

REACHING OUT

The Newsletter for Volunteering in Health

October 2017

Volunteering in Health is now well settled into our new premises at Teignmouth Hospital. It is a much better space for us to work from to offer all of our existing services, and the new Information Centre is developing as we go! Please do pop in and visit us. If you spot any posters or leaflets with our old details on—please remove them!

We had a fantastic launch event in July, with staff and volunteers travelling to the Information Centre in different ways: cycling and



kayaking from Brixham, walking from Torbay Hospital, running from Dawlish, and pushing a wheelchair all the way from Dawlish Hospital. On arrival the mayors of Dawlish and Teignmouth officially opened the centre and everyone was treated to a cream tea.

To finish off the day, two of the managers from the hospital even had their heads shaved to raise further sponsorship! A total of £600 was raised on the day.

After several requests from hungry hospital staff, we are opening a small tuck shop in the Information Centre—so if you're here for an appointment and feeling a bit peckish you know where to come!

In September we held our Annual General Meeting, which went really well—with standing room only! Mairead McAlinden, the Chief Executive of Torbay and South Devon Foundation Trust, spoke about how much the statutory sector appreciates the work of the voluntary sector. She also announced that VIH was one of the first charities to be awarded a new Quality Kitemark, as a trusted health and wellbeing provider.

Thank you to everyone who has made 2017 such a wonderful year for VIH! We look forward to developing the Information Centre further in 2018.

Chloe



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Shoeboxes

We are collecting items for this year's Christmas Shoebox appeal. We will be sending ours via Teignmouth Baptist Church onto elderly people in Eastern Europe through Link to Hope.

If you can donate empty or full shoeboxes, or items to go in them, please bring them into the Information Centre by 27th October. Please speak to Miia Thomas for more information about what sort of things you could donate.



TRIM THURSDAYS

Thank you so much to our new volunteer Pauline Janin who has set up Trim Thursdays, a programme with weekly weigh ins and support to help you lose a stone in three months.

Drop in to the Information Centre any Thursday from 10am-12pm to sign up for a donation of £1 a week.

TEIGN VISION

Another new volunteer is setting up a new support group for people with visual impairments. The first meeting will be held at the Information Centre from 10.30am on Friday 3rd November.

Contact Em Flint on 01626 771697 to find out more about either of these new groups.

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Beach Wheelchairs

Teignmouth Town Council has very kindly gifted Volunteering in Health two Beach Wheelchairs so that we can get people with mobility issues onto the beach. From the summer we will be making these available for all local people and visitors to the town to use so that they can spend a day at the beach with their families, where they may have had to sit on the seafront watching longingly before. To find out more about how to hire the wheelchairs please call us on 01626 771695.

National Recognition

Last year we worked closely with Class Six at Shaldon School on our Pen Pal Project. We are very pleased to announce that the school received recognition from Parliament for this intergenerational work. Six pupils and two pen pals went up to London for the day to collect the award, which is one of just four awarded in the UK each year.

The school has also been invited to speak about the project at conferences in Bath, Birmingham and Exeter to inspire other schools to do similar work. Locally, Our Lady St Patrick's School has approached us and we are working together on a project to help them celebrate their 50th Anniversary this year.

We are continuing working with Shaldon this year with a new group of pen pals and the school are now visiting Teignbridge House with a small group of pupils from each year group every week.



Home Help Service

Did you know we offer a Home Help Service?

Our friendly staff can help you with cleaning, light gardening, laundry, shopping and simple DIY tasks. All work is completed by criminal records checked staff for £12.50 per hour.

A recent survey of our Home Help Service clients showed that the Service has not only helped them with practical tasks, but has also improved their confidence and general wellbeing.

"My confidence has improved and I feel supported knowing where help is if I need it."

To find out more, please contact our Home Help Service Co-ordinator, Marj Dawson.

A studios celebration!



Congratulations to our admin volunteer, Louise Hayes. After graduation, she gifted us many hours of support with our databases and has now secured two jobs; one at Teignmouth Library, and one in fossil research.

Gifts in Memoriam

One way to support us is to leave a gift to VIH Health in your will.

After making provision for your loved ones, we would like you to consider leaving a set amount or a percentage of your estate to VIH. This will help us to continue to support lonely and isolated people in the future.

Volunteer Feedback

We recently sent out an online survey to all of our volunteers to find out what was working well for them and if there was anything we could do to improve their experience volunteering with us.

Our volunteers told us that, since joining VIH, they feel more involved with their local community, that they feel better about themselves and have an increased sense of purpose.

They told us that they feel valued by VIH as an organisation and by our clients, and well supported in their roles. Best of all, they shared lots of compliments for other members of VIH which were a pleasure to pass on.

"VIH is what has given me my sense of purpose and I dread to think where I would be if it wasn't a part of my life."

"Full of compliments for VIH, when I tell people which charity organisation I am with they always compliment me saying that VIH are very good, I get compliments from Doctors and nurses as well, even carers, I love being with VIH and I get all the support that I need... Thank you VIH for all the love and support you all have given to me."

We really appreciate any feedback about our work and always take on suggestions for improvement, so please do share your feedback with us—we take it all on board, and will run the survey again to make sure that we are doing all we can to take care of our volunteers.

World Mental Health Day

This year's World Mental Health Day was on Tuesday 10th October and the theme for this year is Mental Wellbeing at Work. We invited hospital and VIH staff, volunteers and the general public to spend some time thinking about how they take care of themselves as they support others over tea and cake—raising self-belief and a smile! If anyone would like a copy of the resources we shared, please email emma.flint3@nhs.net.



We Need YOU!

Do you want to make a real difference to people in Teignmouth, Shaldon, Dawlish and Chudleigh?

We are always ready to meet people who could give a little time to one of our volunteering roles. Time needed varies from as little as a couple of hours a month, up to more regular roles, depending on how much time each person can gift to us.

Our top three areas of need at the moment are befriending, driving, and wheelchair vehicle driving. If you love to chat, or enjoy driving through the Devon countryside, speak to Volunteer Co-ordinator, Em Flint, to find out how you can join us on 01626 771697 or emma.flint3@nhs.net.

Support for befrienders

Our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Em Flint, is available from 4pm-5pm every Thursday afternoon to speak to anyone who needs to talk about their befriending activities, or is interested in finding out more about what's involved.

We also run regular befriending meetings which are a mixture of business and fun, and are about to launch a peer support group.

A four-legged (be)friend...

Meet Alan and his new friend, Susie. Susie belongs to our befriender, Vicky, and is a retired guide dog whom Vicky trained as a puppy.

Alan has always loved dogs, but is no longer able to keep one himself due to ill health in older age; Susie is only able to walk short distances for similar reasons, but she still likes to make a new friend and have a fuss.



Huge thanks to our volunteer befriender Vicky for arranging for these two souls to have a weekly visit together. Please contact us if you think you could make a difference by volunteering, too.

Flu Clinics

Once again this year we will be running stalls at the local flu clinics, where you can find out more about our services and how to join us for volunteering, as well as being an opportunity to buy some Christmas cards and rotary raffle tickets—with a chance to win a top prize of £1000!

100 Club

This year's 100 club is now underway and has raised £720 for the charity. Congratulations to our winners so far—Janet Lawer, Sheila Goodsell and Marie Edmondson!

Bingo

A huge thank you to Jim from Swiftprint in Dawlish for choosing Volunteering in Health for his charity Bingo Night at the Langstone Cliff in September. We raised a fantastic £902.00 on the night as well as all having a fun evening. Thank you also to Marj Dawson, Gill Dunn, Jinny Spence, and Jazmin Smith who all worked really hard on the night to serve the 224 bingo players. Thank you to everyone who donated such fabulous raffle prizes also! It's our turn again in **January 2018**, so we'll be on the hunt for raffle prizes again—please think of us if you have any unwanted Christmas presents!

Christmas is Coming!

Thank you once again to volunteer Gerry Willocks for masterminding this year's Christmas fundraising! Gerry and her team have been busy knitting Christmas goodies and sorting out a new range of Christmas cards.

They will be out and about at flu clinics and other events this Autumn, including the Cards for Good Causes shop in Exeter. We will also be selling Christmas cards here at the Information Centre.

This year we are also grateful to artist Tracey Elphick who has donated this lovely image to us for some new notecards—perfect for any occasion! These are just £4 for a pack of ten.

HOPE



Two of our staff are training to be HOPE facilitators. HOPE stands for Helping People Overcome Problems Effectively and is a licensed programme designed by Coventry University to help people with health conditions focus on themselves and what is important to them, rather than their conditions. It is a group course for 6-12 people who can work together to support each other.

People who have done the course say that they feel better able to recognise their own potential to improve their own quality of life, confidence and happiness. That's what we're all about! We want everyone—that's our staff and volunteers as well as our carers and clients—to feel more confident, happy, independent, safe and that they have a good quality of life.

We aim to start running these courses ourselves in the new year for clients and volunteers living with a health condition. Please contact us if you'd like to know more.

