

Issue 4 December 2021

# *Volunteers Newsletter*



Sitting down to write the introduction to our winter newsletter so many things came to mind. I think we were all hoping for a Christmas with less uncertainty than last year, one where we didn't have to think about the latest updates on the news, connecting with our friends and family... or worrying about whether everyone is going to start stockpiling toilet paper again!

But at this time of year during the 'season of giving' I feel especially grateful for our volunteers who give the most precious thing they have... their time, not just during a season but all throughout the year. It was wonderful to see volunteers celebrated at the recent Better Every Day awards, and to hear about the contributions that the shortlisted nominees have made. I wanted to send a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you from us at Dorset HealthCare, whether during this year you have given your time directly to our services, or elsewhere in your local neighbourhoods. We value and appreciate you and everything you do for us.

I wanted to share with you all news of an exciting new volunteering service that we, in partnership with local charity PramaLife, are launching early next year. Our Urgent Community Response service is a new service for Dorset HealthCare, providing help and care for frail people at home who are at risk of needing admission to hospital due to an immediate crisis. Volunteers will be calling patients after their immediate crisis has been resolved, to provide reassurance, a listening ear if needed, and information about further support available within the local area. Please do get in touch with us if you are interested in finding more out about the project or getting involved.



## Christmas time by Revd Sharon Boyle

Well. It's hard to believe that it is 6 months since the last Volunteer newsletter. Maybe this year has allowed many of you to return to volunteering roles within the Trust.

The last few weeks has seen the start of a weekly 'reflection time' on Chine Ward at St Ann's Hospital. As a volunteer chaplain at the hospital, it has been a privilege to lead this session, giving the opportunity for both patients and staff to stop and take time in the present moment.

At the beginning of one of the sessions, we focused on a candle and talked about what comes to mind when you light or see a candle. Warmth was mentioned, as was remembering.

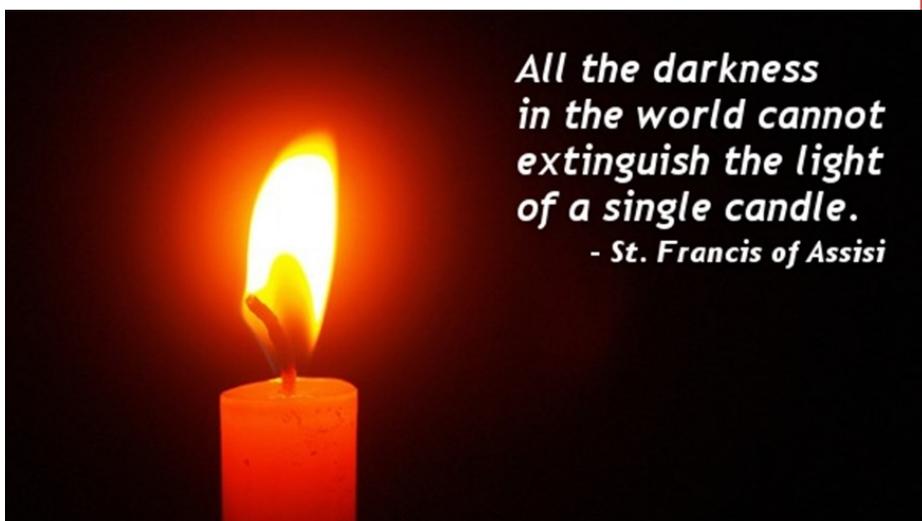
The lighting of a candle has many meanings. Maybe the most obvious is for **light**. Not used so much these days (unless we have a power cut!). A candle is lit as a sign of **love** – a romantic meal, maybe. For many of us candles are lit for **hope**, in recognition of the difficult times in our own lives, communities and beyond. And finally, candles are lit for **peace** both close to home, and across the world.

As I write this, the Hindu festival of Diwali has taken place. Known as the 'festival of lights', houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps called 'diyas'. Like the various meanings of a candle, this festival celebrates new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil, and light over darkness.

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5). These comforting words will be read in Christian churches all over the world this Christmas time, reminding us of the love, light, joy, hope and peace that came in Jesus at Christmas.

May you and your loved ones have a blessed Christmas time.

With love and prayers from the Trust Chaplaincy Team



## Annual Awards 2021

### Volunteer of the Year

This category recognises individuals who work tirelessly, generously giving their time enthusiasm and energy to help improve NHS services by supporting patients, visitors and their families.

### And the winners were ...

#### Jason Edwards and Jennifer Grieve

From the Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service.



#### Their nominators said:

"Jason and Jenn have helped to develop our online Fatigue Management Course for patients. Despite their own chronic fatigue following brain injury, they have given up so much of their time and recorded three podcasts which will give inspiration, hope and advice for others. They will also co-produce webinars and be available for live online sessions. Their lived experience and expertise has been vital for the quality and depth of material and adds so much value to our offer."

## Spotlight on our Volunteers and their stories



My name is Julia Armstrong and I volunteer for Dorset Working Women's Project (DWWP) which I have done for several years now.

Dorset Working Women's Project (DWWP) is a service for sex workers who work on street in the red-light area and also people who work indoors or off their phones and/or the internet. It is a sexual health service which provides advice and information to the women but also supports them to access health services as well as supporting them with a variety of aspects of their lives. This is with a goal to support them to stop sex working, but whilst they are sex working, they help to reduce the risk and harm they might experience.

DWWP support sex workers to access other services such as housing and drug and alcohol services. DWWP support people to access any benefits they may be entitled to; all of this may reduce the amount that someone has to sex work. DWWP also support women who have been attacked, assaulted and/or raped whilst

they have been sex working and support people to access support via SARC and the police if they chose to.

As a volunteer I give 2 hours of my time usually once a month or more frequently if they need cover. A worker from DWWP comes and picks me up from my home as it is at around 8pm at night. The timings can change depending on the time of the year. We then drive to where the outreach van is parked and get ready for outreach. The van was initially got with a view to the sex workers being able to get on board, have a cuppa and be able to speak and access the support more privately than on the street. However, Covid obviously put a stop to this, and the workers are currently not allowed on the bus and DWWP workers and volunteers are not allowed to get out of the van.

Whilst on outreach we will drive around the red-light area and stop and speak to any women that want to speak to us. Sometimes they only will stop for a minute or two and sometimes they will speak to us for longer. On outreach DWWP provide condoms to the women to reduce the risk of STI's and pregnancy. They also provide things like clean needles and foil so women who use drugs are able to do so more safely, reducing the risk of harm to them from infection or injury. DWWP also sometimes have donations to give out, for example in winter they sometimes have gloves and hats to give out.

Whilst speaking to the women, DWWP will ask after their wellbeing, try and find out what they need help with and arrange to meet or call them the next day. This then gives DWWP the opportunity to arrange to help people access drug and alcohol services or housing services for example.

Volunteering for DWWP can be tough and it can be harrowing seeing how desperate some of these women are. I will always come home from outreach with a sense of gratitude that I have a safe roof over my head and a warm bed to get into – a luxury that many of these women do not have. But DWWP provide a vital service to these women who rely on volunteers to run the outreach service. The support and consistency that DWWP provide people is essential and to the people accessing services, a lifeline.



### Christmas tree ornaments.

Wrap yarn round found twigs and decorate

### Gift Tags

Use old Christmas cards for name tags.



### Pine cone dipped ornaments.

Use melted crayon, paint or beeswax for desired effect



### Recyclable gift wrap

Much of the store brought wrapping paper cannot be recycled as it contains, dyes or laminates, non paper additives such as gold and silver foil, glitter or plastics

Use Brown paper instead and twine for decoration and bows.



## *And finally*

**We would like to be as paper free as possible so if you are still receiving a paper copy and are ready or able to make the change to an electronic version please contact us with your email address.**

Please be assured we will never share your email with any other organisations and only contact you in the context of volunteering.

If you would like to get in touch please contact us either by email:  
[dhc.volunteers.newsletter@nhs.net](mailto:dhc.volunteers.newsletter@nhs.net)  
or by telephone on 01202 443089 / 3261

If you require an accessible print version of this newsletter please let us know.

Thank  
you!  
Volunteers

