

# NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Volunteering Annual Report 2020/21



## FOREWORD

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde is the largest health board in the UK, providing healthcare to over 1.2 million people and employing around 38,000 staff. As well as the paid workforce, we also rely on volunteers who work with us to enhance patient experience. Traditionally this has involved spending time chatting with patients who have no visitors, or perhaps helping visitors navigate the hospital – basically a range of tasks which are valued by colleagues, patients and their visitors. Volunteers help our hospitals run smoothly, allowing doctors and nurses to spend their time focusing on providing the best healthcare for patients

As Director of Nursing for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC), one aspect of my role is that I have responsibility for volunteers across all of our healthcare settings. That responsibility includes making sure that volunteers get a high-quality introduction to NHS GG&C, with training on Health and Safety; Confidentiality; Infection Prevention and Control; Equalities Duty, and anything else that might be relevant to their volunteering role. It is important that volunteers are provided with the same standard of training as is given to our paid workforce.



I believe that volunteers will have the best possible experience when they are involved in a role and place that suits them best. This might be in a hospital setting, or it might be in a community setting. When Community Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) were set up in 2016, it made sense for community volunteers to be supported more locally, either through the HSCPs themselves, or through local Voluntary Organisations, and it is essential to what happens now.

Given the challenges of the past year, I have relied on hospital volunteers like never before, and I know that community health services are similar and have also experienced unprecedented levels of volunteering.

This Annual Report provides information about the support volunteers have given to hospitals, however I would urge everyone who reads it to bear in mind that volunteering has been vital to the most vulnerable people in our communities too, throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This Annual Report celebrates the contribution of all of those volunteers, as a shining light in the darkest of times.

Thank you all.

**Dr Margaret McGuire,  
Director of Nursing,  
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

When we first began to hear reports about a new virus early in 2020, few of us would have thought that we were seeing the beginnings of a global pandemic that would take so many lives and cause so much damage to mental and physical health. As Coronavirus took hold and began to spread, we all saw media reports on the horrible effects of the disease, and watched families suffering terrible losses of their loved ones. Our lives were characterised by a sense of fear, and anxiety about an uncertain future.

Soon we were watching daily news reports of hospitals being overwhelmed while staff worked relentlessly, from doctors and nurses to porters, domestic staff and receptionists, and a whole range of 'backroom workers' – everyone in our hospitals was working flat out, and still it felt like there weren't enough people to do everything that needed to be done. Patients were dying despite the best efforts of our doctors and nurses. We began to see reports about front-line staff succumbing to the virus, and there was a sense of hospitals being very dangerous places indeed. As the need for hospital care was rising, we were still learning about the disease, and who was most at risk from it. One thing was very clear – older people and people with underlying health problems were particularly vulnerable to the worst versions of Coronavirus. Unfortunately that included most of our existing volunteers, so many of them had to be paused to keep them safe. With very limited treatment options, it was simply too dangerous to expose them to situations where they might be in contact with the virus. So overnight we lost the inputs of our most faithful and experienced volunteers.

As the number of cases rose steadily, the Government introduced 'lockdown' on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

On 23 March 2020, Scottish death toll is **73**. The national “**Stay at Home**” order comes into effect at midnight.

The COVID-19 pandemic was first confirmed to have **spread to Scotland** on 1 March 2020 with the positive COVID-19 test of a Tayside resident who had recently travelled between Scotland and northern Italy. The first reported case of **community transmission** was on 11 March 2020, and the first reported **coronavirus death** in Scotland was on 13 March 2020.

And with no abatement, the Louisa Jordan Hospital was built in less than 3 weeks. During that time, the Scottish COVID-19 death toll rose from 355 to 2,277.

Confirmed cases of coronavirus pass 2,000 on 30 March, with **355** deaths in Scotland. Construction starts on the **Louisa Jordan Hospital**, with 300-bed capacity. The Louisa Jordan opens on 20 April, as confirmed Scottish cases pass 8,400, with **2,277** fatalities.

Figures from Scottish Government website

## 2. IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS ...

Lockdown became a reality on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, and most of our pre-COVID volunteers had now been paused. Across the communities of Greater Glasgow and Clyde – in common with the rest of the country - many people couldn't go to work. Despite the frightening reports about what was happening in our hospitals, many of those who were unable to work in their usual jobs stepped forward asking what they could do to help. That offer meant a great deal to the staff who were struggling to do everything that needed to be done. A veritable army of volunteers stepped forward and was quickly mobilised.

**"The best way to find  
yourself is to lose yourself  
in the service of others"**  
**Mahatma Gandhi**

**"... the happiest people  
are not those getting  
more, but those giving  
more."**

**H. Jackson Brown Jr.**

**"Service to others is the  
rent you pay for your  
room here on Earth."**  
**Muhammad Ali**

**"We make a living by what we get, but  
we make a life by what we give."**

**Winston Churchill**

## 3. VOLUNTEERS TO THE RESCUE ...

Although many of our experienced volunteers had been paused, the media coverage about the pressure on acute health services triggered a tremendous response from the general public, with people who were furloughed stepping forward to volunteer. When we asked these new volunteers what they would want to do, their response was overwhelmingly that they were happy to do whatever was needed.

Each volunteer brings a unique package of experience and skills, and the Volunteer Managers worked tirelessly to induct and train the new volunteers, while also matching their skills to the gaps as they became apparent.

The Volunteer Managers had to significantly change their ways of working, due to a number of important factors:

- The situation brought about by COVID-19 meant that volunteering practice needed to be governed by specific rules around social distance.
- Volunteers were being asked to undertake tasks that were not in volunteering scope before the pandemic (e.g. cleaning; running errands etc.).
- All volunteering required a revised approach to risk assessment, and some tasks also required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Most previous volunteers had to be stood down, meaning that there were no mentoring volunteers to support new ones.
- The sheer number of new volunteers meant that the Volunteer Managers did not have capacity to provide one-to-one support for all new volunteers, as would normally have been the case.
- Due to the high risk if key people became unwell, detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) had to be developed for virtually all aspects of the Volunteer Managers' work, to reduce the level of reliance on the skills and inherent knowledge of specific individuals.

Almost 400 new volunteers were brought into service, with many more held in reserve. We simply didn't have enough space to bring everyone in and maintain social distance, but it was reassuring to know that there were more volunteers to call on if we had to. The new volunteers were happy to go wherever they were needed, and happy to do any tasks that would make our hospitals run better, or make patients more comfortable. Before long, volunteers were helping clinical staff into and out of their protective clothing and equipment. They were cleaning everything in sight, and gently reminding people to maintain the 2 metres distance rule. Volunteers were organising treats for staff (toiletries or sweet treats that were pre-packaged and non-perishable). Our hospitals were still getting busier, but at least our staff knew that there was a significant level of very practical additional help and support.

Volunteers did all sorts of jobs from disinfecting wheelchairs; helping patients and visitors to find the quickest and safest routes around hospitals, and even sanitising lift buttons and hand rails. In those very bleak times, there was much publicity about the measures that had to be put in place to keep our most vulnerable people safe, so many volunteers became expert in infection prevention and control measures. We were all becoming used to maintaining distance from others. Wearing masks was starting to be normal, and we were all sanitising our hands many times a day, without even thinking about it. Our volunteers did whatever needed to be done, and very quickly became a vital part of the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde fight against COVID-19. The public appreciation for the NHS effort meant a great deal to staff and volunteers alike, as donations of pampering toiletries and sweet treats started to appear more often. Local children made thank-you cards and the regular Thursday night clap

brought communities together in gratitude for the NHS. Our volunteers were – and are - very much part of that NHS.

#### 4. GUARD OF HONOUR

How do you thank the people who turned up for their shifts - without pay - and who did not have to be there?

It was a difficult brief to fulfil, but in the three main acute sites of NHSGGC a 'Guard of Honour' was arranged as a surprise for our volunteers, to coincide with the cessation of the Give & Go (Part 1)<sup>1</sup> in July 2020. We needed to find a way to bring staff and volunteers together safely to show the hundreds of COVID-response volunteers just how much they meant to the clinical teams as well as patients and families.

Staff at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, and the Royal Alexandra Hospital lined up in traditional fashion to celebrate the hard work and dedication of volunteers who worked across the service in a variety of roles.



Recognised by their bright red t-shirts, volunteers helped ensure NHSGGC was able to continue to deliver person-centred care throughout the pandemic. The doctors, nurses and other health professionals were able to show our volunteers just how much their work meant, as they lined the corridors of the 3 big acute sites. The volunteers were so very surprised, overwhelmed and delighted as the clinical staff took time to clap solely for them. It was a moment that will stay with them forever but

what they brought to the hospitals was tremendous hope, tangible skills, an unwavering willingness and an unbreakable human spirit that the NHS can never repay.



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<sup>1</sup> More information about Give & Go can be found on page 17



## 5. THE SCALE OF VOLUNTEERING

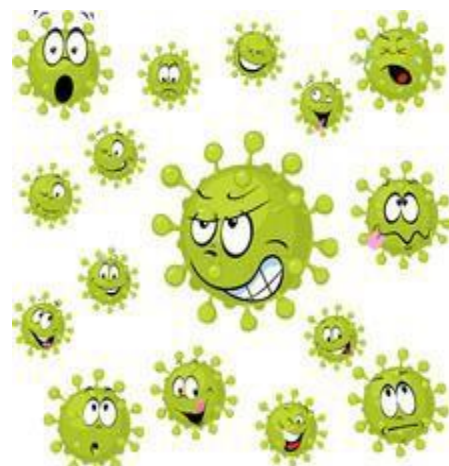
By early April we were all beginning to get a sense of just how big the COVID-19 challenge was. With the whole country in lockdown, people were already getting worried about the financial impacts of the pandemic. Worries about mental and physical health crept into the lives of a great many people, and the uncertainty of how long restrictions might last became a pervasive issue too. Despite all of these anxieties though, our new volunteers stuck with us. During 2020/21, our Acute Sector COVID volunteers delivered over 50,000 hours of service. And this figure doesn't include the hours given by COVID volunteers in our communities!



During 2020/21, our Acute Sector  
COVID volunteers delivered over  
**50,000** hours of service



As can be seen from the graph above, volunteers were active across the whole Acute Sector, giving over 50,000 hours of their time between April 2020 and March 2021. The following pages spotlight some of the programmes that volunteers have been involved with over the past year, recognising that we can't feature every project, but that all of the projects – whether featured or not – have been made possible by the dedication and hard work of our volunteers and the Volunteer Managers.



## 6. GROWING SPACES

The 'Growing Spaces' programme is an outdoor, green space project designed to support mental health and wellbeing, based within the grounds of Gartnavel Royal Hospital. Volunteers develop and maintain the space, creating pockets of calm and tranquillity for patients, staff and visitors.

The context of the COVID pandemic has underscored the need for these spaces like never before, and many new visitors have found the site when looking for places to exercise and be closer to nature.

Garden volunteers have been working flexibly to make sure that the Growing Spaces have still been cared for and available to all those who need them. They have adapted to the restrictions and regulations in place as a result of the pandemic and their commitment was recently evidenced in feedback from a visitor who shared that *"the gardens saved my life in 2020"*.



The plant donation stall provides a range of garden plants, from delphiniums to sweet peas, which have been brought on by the volunteers and are then made available to all for a discretionary donation.

Visitors to the gardens have commented to volunteers about how donating has made them *"feel they are giving something back to the gardens"* and that *"it makes me feel like I am doing my bit"*.

This sense of ownership which visitors have felt will be important for the Garden's future and hopefully help re-connect the 'Art in the Gart' volunteer programme back towards our neighbours, as soon as restrictions allow.

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At the start of 2021, the volunteer team was keen to find positive ways to help those who enjoy the gardens look forward beyond the pandemic and retain the sense of ownership visitors expressed over the last year.

It was identified that signage was an area where more work was needed in order that those using the gardens could learn of the context of the Growing Spaces. So far, one of the garden volunteers has gifted his creative skill to us, and has developed visitor-friendly signage to encourage care of our bulbs and wildlife spaces by all.



In anticipation of the Climate Change Conference COP26 taking place in Glasgow in November, they have been developing a light-touch programme of activities to help raise awareness of environmental issues of relevance and with which it is easy to engage.

So far this has involved the installation of a mini-forest on the grounds to increase biodiversity and habitat for wildlife and offer easier access to wild spaces and nature for patients and staff working on the site.

With the expertise of the Senior Project Officer of Growing Spaces partner organisation TCV, volunteers have developed a compost making observation station in the Walled Garden, where visitors can see up close what happens in the composting process.

The work within the grounds is always evolving, and we look forward to welcoming familiar and new faces in 2021/22.



During Mental Health Awareness Week and Greenspaces Week, our site enabled colleagues from Glasgow Eco Trust to support their own staff to connect with Nature when they volunteered their time to help maintain the patient garden area of The Applefield Garden. This “informal” volunteering, which is flexible and person-centred is of mutual benefit for the volunteers who undertake the activity and for the wider Garden Volunteer activity programme as it brings extra resources of time and labour to the Growing Spaces, whilst enabling access to activity which supports mental health and wellbeing, particularly during the past year when mental health has really been under pressure.

During 2020/21, volunteers contributed **1,320** hours to the Gartnavel Hospitals. That equates to **176** full working days.

## 7. PROJECT WINGMAN

As restrictions increased, holidays were cancelled and flights were grounded, Airline Pilots and Cabin Crew staff stepped forward to volunteer their time and expertise with Project Wingman, creating 'First Class Lounges' with First Class service for staff taking much needed breaks from the front line.

Project Wingman was co-founded by Captain Emma Henderson at the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Emma recognised the skills and traits of aviators and how they could help support NHS staff during the pandemic. The charity ensures all Wingmen are fully insured to be volunteering on hospital grounds, and the Wingmen come from one of the most safety conscious industries in the world. So Wingmen understand the high pressures and importance of adhering to procedures while providing a first class service. Airline crew are continually trained and assessed throughout their career. They wear many hats onboard the aircraft including fire fighter, police officer, first aider, counsellor and peer supporter. They need to be hypervigilant, adaptable and assertive, all while ensuring they are ambassadors for their airline.



In April 2020, Wingmen arrived at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital; the Glasgow Royal Infirmary; the Royal Alexandra Hospital and Gartnavel General. In the QEUH, they were able to maintain a 24/7 hub, with many of the Wingmen doing nightshifts. They decorated all of the hubs from top to bottom, brought lamps in to create ambience, speakers to play music, ran theme days, and ran free raffles and quizzes. They created wall space for staff to put up their children's pictures. They sat and listened if staff needed a socially

distanced shoulder. The novelty of having airline crew in their uniforms helped weary staff dis-associate from the harsh realities they were dealing with. The Wingmen went above and beyond, even though their own livelihoods were uncertain. Put simply, they wanted to do something positive for NHS staff.

In late November, several Wingmen came in late at night when the hubs were closed, to decorate the spaces with festive cheer. Then again to change over to Scottish decorations for January; love hearts for February etc. This helped to keep staff motivated, and reminded everyone about other aspects of life rather than just being fixed on COVID-19.



Despite the uncertainty about their own careers, the Wingmen were very proud to represent the airline industry and their airlines while volunteering with NHSGGC. During 2020/21 the

During 2020/21 the Wingmen provided over **10,500** volunteer hours in Greater Glasgow & Clyde Hospitals. That equates to over **1,400** full working days

Wingmen provided over 10,500 volunteer hours, and improved the working days of countless frontline staff. The Wingmen also trained some of our other volunteers, so that staff would continue to be looked after once the Air Crews went back to their substantive roles.

"Many thanks to Project Wingman. So dignified and kind despite their own difficulties in the airline industry. Big love to you all. Please stay safe"

"Thank you to the Pilots and Air Hostesses giving up their time to support our NHS. Please keep this space open"



"CABIN CREW - YOU ARE AWESOME! THANK YOU"

"For once all the NHS staff feel appreciated. Keep up the good work - it really does do wonders for staff morale"

"Aircraft crew - utterly beautiful happy and serene. What a welcome! This place is looking so homely now. THANK YOU"

## 8. GIVE & GO

As more restrictions came into play, hospital visiting had to be stopped. We all recognised that this was necessary, because loved ones who were unwell enough to be admitted to hospital were generally very vulnerable to really poor outcomes if they also caught COVID-19. The spread simply had to be halted. However the ban on hospital visiting brought its own set of challenges – visitors bring fresh clothes and take away dirty laundry. They bring emergency items like phone chargers or e-reader devices. They also bring items of comfort like sweets and drinks, and they keep patients company during visits. Visiting had to be via technology, making video calls through smart-phones and tablet devices, but that didn't resolve the issues about clothing, emergency items and 'goodies'. Thus the Give & Go Service was created.

Volunteers created a vital bridge between patients and their relatives, following strict infection prevention and control measures. Contactless double-bagging was put in place and volunteers acted as 'runners', taking parcels to wards and picking up laundry bags. The logistics of the service were quite challenging in that Give & Go desks couldn't accumulate large numbers of bags at any one time, for a number of health and safety reasons, plus social distancing meant that queues at the Give & Go desks had to be avoided whenever possible.

The volunteers often had to go to the wards at a minute's notice when ward staff perhaps had a slight lull and were able to receive parcels or hand over used laundry.



Restrictions on the number of people using lifts meant that it was often quicker to use the stairs – and many of our volunteers commented on their fitness being vastly improved through Give & Go!



Despite these challenges, Give & Go was a huge success. The service was first put in place around mid-May 2020, and when things were looking brighter and restrictions were eased for a while, we were able to stop Give & Go at the end of July. By then, a designated named person was allowed to visit a loved-one in hospital. Volunteers continued to do other things in support of our hospitals and patients, however by mid-September we were back into visitor restrictions and full-scale Give & Go. Even though Give and Go was a bit of a stop- start service, during its operation in spring and early summer 2020, and then again through autumn and winter 2020/21, the service delivered **and picked up an astonishing almost 85,000 packages.**

At Glasgow Royal Infirmary, the Give & Go volunteers measured their steps and managed to travel the equivalent of John O’Groats to Land’s End in only 10 days!





In total, there were 84,319 Give & Go deliveries and pick-ups during 2020/21.

The picture below shows some of the Give & Go Team at the RAH, taking a moment in the fresh air to cool down after a morning of running up and down the stairs.



## 9. THE ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Although the Royal Hospital for Children is an NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde facility, the volunteers based there come under the care and guidance of Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity. They still work closely with the Acute Sector Volunteering Service though, and there is additional support from the GGC Team as required. The Children's Hospital Charity provides weekly information about volunteering activity to the NHS Board's corporate team, and good practice examples are regularly shared. The RCH volunteers are part of a much bigger volunteer community on the South Glasgow campus.

It has been well documented that COVID-19 predominantly affected adults rather than children, however the restrictions on movement and physical distancing had a significant impact on families, particularly families with seriously unwell children. The team of volunteers based at the Children's Hospital ensured high-quality, dependable support to our patients, families and staff team members ensuring a helpful and safe presence at all times.

In common with volunteers across the acute sector, the Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity volunteers needed to quickly adapt their ways of working. Specifically overcoming the challenge of providing their support from communal spaces rather than within inpatient ward areas.

The volunteer team enabled play and activities by assisting with creating single use goody bags for children of all ages. The volunteers also made sure that the staff hubs for the main Children's Hospital and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit ran properly so that staff had a safe and pleasant space to relax into when they needed a break.

One of the most important attributes that defined the volunteering input to the Children's Hospital was the speedy response to patient needs (pyjamas; a car seat etc.). There



were also the welcoming volunteers – they provided a very warm and welcoming smile to everyone who entered through RCH doors, and helped with directions for anyone who was unsure or where they were to go. Volunteers also supported at the Princess Royal Maternity and the Royal Alexandra Hospital Maternity Units, providing general support as directed by the ward teams.

As well as in-hospital support, the charity also organised a large team of volunteer drivers. The number of volunteer drivers expanded in response to the pandemic, which was vital to enabling some established programmes to continue, and allow some new initiatives to be trialled. For example, the drivers distributed medical equipment to families' homes to prevent them from having to venture out during lockdown. As well as this, the volunteer drivers enabled the exceptional donor breast milk programme to continue. The programme links every neonatal unit in Scotland to donor mothers.



*"It's an absolute privilege to help get donor milk to vulnerable babies in the Neonatal Units who need it most. Every shift is different. Some days you'll be a couple of miles down the road, other days all packed up to travel to the other end of the country."*

*The Mums I collect donor milk from are absolute stars and their contribution is fantastic. Particularly during difficult times like these, it's been amazing to help keep such a vital service running."*

Janette, Volunteer Driver

More recently, the charity reintroduced events such as "What Matters To You Day" and "PRIDE" whereby volunteers have supported manned stands within the atrium, sharing good practice and good news with passers-by, all whilst maintaining good social distancing and hand hygiene.

During 2020/21, volunteers contributed **2,632** hours to the Royal Children's Hospital. That equates to **350** full working days

## 10. VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING IN LEVERNDALE HOSPITAL

Before March 2020, Glasgow City HSCP volunteers provided a wide range of informal activities across North East and South West Mental Health Inpatient Services. However, when COVID-19 hit, volunteers who provided activities ranging from Bollywood dancing, break dancing, and creative writing, to beauty therapy, ward visiting, and art, were no longer able to carry out their roles on-site. All services had to navigate a new ways of working and this meant coming up with innovative ways of delivering volunteering sessions.

In May 2020, Leverndale Hospital's ward 4B was furnished with technology to support remote therapies. This provided a golden opportunity to pilot virtual volunteer-led activity. After a trial of delivering art sessions over MSTeams, supported by a volunteer who runs a community art project that streams free online classes to its participants, the team was able to recover a range of volunteering activity over MSTeams, including dance, pampering and journaling sessions supported by Leverndale's Patient Activity Coordinator (PAC nurse), Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), and Recreational Therapy staff.

Feedback has been positive, suggesting benefits for all involved. For volunteers, planning and delivering the sessions has helped to maintain a sense of structure during lockdown, as well as giving the 'feel good factor' that comes with volunteering:

***"I really enjoy providing weekly art sessions as a volunteer with Leverndale as every week for an hour I get to show and create artwork with the group. The sessions are very relaxed and I feel the attendees taking part get so much out of them. To create artwork and landscapes is such a fulfilling and rewarding experience for me and the group."***

Garry Steven, Virtual Art Volunteer.



Ward staff were equally enthusiastic about the benefits of virtual volunteering and enjoyed being able to provide a wider variety of activity, whilst learning new skills from volunteers:

***"At first the patients found it very strange but with Garry's amazing skills he has helped a lot of patients become more comfortable with online sessions which has impacted positively on their recovery journey. Also, it increased their confidence in using platforms such as Zoom and MS Teams. It has been nice to have the opportunity to work on this project and adapt working practices to help facilitate these wonderful sessions."***

Jenn Wyld, Patient Activity Coordinator Nurse.

These newly developed skills in video conferencing also mean that in-patients of Mental Health Services are better equipped on discharge, to engage with 'Attend Anywhere' appointments, as well as online learning. One session attendee has gone on to set up a channel delivering art classes of their own.

***"I didn't think I would like a session like this, I don't like the way I look on the screen but I actually really enjoyed it and it felt like Garry was in the room."***

Patient, Ward 4B, Leverndale Hospital

***"I suffer from social anxiety in group settings but with this I didn't have to worry."***

Patient, Ward 4B, Leverndale Hospital

***"I want to continue sessions like this when I get home"***

Patient, Ward 4B, Leverndale Hospital

We are now working to roll out virtual volunteering sessions across all North East and South West Inpatient Mental Health Services, although this is very much dependent on technological equipment for wards and volunteers alike. The service is working to develop roles and systems that will be better suited to those in-patient groups who don't respond well

to screen based activity and that will enable us to be more inclusive of volunteers who don't have the technological skills and/or hardware to resume volunteering virtually.



## 11. THE BEATSON WEST OF SCOTLAND CANCER CENTRE

The Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre sits within the Gartnavel Hospitals campus, but it provides cancer care and treatment to a wider area beyond the Greater Glasgow & Clyde metropolis. The Beatson attracts volunteers who often (though not always) have either direct experience as cancer patients, or have experience through a loved one receiving care there. The volunteers are co-ordinated and supported by the Beatson Cancer Charity, which recognises the additional dimensions that volunteers bring to good quality care.

The charity is proud to have been able to offer additional, very practical support to the patients and staff at the Beatson and beyond, particularly over the 2020/21 pandemic year. In common with the wider NHS GGC, the Beatson had a tremendous response from people in the community who wanted to volunteer. Individuals with cancer were recognised as being particularly vulnerable to poorer outcomes if they were to contract the virus, and so were grouped into 'shielding' categories. Although shielding was the primary strategy to protect vulnerable people, it also meant that they risked being more isolated than the general population, and also that they needed to rely on the support of other people – often volunteers. Many of the volunteers working directly with the charity had understanding of and empathy with people on their cancer journey, although COVID-19 on top of that was a new experience for everybody!

The Beatson Cancer Charity therefore worked alongside the other Volunteer Managers within the acute hospitals, and indeed across the whole health board, to carry out interviews, and support induction and training to help mobilise the new volunteers and get them ready to help wherever they were needed.



Within the Beatson, volunteers set up Hand Hygiene Stations at the entrances to the hospital as well as managing the Give and Go service; a real lifeline for patients and families when visiting stopped. Telephone befriending was very important, especially when visiting was severely restricted, and it was important that the telephone befriending volunteers were not afraid to talk about cancer, if that's what the patient wanted.

Over and above that, the volunteers helped make up care packs for inpatients, and discharge packs for patients getting home. With shielding in place, these discharge packs provided free food, drinks, toiletries and facemasks for patients making sure they had vital supplies. The Beatson Cancer Charity was also delighted to be able to provide these care packs to some of our most vulnerable patients at Gartnavel General Hospital. That of course relied on volunteers making up the packs and taking them to the wards for distribution.



With volunteer support the Beatson Café was re-opened in a COVID-secure way to provide takeaway food and refreshments for staff and patients. Latterly the seating area was opened, providing an important social space for NHS staff and patients to have a place to sit and take breaks. The Café was governed by the same Test and Protect requirements that other cafes had to implement, but had the added advantage of additional assessment and advice from Infection Prevention and Control colleagues, which made patients and their relatives feel much safer.

The Beatson Befriending Telephone Service, manned by volunteers, was launched at the start of the first lockdown, and is still operating over a year later. The charity wanted to continue to support people who have been impacted by cancer whose isolation or loneliness would likely be compounded by COVID restrictions and the fear of catching the virus. Shielding and being stuck at home meant that lots of patients and their loved ones were missing out on emotional support.

The charity has led and supported a strong band of committed volunteers, and is rightly immensely proud of being able to reach people, to extend the hand of friendship, offer weekly calls, conversation and a bit of comfort, in these exceptional times. The commitment of the Beatson Volunteers continues and they are bonded into a cohesive team with members that support each other and well as the patients and their families. Going forward, the charity plans to expand the service, inspired by heart-felt testimonials showing that a bit of friendship and companionship can really make a difference.

*"I am very thankful to my befriender and really enjoyed my calls during the most difficult time in my life"*



*"My wife is always so much brighter after her call with her befriender and for that, I am so grateful".*

During 2020/21, volunteers contributed **4,527** hours within the Beatson. That equates to over **600** full working days. The volunteers also handled **1,496** Give & Go deliveries and pick-ups.

*"We want to pay tribute to all volunteers for all their support, hard work and kindness. Whatever your role, however you helped, here at the Beatson and all of our NHS sites, thank you!"*



## 12. THE SCOTSERVS TEAM

Since 2011, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has worked in partnership with SCOTSERVS, who's volunteers give up their time for free to help support patients and their ongoing care both in a clinical environment as well as at home in the community. This charitable ambulatory team is used to responding quickly, providing specialist medical logistics and responding to all sorts of emergencies — from delivering urgent medications to patients shielding in the community, to helping provide support for paediatric patients with long-term or life-limiting illnesses.



SCOTSERVS is the national Medical Transport charity, and their volunteers deliver Specialist Medical Logistics Services for NHS Boards across the whole of Scotland, around the clock, 365 days a year. The charity is used to responding quickly, transporting in all sorts of emergencies from delivering urgent medicines to patients, or transporting supplies of rare blood groups for transfusions, right up to taking life-saving donor organs from the donor location to the transplant location.

The local SCOTSERVS volunteers were vital in enabling NHS GGC to switch to different ways of working quickly when the first lockdown came into force. Although the media images showed hospital wards and that very important 'front-line' response to COVID-19, for clinical staff to work as well as they possibly can, they need to have support staff carrying out as many of the non-clinical aspects as possible. So, for example, we can't take nurses away from patients to draw up staffing rotas. Nor can we have doctors spending their valuable time typing up case reviews etc. These are important tasks, but they are not clinical tasks.

When the first lockdown was announced in March 2020, all of a sudden hundreds of support staff were told to 'Stay at Home'. Our own IT Department did an amazing job of quickly sourcing laptops and mobile devices, and getting them set up with high-end security an encryption so that support staff were able to work from home. But there was also a huge challenge in getting these devices to the staff who were not allowed to leave their homes. SCOTSERVS mobilised their fleet of Emergency Response Motorcycles and RapidResponse cars to get the equipment to the people who needed to support the front-line clinical work. The SCOTSERVS volunteers got support staff up and running really quickly, meaning that clinical staff could focus on patients. The support staff also began to fully realise just how vital they are to good clinical services. As time went on and restrictions continued, support staff were able to carry on working, which is a huge protective factor for good mental health. All in all, SCOTSERVS delivered, and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde was able to focus on what it does best – high quality, effective healthcare.

As lockdown continued, and throughout the changing restrictions, the SCOTSERVS volunteers have responded to well over 4,000 individual daily requests related to NHSGGC patients, and continue to be a vital part of our volunteer infrastructure.



SCOTSERVS volunteers — Dr John Darlington (Rider) & T.O. Paul Gunton (Driver) receiving their NHSGGC Covid19 appreciation badges.



### 13. VOLUNTEER CLINIC GUIDES

Some of our Acute Sector therapy clinics had a bit of a stop-start experience during 2020/21. Non-urgent clinics were stopped at the first lockdown in March, and then were able to resume in June. However by September they had to be halted again and didn't resume until February 2021.

The stopping and starting of these clinics was necessary, but meant that for some patients, their recovery took a bit longer. Many of the patients would only leave their houses to attend healthcare appointments, and were anxious about being out of their homes. Our volunteers supported these patients, reassuring them, guiding them to sanitiser and ensuring 2 metre distance.



## 14. WHY DID PEOPLE VOLUNTEER?

As the pandemic took hold, we were all seeing and hearing reports about how the virus and the restrictions were affecting people. There were tragic stories of deep personal loss and loneliness, as well as inspirational stories of community cohesion and innovative fundraising. Any or all of these stories could have been a trigger for volunteering, and all of our volunteers had heard something that touched them in some personal way. Our volunteers quickly discovered that besides making a meaningful contribution to the hospital and the community, there are many other benefits of volunteering, and this has been particularly so during the pandemic. Our volunteers have met new people, made new friends, and picked up new skills. Volunteers have also told us that hearing the stories of patients and their families – particularly relating to COVID-19 - has helped them to feel thankful for their own good health. Besides the feel-good factors of helping others and of having a bit more control of their own lives, typically volunteers have also had some practical advantages that might help them in future paid employment. Most volunteers have:

- received orientation and training, including 'on-the-job' training
- had earlier access to the COVID-19 vaccination than would have otherwise been the case
- been invited to occasional socially distanced thank-you events
- had opportunities to gain a good reference for employment and/or education programmes.

Our volunteers have come from all backgrounds and bring their own skill sets and talents with them – every single volunteer has added something important to our efforts. The power of volunteering is such that a great many of our pre-COVID volunteers that had to be paused, kept trying to come back to help. The offer was forged in kindness and compassion, but we had a duty to keep them as safe as possible – not least because we know we will need their experience and enthusiasm when things start to shape into what will become 'normal', and also when our current 'COVID' volunteers have to go back to their regular jobs!

... many pre-COVID volunteers that had to be paused, kept trying to come back to help ... we know we will need their experience and enthusiasm when things start to shape into what will become 'normal' ...

## 15. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Our volunteers have the unique opportunity to see the hospital systems from an inside perspective, where it's easy to see the need for quality healthcare professionals. For some, this inside knowledge offers a new found desire go into a healthcare related profession. For young volunteers, volunteering may help them determine if they want to continue their

education in healthcare. Many volunteers gain clinical and patient exposure, which helps them to know if they're making the right choices, and also adds substance to course applications. The next section highlights the stories of a few of our volunteers, including some who were inspired to divert their volunteering experience towards new career goals.

## 16. WHO ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS?

As might be expected, our volunteers come from all walks of life, and are generally ordinary people doing amazing things. Everyone has something to offer, so anyone can be a volunteer.



### Meet **Elaine Penman**, RAH Allied Health Professional (AHP) Support Volunteer

Elaine has been volunteering with us for over 5 years, in a variety of roles. She started her NHS volunteer journey by helping out at the Langlands unit, assisting the Activities Coordinators on Ward 52. Shortly afterwards, Elaine registered on the Dietetics course at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) and was persuaded to join the team at Ward 23 at the Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH) where she assisted with mealtime support to patients. Elaine has been actively involved throughout the past year in COVID response work helping out wherever needed, but she has a special connection with the Physio team on Ward 23, where she is

practically part of the furniture now!

### Elaine explains why she got involved;

*"Transitioning from an office job in community pharmacy to frontline healthcare, I was keen to explore primary and secondary settings whilst studying. Over the five years, I have moved between different roles and locations, which has been an excellent opportunity to experience diverse areas of the NHS and play a part in helping staff and patients.*

*I enjoy meeting new people and supporting patients during their time in hospital, whether it's doing seated exercises, filling up their water jug, talking about food and nutrition or having a general chat to pass the day.*

*Building confidence in interacting with patients and feeling comfortable in the ward environment has been great. As a dietetic student, I am gearing up towards placements and working with the public in a healthcare role. Every shift is a learning experience!"*

## Meet **Hatem Johnson**, Ward Volunteer, Lightburn and GRI

Hatem has been an NHS volunteer for around 6 years and in that time he has been involved in many different roles. Starting as a Ward Visitor in Lightburn hospital, Hatem spent time with our older patients, helping facilitate games and fun activities to help pass the time during their admissions. Hatem then moved to the Glasgow Dental Hospital as a Welcome/Guide and then Hatem joined the COVID response and helped with Give & Go at Glasgow Royal. Hatem was an extremely popular member of the team as he loved taking the parcels to the furthest away wards! Hatem is a well-known volunteer across both Lightburn and GRI and his bright and sunny nature makes him a huge hit with patients, families and staff alike.



Hatem is an asylum seeker and explains;

*"... my life has been very difficult at times, and I have felt blessed to be able to be part of the Volunteering Team as I have a real feeling of belonging. It feels like a family, when I have little support and as I am a part time Health and Social care student. I am hopefully, one day, going to be able to work for the NHS."*

Hatem was sad when the Give & Go ended as he truly enjoyed the moving around. He explains:

*" I loved when we tracked our steps from Lands End to John O'Groats. We managed to get there in 10 days due to all of the walking around the huge GRI site. I really enjoyed being able to help, we were so appreciated by staff and families and it was great to be able to keep active making such a difference too. Volunteering has improved my confidence in general, it has helped my communication skills massively and it has also complimented my learning in college. I am going to remain a firm NHS Volunteer as it is a massive part of my life. I always feel like I belong when I am with my volunteering family and I am grateful to have the team and Louise in my life."*

We are grateful to have Hatem too!

## Meet **Amy Donaghy**, RAH Give & Go / AHP Support Volunteer

Amy joined us in September 2020 and quickly became a key member of the very busy RAH Give and Go team. Although she started off in the Give & Go service, Amy later joined our Orthopaedics AHP team at the RAH, where she offers support and encouragement to patients' alongside the Physio team.

Amy has been successful in her application to study Medicine at Glasgow University and explains her reasons for volunteering;



*"I got involved in volunteering in the RAH as I really wanted to help others during the pandemic and make a difference, so as soon as I heard about the opportunity to volunteer in a hospital I leapt at the chance.*

*For me I found meeting a whole range of new people the most enjoyable, from patients, porters, health workers and other volunteers. Everyone has their own story to tell and bits of advice to give. Having the opportunity to meet these amazing people and assist them (even just by delivering parcels and doing physio with some of them) has been a privilege.*

*Through my journey of volunteering I believe I have gained more self-confidence and I can now more comfortably speak to people who I've never met before. I have also gained experience of the inner workings of a hospital which should come in handy in the future!"*

## Meet **Lucy McGonigle**, Leverndale Virtual Patient Activity Volunteer.

Lucy first came to volunteer with us in response to a call for volunteers to help steward the 'Meander for Mental Health' event in September 2019 and when she learned that there was scope to volunteer longer term, she applied straight away. Lucy has a long standing interest in working with mental health services and now delivers guided creative journaling sessions, over MSTeams with the Patient Activity Nurse in ward 4B at Leverndale hospital.

Lucy has recently been successful in her application to work with NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Community Mental Health Team. Although Lucy will be busy with her new role, she plans to continue volunteering with In-Patient Mental Health Services for the foreseeable future.



Lucy explains what motivates her

*"I felt very welcomed and appreciated when I*

*volunteered for 'Meander for Mental Health', and this is how I continue to feel to this day. When the pandemic hit, my Volunteering Services Manager and the ward's Patient Activity Nurse worked with me to develop journaling sessions to be delivered online, and we continue to adapt these depending on the needs of the patients who are taking part. Although I look forward to eventually being on the ward with the patients, it is a privilege to be able to contribute in some way to their recovery during this difficult time, even if it is just by brightening their afternoon a bit. Volunteering within NHS GGC's Mental Health Services gave me the confidence to work in the sector again, and I look forward to beginning my new position. I have felt very valued and supported by my Volunteer Manager during this time, and it has been lovely to have been recognised for my contribution by NHS GGC."*

## Meet **RAMYA MANIVANNAN**, GRI Give & Go/Meaningful Activity Volunteer

Ramya first joined the volunteering team at Glasgow Royal Infirmary in September 2019 as a Meaningful Activity Volunteer; helping running our very successful Dementia Cafes. Our cafes were a real big hit with patients and families alike but had to stop as the pandemic began. Ramya; a Strathclyde University Business student decided to remain with us to help out with the COVID volunteering response and was a key member of the extremely busy Give & Go.



We asked Ramya what it is she enjoys about being an NHS Volunteer in Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Ramya said:

Ramya told us some of the many reasons she loves volunteering.

1. *The fact that I'm part of fighting a global crisis, with so many courageous people.*
2. *The realisation that amongst this awful pandemic, there are so many good people in this world.*
3. *The little conversations and moments with strangers that make more of an impact than you think.*
4. *The challenging times that, even when they get really tough, make me more resilient and brave.*
5. *The overwhelming support from staff and the general public.*

*"Most of all, it's the people. I wouldn't love volunteering as much as I do, without all of the volunteers at Glasgow Royal Infirmary- we really feel like a community. I am truly grateful to be a part of the team and have grown so much. I have no idea what job I want when I leave university; I can only hope that it's as fulfilling and empowering as this!"*

## Meet **Carol Hughes**, Project Wingman, RAH HUB Volunteer

Carol is one of the brilliant team of volunteers that run the Staff R & R Hub at the RAH. Until last year, Carol worked at BA for 31 years. She originally started volunteering at the RAH with the Project Wingman crew in April 2020. Carol is now our most experienced HUB volunteer and has been an excellent mentor for newer recruits as they join the team. She is also famous across the hospital for her legendary home baked Ginger Cake and Custard Creams!

Carol reflects on her experiences at the RAH HUB;

*"When I was furloughed at the start of the pandemic, I read about Project Wingman on our company Facebook page and saw that they needed volunteers. I thought it would be a good thing to do with my time. At the beginning, I was a wee bit nervous and apprehensive. We had induction training and undertook a peer support course, but I wasn't too sure what I would be coming into".*

When asked about her volunteering role, Carol says;

*"It has been one of the best experiences of my life! Being able to give your time, being able to listen to staff is really rewarding. The staff are so grateful and also interested in your story. The HUBS have really evolved over the past year, but it's been a lot of fun. At the beginning it was great to meet colleagues from all different airlines, we got on so well and we have all kept in touch as crew members have moved on.*



*I have now been adopted into the NHS volunteer team and am meeting new folks from all different backgrounds which has also been lovely."*

## Meet Catherine Durham, RAH Staff HUB Volunteer

Catherine is one of the fabulous team of volunteers that run the Staff R & R Hub at the RAH.

Before retirement, Catherine worked as a senior accountant and manager in North Lanarkshire and brings a wealth of organisational skills and experience that ensures the RAH HUB runs smoothly. Catherine makes sure we keep well stocked and organises our hugely successful seasonal tombolas, which bring in much needed funds to support the HUB.

Catherine is very active in the community and has volunteered in large scale events as well as community projects and is looking forward to volunteering at the Euros and the COP26 event this year.

Catherine started as a regular volunteer at the RAH in September 2020.

*"I got involved because I have always wanted to help out in the hospital. My daughter works in healthcare and I saw first-hand from her what a tough year it had been for staff working on the frontline. I wanted to give something back, especially to the people that were working the hardest throughout the pandemic.*

*I enjoy meeting the staff, and have some great conversations with the staff and other volunteers, everyone is very friendly. Just knowing that you are helping and contributing is a great thing; I have a sense of pride wearing the volunteer uniform every time I come in."*



## 17. PANDEMIC RESPONSE – SOME OF THE LOGISTICS

### Volunteering Application Process

Our Volunteer Managers had to develop a new Volunteer Application Process very quickly. Previously new volunteers would put themselves forward at a steady and predictable stream, and our systems were geared up for one-to-one inductions. With the sheer number of new volunteers that were needed – and that came forward – we needed to be as efficient as we possibly could in ensuring safe recruitment and good matches between skills and volunteer roles. Community applications were diverted to the appropriate HSCPs quickly, which in turn brought clarity about the level of volunteer support that could potentially be available both to community health services and to our hospitals. The team worked to ensure that new applications were processed as quickly as possible, so that we had enough volunteers ready to be deployed immediately in the event of a sharp rise in demand.

### Volunteer Deployment

Volunteering tasks were grouped into four key areas, namely:

- Nursing;
- Facilities;
- Driving and
- Administration.

This was to support appropriate placement of volunteers, and individual tasks were identified, based on requests from services and wards. Before any tasks were allocated we took advice from Infection Prevention & Control and Health & Safety colleagues. Even tasks that had traditionally always been undertaken by volunteers had to be re-assessed in light of COVID. PPE requirements were identified, and 2 metre distancing was being reinforced everywhere. We were still in the phase of supermarket shelves being stripped bare and soap and sanitiser being almost impossible for members of the public to get hold of, so some volunteers even stood guard to ensure that sanitiser bottles didn't 'disappear', while still actively encouraging everyone to use the sanitiser. As well as all the COVID-related tasks, the volunteers still managed to continue some of the nice 'extras' that volunteers have traditionally brought into hospital environments.

- Developing a newspaper with good news stories for distraction at ward level for Older People's wards and the Occupational Therapy department
- Helping within stores to keep stocks replenished and alert the wards to any dwindling supplies
- Helping with meal times on the wards
- Telephoning relatives on behalf of the wards to advise when patients were recovering (this helped enormously in reducing the number of phone calls that caused the nurses to have to stop what they were doing to answer).

The lockdown restrictions that had been put in place in March 2020 were designed to reduce the spread of the virus, so that serious cases were kept to numbers that were as low as possible, and therefore as manageable as possible. Infection prevention and control was of paramount importance in our hospitals. Non-urgent admissions were largely paused, meaning that non-COVID admissions were of patients who were acutely unwell, and so by definition, would also be likely to have a poor outcome if they contracted COVID while in hospital. Because of these factors, hospital admissions had to be tightly managed, with robust infection prevention and control measures in place. Our volunteers worked tirelessly to support safe admissions, by helping with donning and doffing of PPE and through cleaning and sanitising everywhere they went.

## 18. A SUMMER OF HOPE AND FEAR ...

The infection prevention and control measures worked well, and people out in the communities did their bit to reduce the spread of the virus too. Social distancing and frequent and thorough handwashing, along with contact tracing and isolating led to a steady decline in case numbers, and on 7 June 2020, no new COVID deaths are recorded in Scotland for the first time since lockdown began in

March. Although advice was issued that we should not take foreign holidays, everyone was beginning to feel a bit more optimistic nonetheless. Fortunately we had a warm, sunny summer here in Scotland – and our volunteers still came in despite what must have been a strong temptation to just enjoy the sunshine!

7 June 2020, no new COVID deaths are recorded in Scotland for the first time since lockdown began in March

By the end of July, people were again allowed to visit their loved ones in hospital, so the need for Give & Go disappeared. Discontinuing Give & Go felt like a really positive move, although we were still sticking to the 2 metre distance rule; wearing face masks and hand sanitising.

Figures released by National Records of Scotland show that deaths between April and June 2020 had increased by a third on other years

However some grim statistics were published by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) on 9 September 2020, showing that deaths between April and June 2020 had increased by a third on other years. This brought the bravery of our volunteers into sharp focus, and we were

already seeing the COVID-19 case numbers rise, across the whole country. A stark reminder came as hospital visiting was stopped again, and we had to resurrect the Give & Go Service from 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

## 19. WINTER IS COMING ....

With cases steadily rising despite all the restrictions, our volunteers continued to work with us, doing whatever needed to be done, and bringing whatever comfort they could. Political leaders were warning that the end was not in sight yet, and restrictions would be kept in place. Our volunteers remained cheerful in spite of this, and carried on running up and down stairs for Give & Go, or cleaning rails, wheelchairs and lift buttons. Drivers carried on delivering bespoke medicines for very sick children so that they could stay at home with their families instead of having to be in hospital. Our contribution to clinical trials and research was able to continue, again because of the volunteer drivers taking packages of trial drugs to people's houses. All of these activities and more continued thanks to volunteers.

Then on 2<sup>nd</sup> December the UK approved the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID vaccine. By the very next day the first batch arrived in Scotland. The arrival of the vaccine was the good news so many of us had been waiting for, and the UK Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisations (JCVI) confirmed that NHS front-line volunteers should be categorised in Priority Group 2, the same group as paid front-line NHS staff. This was a very important recognition of the volunteers' contributions, and most of our volunteers accepted the vaccine offer when it was made. Everyone acknowledged that there was a time gap between receiving the vaccine and having

The UK approves  
Pfizer/BioNTech COVID  
vaccine on 2 December  
2020.

The first batch arrives in  
Scotland on 3 December.

By 6 December the  
number of people in  
Scotland testing positive  
for COVID-19 passes  
**100,000**. By 7 December  
the number of COVID-  
related deaths in Scotland  
passes **6,000**.

protection from it, and that the vaccine did not claim to be 100% effective. However our volunteers continued, keeping themselves safe by sanitising, using masks and other PPE, and keeping the all-important social distance.

By 6<sup>th</sup> December the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases passed the 100,000 mark, and by 7<sup>th</sup>, the number of COVID deaths in Scotland passed 6,000. These grim

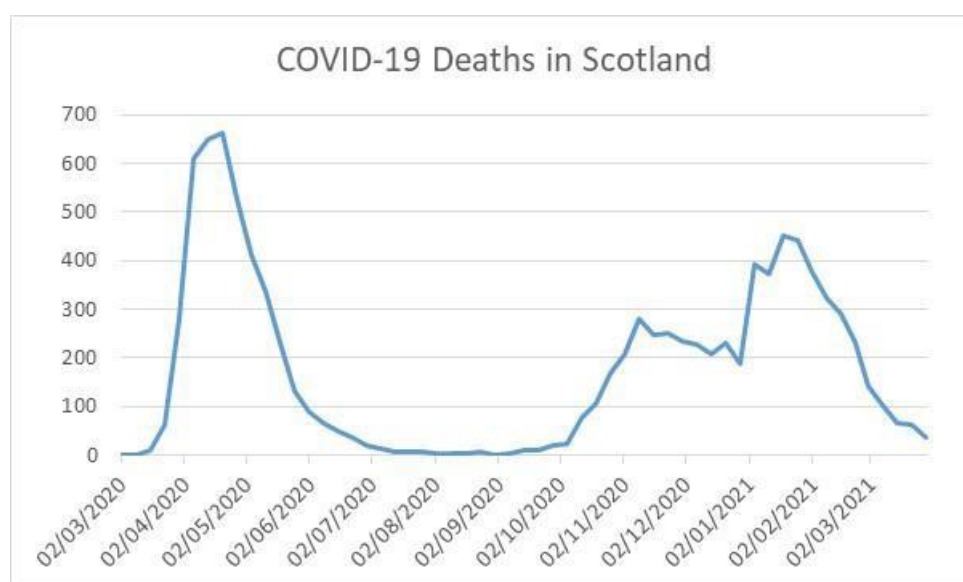
Official figures released  
on 16 January show that  
2020 had the highest  
number of peacetime  
deaths since 1891

statistics were released against a backdrop of rising case numbers, and on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the Scottish Government placed mainland Scotland under lockdown again. Give and Go was back into full swing and by mid-January was handling around 2,500 packages each week. By mid-February that figure had risen to almost 3,500. Despite the new lockdown, on 9<sup>th</sup> January the Scottish Government issued figures showing 1,596 people in hospital with COVID – the highest number so far. By the following day (10<sup>th</sup> January), that figure had risen to 1,877. Official figures released on 16<sup>th</sup> January by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) indicated that 2020 had the highest number of peacetime deaths since 1891.

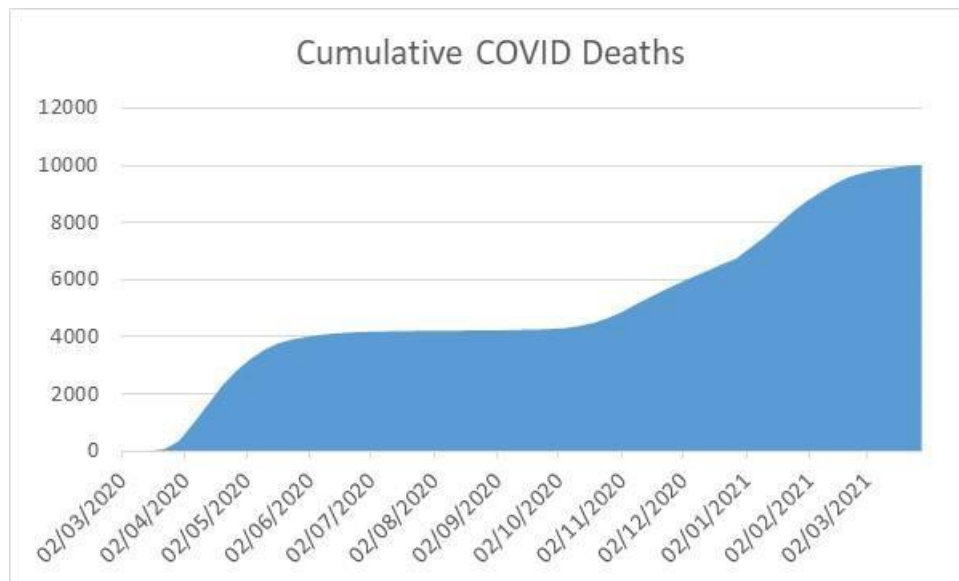
## 20. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? ....

The year 2020/21 has probably been the most challenging year the NHS has faced since it was founded in 1948. Staff and volunteers have always been held up as the most valuable assets available to the NHS, but this past year has strengthened that belief, and also strengthened the relationships between the staff and volunteers.

At times when sickness absence rates, or absence rates through having to self-isolate were at their highest, our paid staff relied on volunteers like never before. And our volunteers continually rose to that challenge too. The loss of life was unprecedented across the whole of Scotland, coming in waves and sapping everyone's resilience.



The cumulative COVID-19 death toll in Scotland was shocking, hitting 10,000 by the end of March 2021, yet staff and volunteers came in to each new day with a positive attitude and an optimism that things would soon improve. The challenges have reminded everyone about how crucial our health and care services are. The volunteers who stepped forward – and those who stepped down to keep themselves safe for a future return to volunteering – have contributed immeasurably to the NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde COVID-19 response. This report highlights some aspects of that, but there was so much more going on, and that can be built on once we are convinced that we have COVID under control.



Moving forward into 2021/22 and the accelerated vaccine roll-out, we are all hopeful that this coming year will be better than last year in all the right ways. We are already working to bring our pre-COVID volunteers back into 'active service' and as many of our COVID-19 volunteers return to their day-jobs, they will be leaving us with a sense of pride and self-achievement. And we hope to welcome them back at some point in the future, although hopefully not in the context of a global pandemic!

Every single volunteer – whether active or paused – has played their part in our collective response to this historic event. They will be able to look back in years to come and reflect on how they made a real difference in a time of national emergency, and how they helped to shape a response forged in kindness and sound human values.

This is the first NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Volunteering Annual Report, and was developed to document the inspirational story of how ordinary people put themselves at risk when they stepped forward to help, during extraordinary times. We also acknowledge that volunteering has *always* been part of our NHS culture, and has traditionally gone on quietly in the background. Going forward, we will develop more reports that showcase and celebrate the additional dimensions that volunteers bring to high-quality NHS care.

