

Trust support and buy in at board level was provided by our Chief Nurse who was eager to approve the business case for this project. Play therapy is an area that is high on the strategic play as it is currently not meeting Trust corporate metrics



Finance and funding for the clinical lead went smoothly. HR issues across the Trust caused big delays with recruitment providing back fill took much longer than anticipated. There was also a long-term absence – followed by the clinical lead leaving the Trust. We have now recruited for this post, the successful applicant has demonstrated experience of working with volunteers previously, bringing experience and a new dynamic to this project

Volunteer engagement has been good – staff engagement more challenging. Several volunteers who have started the project have left and this has caused some frustration with staff supporting the project clinically. Reluctance from staff came from previous negative experience with volunteers and fear of being replaced and losing jobs.



As an acute paediatric Trust our project is centred around Health Play Specialism We identified the mutual benefits this project would bring to both Patient Experience and to the NHS workforce in a career path that is largely under applied for and understood

Losing our clinical lead was a massive challenge

Non clinical lead (VSM) – kept the project on track due to involvement and regular updates

Play team and patient experience worked close together and barriers are coming down
Greater understanding of the VTC created

Volunteer recruitment has continued in the existing format but has also been extended to include local colleges and NHS cadets – we have discussed the VTC role during these sessions and asked for expressions of interest. Health Play Specialism has proven to be a career path unknown to many volunteers



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Through contacts at a local college, we have been able to provide employability training for specifically NHS jobs free onsite for our volunteers Really pleased that several volunteers have been shortlisted for interviews and 1 volunteer has gained employment within the Trust.



Through regular 1-1's with volunteers taking part in the VTC we have recognised the need for extra support within certain areas. Volunteers placed within our busy day-care unit have felt unsupported due to play therapists being called away and spending long time with patients. Other support strategy has been put in place, so volunteers have another go to person



Heloforce have been available to provide support every step of the way and give us a well needed nudge when necessary. The challenges we faced demonstrate the changes within the NHS currently and that how we adapted and kept going is something to be proud of. Alder Hey will continue to benefit from VTC as we keep going and ultimately other Trusts and the NHS future workforce will do to in the future

