



January 2024

Getting to know you!

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Let's break the ice!

Volunteering

NHS
Lothian

Getting to know Ho Leung

Ho Leung is a Ward Helper at the Western General Hospital and volunteers in the Medical Assessment Unit.



THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A VOLUNTEER IS...

The appreciation from the patients and the medical staff. When I hear 'thank you' or 'thanks for coming today', I feel grateful and it's heartwarming. That means a lot to me!

AS A VOLUNTEER I LOVE...

To chat with the patients, know about their personal stories and understand how I can offer a better service for the patients on the ward.

A TYPICAL DAY VOLUNTEERING FOR ME LOOKS LIKE...

The hustle and bustle in the ward. Setting up and serving coffee or tea for the patients, changing water jugs, collecting finished meals and dish washing in the kitchen.

THE ONE THING I'LL NEVER FORGET ABOUT MY TIME VOLUNTEERING IS...

My purple shirt! It distinguishes myself from other medical staff as a volunteer, and some patients are interested in my duties, as my outfits are different from staff on the ward.

SINCE BECOMING A VOLUNTEER I HAVE GAINED...

Experience of working and serving in the healthcare industry. Understanding how the healthcare system works in the UK, and how to take care of the patients and vulnerable groups in a professional manner.

Getting to know Ann Marie



I WAS INSPIRED TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER BECAUSE..

I wanted to give my time to my local community and when I had a conversation with my manager I used to work with, she gave me the motivation to apply for volunteering. She said that I am very much a people person and that I showed empathy with great organisational skills. Now I wish I had done it sooner!

MY FAVOURITE SEASON IS...

The start of Spring because it's the start of my golf season.

THE BEST JOB I'VE HAD WAS...

As an Operations Manager in Boots the Chemist.

ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SELF WOULD BE..

Learning to drive earlier, I was in my late 30s when I learned.



MY TYPICAL DAY ON GLENLEE WARD...

I start by making coffee and tea for the patients in the morning, then I collect the cups when they are finished, wash and put them away and tidy up the kitchen. I prepare for lunch arriving, putting out cutlery and dishes, I also make up the cold drinks. On arrival of lunch I help to serve to the patients, then after lunch I tidy up the kitchen and put the dishwasher on.

FAVOURITE FOOD...

Haddock Mornay

WHAT ALWAYS MAKES ME SMILE...

Take That - Rule The World.
It was mine and my husband's first dance song at our wedding.

THIS OR THAT

Sun, Beach,
Dancing,
Swim,
Outdoor,
Planned

Ann Marie is a Ward Helper in Midlothian Community Hospital and she's been volunteering since October 2021!

Getting to know Kirsty

Kirsty is a Ward Helper in the East Pavilion at the Astley Ainslie Hospital

I WAS INSPIRED TO BE A VOLUNTEER BECAUSE..

I have had two family members (an Aunt and my Mum) receive amazing care in the NHS. My aunt received a liver transplant and it has totally transformed her life. My mum sadly suffered a bleed on the brain but when we were approached by the doctor and asked to consider her as a donor, to which we agreed, the care and sensitivity shown by the transplant team and co-ordinator to my family and to my mum was second to none. Seeing both sides of this journey really opened my eyes to what the NHS does in two different kinds of crisis.



MY FAVOURITE THING TO DO IN MY SPARE TIME IS...

I love attending live music and sporting events - photo to the left with Callum Beatty!

THE BEST JOB I'VE HAD HAS BEEN...

A lifeguard when I was younger, I loved my time working in the pools in Edinburgh. I have met some lifelong friends whilst working and it changed my career path.

THE ONE THING I'LL NEVER FORGOT ABOUT MY TIME VOLUNTEERING IS...

We had a patient on the ward whose wife showed me one of his drawings he had done before he was admitted which was amazing; he is very talented. This patient was really struggling with his recovery and his wife was trying to encourage him to do some puzzle books which he wasn't showing any interest in. When I was chatting to them I noticed a pen and a blank piece of paper on his table and said to him, "Why don't you try to pick up that pen and see if you can doodle a little, I've seen your artwork and you're so talented". I was then called away to do something but 5 minutes later his wife appeared at the ward kitchen door and said "he's written his name!" and told me that was a huge achievement for him. She had thanked me for encouraging him and was very overwhelmed at what he had done, it was almost a little insight to seeing his old self. I came away from my shift that day realising the impact of what volunteering does, not just for the patients but also the family members. His wife is a lovely woman who was struggling to see her husband so low so I don't think I will ever forget the smile and emotion on her face that day.

Getting to know Moray

I WAS INSPIRED TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER BECAUSE...

As a transplant recipient I wanted to give back to the NHS that saved my life, in particular, the transplant ward at the RIE. Also to give a positive experience to new and prospective patients that life after transplant can be all they would want it to be.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A VOLUNTEER IS...

Being thanked by patients as they leave the transplant ward after a life changing time in hospital. The nurses, doctors, coordinators and surgeons in the transplant ward inspire me every time I go in. Their care, compassion and professionalism is mind blowing as they go about their work saving lives.



FAVOURITE THING TO DO IN MY SPARE TIME IS...

Keeping active by walking.

BEST JOB I EVER HAD WAS...

As an Engineer in the Merchant Navy in my 20s. I saw many parts of the world and had my eyes opened to different cultures and ways of life.

THE BOOK I'VE READ OVER AND OVER AGAIN IS...

'A Voyage For Madmen' by Peter Nichols. A true story of adventure, daring and ultimately disaster for many of those involved.



ONE PIECE OF ADVICE I WOULD GIVE MY YOUNGER SELF WOULD BE TO...

Look after my health better in terms of nutrition and exercise.

A TYPICAL VOLUNTEER DAY WOULD BE...

Giving a positive, lived experience of life both going through, and after the transplant process to patients. Helping the ward staff on busy Fridays when patients are being discharged and seeing the patients and their families leave the ward with hope for their futures.

Sunrise or Sunset?

Sunrise, look forward to the day and make the most of your life.

Sun or Moon?

Sun. With factor 50

Beach or Mountain?

Mountain, especially the Scottish Highlands.

Pop or Rock?

Definitely Progressive Rock of the 70s. Can't beat Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and early Genesis.

Getting to know Nina



Nina volunteers as a Ward Helper in the Astley Ainslie Hospital.

I WAS MOTIVATED TO VOLUNTEER...

After I retired in 2021 (from Edinburgh University Library) I wanted to do something useful with my free time. I believed that being an NHS volunteer would be rewarding, and I welcomed the opportunity to meet new people and do something very different. I had once spent almost a year in hospital myself, and I wanted to give something back to the NHS.

FOR ME, THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING AN NHS VOLUNTEER IS...

Meeting new and interesting people, both patients and staff. I generally find that I leave my afternoon shift feeling better than I did before I started it. I have thoroughly enjoyed being in the Astley Ainslie Walking Group, accompanying patients and other volunteers around the beautiful grounds on Friday afternoons. I think you get to know people better on these walks, away from the ward, out in the lovely grounds. Several of the patients have extensive knowledge of plants/trees/biochemistry and have made these trips very enjoyable and interesting.

I HAVE LIVED AND WORKED IN TWO OTHER COUNTRIES...

I was the Chief Librarian in the Turks and Caicos Islands, British West Indies. I was responsible for the development of public and school libraries. The photo on the right is of me outside the Victoria Public Library, Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands. I also worked as an Assistant Librarian in the University of Science & Technology in Ghana, West Africa. I was in charge of a Retro Conversion Cataloguing Project.



I HAVE READ JONATHAN STROUD'S 'BARTIMAEUS TRILOGY' OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

Absolutely wonderful fantasy series. Witty, sharp, funny, dark and full of the backstabbing politics you can see today in the current UK government! Aimed at youngsters, but all ages can enjoy the humour and sharp wit.

My favourite things to do include reading, jigsaws, crosswords, and meeting friends in cafes.