

Autumn 2025

Here to help annual celebration event



August saw the annual Craigavon Hospital Here to Help volunteer celebration event.

8 volunteers were in attendance, along with their 2 keyworkers. They enjoyed tea and scones, chat and laughs!

This event recognises the hard work and dedication of all Here to Help volunteers, and thanks the volunteers for everything they do. Care Opinion staff popped in to tell the volunteers how they can encourage patients to share their views using the Care Opinion portal.

Volunteer Mentors in Foster Care Review



Going brilliant. A great match, a great family and working for everyone

Volunteer Mentors at a recent get together . They shared their experiences and ideas to support new volunteers in the role. The event ended with a lovely nature walk .

Very rewarding and I feel that I make a difference both to the child and their family.

The volunteers in the Mentor role within Foster Care Services has been running from January 2004. Five volunteers have been mentoring since then and with new volunteers coming on board we took the opportunity to get all there tips, hints and ideas to help the new volunteers. Thanks to all the ideas we have created a new resource with all that information packed into. Thank you all for the brilliant effort you have been putting into this role.

A child was placed in a very busy house and enjoyed the 1 to 1 time with the mentor and the support. The child has now moved into their long term placement and has gotten so busy they struggle to fit time in with the mentor. Its wonderful that the mentor could be there when needed but knows when to step back to allow the child to flourish in their new life.

Meal Time Support Training

Our latest Meal Time Support training programme took place in St.Lukes Site on 17th July. The volunteers thoroughly enjoyed the course and are now ready to provide meal time support throughout our Trust sites. Many thanks to the facilitators Dana Suitor (Dietitian) and Wendy Henderson (staff nurse) who helped deliver this training



HSC Southern Health and Social Care Trust
TOGETHER, IMPROVING CARE, TRANSFORMING LIVES

ahp allied health professions
better living matters

Allied Health Professions Careers Events

Are you in year 12,13 or 14 and considering a career in health care?

Come and meet us at one of our open evenings on
Tuesday 30th September (South Lakes Leisure Centre) OR
Wednesday 15th October (Newry Leisure Centre)

Time: Slots available 5:30pm, 6:30pm & 7:30pm (booking essential)



Sharing the passion of our professions to influence choice

- Interactive demos
- Chat with new graduates
- Collaborative working
- Highlighting patient centred care

Allied Health Professions in attendance will include:

- Dietetics
- Occupational Therapy
- Orthoptics (30th Sept. only)
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Radiography



Please click [here](#) to book your space.

workinspiration@btnci.org.uk



The next Meal Time Support training session will be held on

Wednesday 29th October 2025
In Ballybot House,
Cornmarket Newry

Booking is essential, please contact: volunteer.service@southerntrust.hscni.net

Annual Reviews

During the Summer months we conduct our Annual Reviews with Volunteers. This is an important time for you to have your say on what is going well and what could be improved within your volunteering role. All your feedback is important to the Service. Please engage with these reviews.



Pets as Therapy

Patricia and Bennie bringing joy to those in to Loane House. Bennie got lots of cuddles and put a smile on everyone's face.



Showcasing Mealtime Support

Did you know that Meal Time Support is one of our most popular roles for students across the trust? Meal time support gives volunteers an opportunity to gain practical hands on experience in our wards, vital for those UCAS forms for those wanting to study in Health care related fields. Below we hear from student Caolan who has been volunteering from April 2025 in Loane House.



New Here to Help Podiums

"Hello my name is Caolan and I am a sixth form student at St. Patrick's Academy Dungannon. I am currently volunteering as a Meal Time Support volunteer in Loane House Dungannon. I volunteer every other Wednesday from 4pm to 5pm. My role involves supporting and encouraging patients to eat their meal and assist where necessary. I love having a chat with them too! I enjoy the role because of the smile I receive upon handing out the tea and biscuits which can really lift an older persons mood. From volunteering in this role I have improved my communication skills and it allows me to show my empathy and compassion with the patients. This is really vital as I hope to study medicine in 2026 at university. I would recommends to others to get involved because even the smallest jobs such as being there for someone to talk too or just hand out butter and napkins can go a long way in assisting the amazing multi-disciplinary team within this care setting".



Visitors to Craigavon and Daisy Hill Hospitals will have noticed the Here to Help volunteers are now standing out more with their new podiums. Feel free to say hello when you see them.

Baton of Hope



Jenny showing off one of the raised flower beds. Jenny has been helping with these in her volunteering role with The Orchard Day Centre, Newry.

Great work Jenny, Well done!



The Volunteer Service was delighted to be part of the Baton of Hope parade in Newry on 3rd September.



The symbolic baton representing mental wellbeing visited the Southern Trust area as part of its UK tour promoting suicide prevention. The event saw bereaved families and suicide survivors carry the Baton of Hope in a bid to challenge the stigma surrounding suicide and get people talking.

Looking after your mental health is important



Minding your head has information, advice and support to help people in Northern Ireland look after and improve their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It is a useful tool to have at our disposal:

- for our own mental health and wellbeing
- to find support
- to support others

Click this link to go to [Minding your head website](#)



When you decide to end your volunteering please...

- 1 Let Key Worker and Volunteer Coordinator know you are leaving
- 2 Return your polo shirt and ID badge to your Volunteer Coordinator
- 3 Free your role for new volunteers

THANK YOU



The volunteer coordinators are currently busy visiting schools and SRC freshers fayres to promote our service.

It is a delight to be recruiting so many new volunteers at this time of year to replace all those volunteers who have left to begin their university studies.

Volunteer Coordinators

Aine Mulholland, Craigavon & Banbridge, 028 3756 3950

Karen McCabe, Armagh & Dungannon, 028 3756 4498

Katrina Lavery, Newry & Mourne, 028 3756 6295