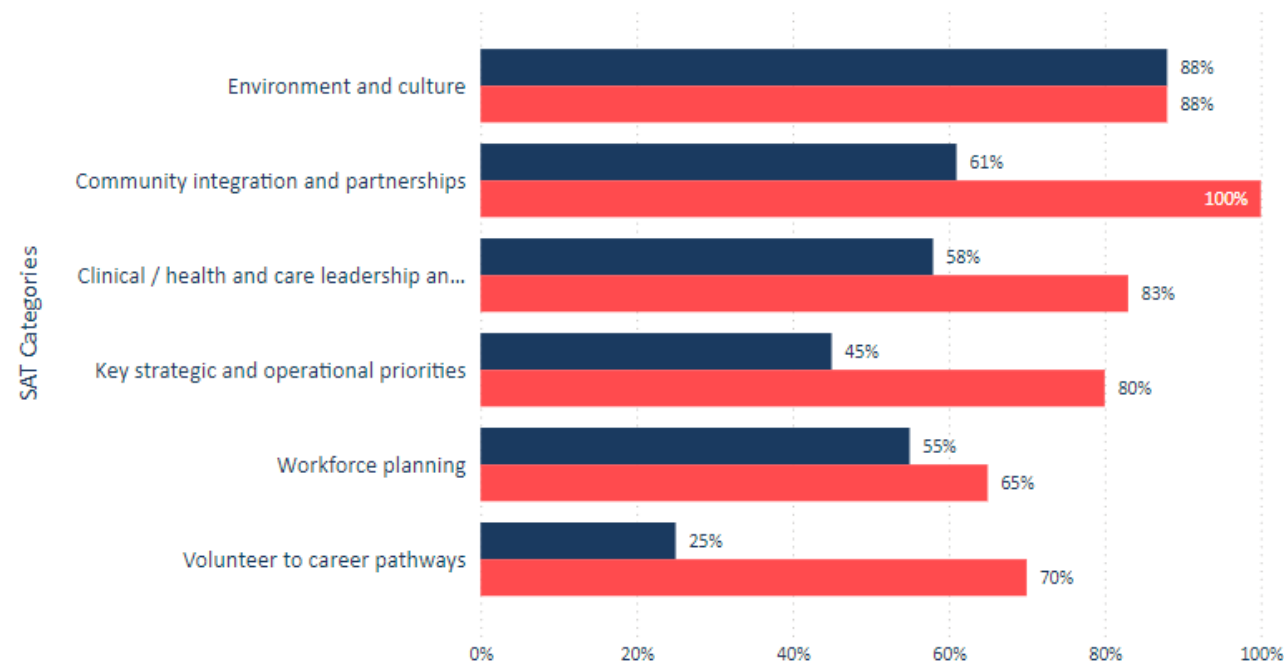


After completing the VtC programme, there was an **increase in the overall SAT score, which improved from 56% to 77%.**

Similar to the positive change in the overall SAT score result, **we have observed an improvement in the scores for the five individual elements of organisational improvement for volunteering.**

First and Second Average SAT Scores Overview

Submission ● First ● Last



It is important to note that due to the complexity of establishing volunteering roles within primary care organisation's, this data is a general reflection from several host sites. By focusing on the host sites before trying to integrate the pathway, we were able to open a whole range of new pathways within the organisations, while also ensure that every volunteering role added value in its own right.

# Conclusions and recommendations

## Conclusions:

- The implementation of the VtC programme in Norfolk and Waveney ICB has been successful in organisational improvement related to volunteering.
- The programme has helped the Trust to further integrate volunteering into workforce strategies and aided the development of effective career pathways for volunteers, however, at the time of this evaluation, no volunteers had been recruited to the VtC programme.
- The programme has proved that volunteering pathway can add value in primary care settings, and the organisational reluctance due to perception around time required and actual value –added to the organisation can be addressed through the production of case studies from the programme.

## Recommendations:

- Creation of a “Volunteer to Career Toolkit”, combining all of the lessons learnt, documents, support channels and case studies from the programme , allowing individual primary care organisation to pick up and deliver their own VtC programme in house with minimal support
- Work with other NHS health organisation to begin to change their current volunteer roles into the volunteer to career pathway.
- Move the BAU ownership of the programme into the patients and communities directorate, under the new Head of VCSE and Health Inequalities



# Acknowledgements

Our Volunteer to Career (VtC) programme was carried out in partnership between our organisation and Helpforce, with funding from NHS England.

Helpforce has been an invaluable partner in helping us set up and deliver this programme and has also supported us in analysing the data, setting out the impact evidence of this programme.

All findings, conclusions and recommendations are from the primary care workforce team in the Norfolk & Waveney ICB.

## About Helpforce:

Helpforce works with health and care organisations across the UK to accelerate the growth and impact of volunteering to keep people healthy in their communities and support them during treatment and after. It is an independent, not-for-profit innovator, focused on co-creating on and evaluating volunteering projects, and rapidly sharing insights and best practice. To learn more about the charity, visit [www.helpforce.community](http://www.helpforce.community).

# Thank you



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**Volunteer to Career**

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