

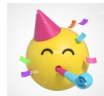
Special Dedication to Donna Sloan



We would like to dedicate this issue to former Volunteer Coordinator, Donna Sloan, who recently passed away. Donna was a much valued and dedicated staff member based in Newry & Mourne. We really appreciate the foundations Donna helped lay for the Volunteer Service.

Congratulations Aisling

On receiving wonderful feedback recently.



“My daughter had a recent admission to Paediatric ward in Daisy Hill. During that time a young volunteer called Aisling came in and offered to play games with her. Aisling was a chatty, friendly, kind young lady and gave my daughter a few giggles, which was exactly what she needed. Aisling had mentioned she would like to work in healthcare in the future, she will make a great member to any hospital team in the future.”

Donation to the maternity ward



One of our dedicated volunteers, Erin Stevens, recently took time out from her role volunteering in Blossom Children’s Ward to donate hand-knitted hats to the maternity ward.

Born prematurely herself, Erin was keen to give something back. She lovingly created the hats for premature babies and was delighted to present them to staff midwife Corinna Barton. Her thoughtful gesture will help bring warmth and comfort to some of our tiniest patients and their families.

Thank You Volunteers



This year we are celebrating our volunteers a little differently. By running different activities over two months and we hope you can all attend at least one, wherever and whenever you can.



Relax from exam stress

With our online relaxation programmes on
13th May from 6.30 to 7.30

For relaxing
Colour Breathing

or

20th May 6.30 to 7.30

Join our **Bend Don't Break Session**



Come to our

Volunteer Thank You Brunch



**Tuesday 30th June
9.30 to 12.30**

Oxford Island Nature Reserve
For a lovely brunch along with a choice of activities including forest bathing, crafts and boccia. There will also be the opportunity to have some health checks while you are there, if you wish to avail.



Join us on a chatty walk

6th May at 11.00am
St. Lukes Hospital Site,
Armagh

19th May at 11.00am
South Lakes Leisure
Centre Craigavon

4th June at 11.00am
John Mitchell Place,
Newry

Check out the Volunteer Week posts on Southern Trust Social Media



Thank You

Bennie the Therapy Dog

Our wonderful volunteer Patricia and Bennie the therapy dog have been bringing joy to service users in Loane House, South Tyrone Hospital. Bennie and Patricia visit Loane House every Monday, Ward Manager Wendy Henderson says, *“Bennie brings a smile to those patients who have a dog or had one in the past. He also helps patients to interact when they normally do not. For the patients who have dementia he can quite often be a good distraction, something to break the monotony of the day and stimulate good memories “*



Inís and her Therapy Dog Ira

Inís and Ira came for their first visit to Daisy Children’s Ward and were such a big hit with the children. Ira loved showing off her tricks for the children and bringing lots of smiles and cuddles. Then they visited Orchard Day Centre and wowed everyone there just as much and got even more cuddles.



Show case volunteer roles; Children’s Ward Activity Support

Activity support volunteer, Oliwier, spoke to us about his typical day volunteering in Blossom children's ward and why he enjoys this volunteer role;

“I volunteer in Blossom children’s ward after school once a week. I let the nurses know I have arrived, they tell me who I should chat to. I raid the games cupboard for some toys or games. Then for an hour I play board games or just chat to the child and usually their parent or caregiver gets a break. 5 minutes before my time is up I let the nurse know that I will be going and I say goodbye to the child.

Sometimes toys or board games are left behind since the child usually continues the game with another volunteer or a parent/guardian. Before I volunteer I can feel a little nervous, but afterwards I am very happy because I feel the impact I've made at Blossom is something to be proud of, no matter how small it is because at the end of the day if I were in their shoes I would want someone to mess about with and just forget the reason I am in hospital!”



Congratulations to our newly inducted Volunteers



Showcasing our User Involvement Activity

On 9th March we were invited to showcase our volunteering User Involvement/PPI activity at a recent 'User Involvement Champions event'. Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) in Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts, refers to the **statutory duty** of health organisations to actively involve patients, carers, and the public in the planning, commissioning, delivery, and evaluation of health services.

We demonstrated the positive impact of asking volunteers for their opinions on areas of our service and making changes according to their feedback. It has been a vital key to the improvements made over the last four years and we appreciate every volunteer who has offered their suggestions.

Promoting Wellbeing Training Brochure

If you are interested in attending any of the wide variety of health and wellbeing courses being delivered this year please follow the link below. We can guarantee you can will be surprised by the variety. [Your Health | Southern Health & Social Care Trust](#)



Meal Time Support Training Feb 2026



Could you be the change
in a young person's life?

Supported Lodgings/STAY

Supported lodgings/STAY hosts provide accommodation to care-experienced young people and young refugees, and offer practical and emotional support to guide them towards independent living.

Hosts receive training, support and financial assistance.

0800 0720 137
adoptionandfostercare.hscni.net



Many thanks to Anita McConnell, Bincy Jose and Niamh McParland for helping to deliver Meal Time support training for the latest cohort of volunteers.

17 volunteers are newly trained, and are excited to be starting the meal time support roles.

The next meal time support training session will be on;

Wednesday, 24th June 2026 in St Lukes, Armagh.

Contact your Volunteer Coordinator for more details.

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](https://mindingyourhead.info)



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**

All volunteers are entitled to access the NHS Blue Light card? For a small fee, this card gives you discount to various high street and online shops.

To apply for the card, you must have a volunteering ID. Please contact your Volunteer Coordinator for further information.

HSC Southern Health and Social Care Trust



Do you know that as a volunteer with Southern Health & Social Care Trust you have free access to our health & wellbeing portal?

Website: <https://u-matter.org.uk>

Username: **southerntrust**

Password: **umatter**

Or you can download the U-matter App directly to your phone.

Volunteer Coordinators

Aine Mulholland, Craigavon & Banbridge, 028 3756 3950

Karen McCabe, Armagh & Dungannon, 028 3756 4498

Katrina Lavery, Newry & Mourne, 028 3756 6295