



# Volunteering Strategy 2025



A great place to **Live**

A great place to **Work**

A great place for **Care & Support**



## VOLUNTEERING IS CLOSE TO MY HEART

Volunteering brings a sense of community, builds confidence and self-worth and brings out skills and abilities we never knew we had.

For some of our volunteers, our hospitals, our wards and the needs of our patients and families have been their focus for decades. Raising funds, talking with patients, meeting people and helping them navigate the sites, operating a shop - all to make life easier and better for patients, families and staff.

Thousands of hours have been freely given and invested in others, selflessly seeking to aid and support the most vulnerable and those in the midst of treatment and care.

The vision, the aspirations and the ambitions in this strategy are about giving back to our volunteers, investing and developing our volunteering programmes.

As Chair of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust I will always champion the volunteer service given and the difference volunteering makes in lives every day.



Jonathan Patton, Chairman



## VOLUNTEERING MATTERS

Volunteers play a vital role throughout the Trust, supporting staff and helping both our patients and service users at what can be a worrying time in their lives.

During our Volunteering Strategy 2017 - 2022, SET nurtured strong relationships with volunteers. There are numerous examples of volunteering helping the Trust on a day to day basis. Volunteers have also carried out crucial roles in exceptional circumstances, such as the pandemic.

Volunteers stood with our staff in vaccination centres and stepped up to help clinically vulnerable patients in the community, delivering medicines and cardiac monitors to those who were shielding in their homes.

We truly appreciate the courage and kindness of our volunteers and value the support we receive from each and every one of them. We want volunteering to continue to grow stronger and flourish within the SET family, which will benefit everyone and help volunteers achieve their personal goals.

This is an exciting and challenging journey which we are proud to travel with our volunteers by our side.



Roisin Coulter, Chief Executive



## Opening the door to a better tomorrow

Involving people in volunteering yields numerous benefits. It broadens people's horizons - it develops understanding and empathy - it promotes wellbeing - it brings with it a sense of belonging - it adds to the care given by professionals and ultimately builds better communities. This strategy has been shaped by volunteers, staff and services based on their experience of volunteering and the benefits it brings. We are focused on building a volunteering service that is best in class, that benefits our volunteers by offering development opportunities and supports our service users and people where we work and live.



Volunteering is a Trust Corporate priority for 2025 - 2028 in which we are committed to growing volunteering to support us to enhance our services and continually improve the patient/client experience. Our volunteers are and will continue to be provided with opportunities to build their confidence, make new friends, improve physical and emotional health and wellbeing, develop skills and gain valuable work experience.



Volunteers are an integral and valued part of South Eastern Trust and focusing on 'Our People' and the 'Trust People Plan', volunteers support us to deliver high quality services, to provide compassionate care and support to our patients and clients



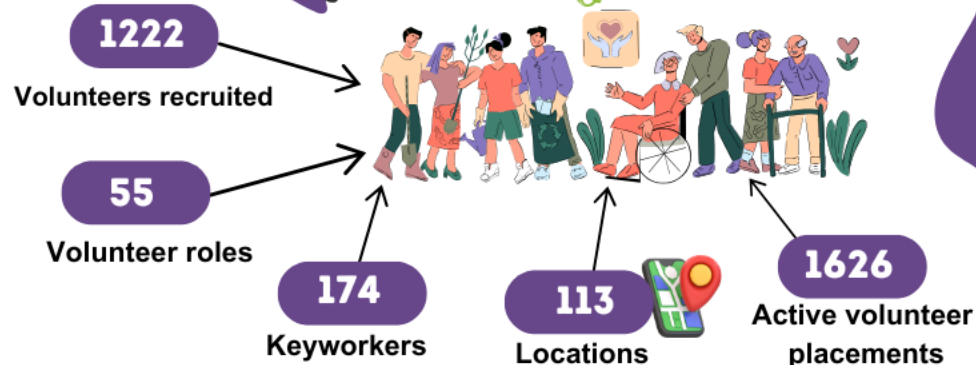
The Volunteering Strategy has strong links and alignment with regional strategies and priorities such as NI Executive 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most Programme for Government 2024 - 2027' where wellbeing is a combination of social, environmental, economic, and democratic factors which are essential for society to flourish. Within the Strategic Outcomes Framework priorities include people being empowered and supported to gain and maintain positive psychological and emotional health and wellbeing. Older people are confident and able to age and live well in a safe environment connected to their families and communities.

Volunteering for South Eastern Trust supports volunteers to improve their health and wellbeing, be part of our Trust and wider community and contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of our patients and clients.

How much did we do?

# Volunteering in Action 2017 - 2024

How well did we do it?



**Volunteer Services**  
HSC South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust



Volunteers interviewed, told us volunteering improved their wellbeing



**430**

Volunteers interviewed, said they enjoyed their volunteer experience



Young volunteers gained experience in the workplace, which they say helped build confidence, developed their knowledge and skills and helped them progress with a career or studies

**99.98%**

## How we have made a difference?



During the pandemic, volunteers stepped up to take on alternative volunteer roles designed to support staff to tackle the needs of inpatients and those clinically vulnerable patients, who were isolated and living in their own homes.



Patients were greeted by volunteers at our Covid Vaccination Centres. A much needed community connection at a time when anxieties were high.

"It means a lot to me to have a Befriender. I look forward to seeing my friend Pauline."



Volunteer Befrienders have reduced the levels of loneliness in older people over 65 living in their own homes.



A Volunteer Driver Programme was set up to deliver cardiac and oximetry monitors to patients who are housebound or cannot collect the monitor due to ill health or transport issues. Without this service, the patient's diagnosis and treatment would be delayed.



DNAs reduced in Psychiatry of Old Age Dementia Clinics with the placement of a Volunteer Appointment Buddy, who phones patients to remind them of their appointment date and time.



A Meeter & Greeter Service is in place in all acute and community hospitals creating a welcoming environment and supporting people with wayfinding around the changing growing environment.



Young people from an area of deprivation completed the Youth Volunteer Development Programme, achieving a qualification in Team Working and First Aid, and learned information in healthcare topics through short courses.

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## Our Vision:

Volunteering will continue to grow stronger and flourish within the SET family. This will bring benefit to:

- Volunteers
- Patients and Carers
- Staff, the Trust and wider Community.

Volunteering will flourish by being...



## Impactful

**Establish volunteering opportunities that have a positive impact on the patient's/carers experience, volunteers and staff.**

### **It is our ambition to:**

- Enhance the volunteering model so that it is accessible to those who wish to volunteer, those that offer a volunteer opportunity and the management and good governance of volunteers
- Attract new and retain existing volunteers
- Increase the range and variety of volunteering opportunities available
- Establish pathways for patients to continue their recovery journey through supportive volunteering opportunities.

## Recognised

**Create a culture where volunteers are valued with opportunities to influence and shape the services we deliver and the community we live in.**

### **It is our ambition to:**

- Continue to recognise volunteers and showcase the positive contribution they make across services
- Engage with volunteers to hear their feedback, enabling them to inform opportunities for improvements to services
- Provide a Volunteer Development Programme.

## Inclusive

**Volunteers are valued and a fundamental part of the SET family.**

### It is our ambition to:

- Foster a culture that is inclusive of all who want to give their time, making sure volunteering can fit with people's identity, background and life experience
- Actively remove barriers, make reasonable adjustments and provide support to ensure that everyone who wants to, can volunteer
- Develop a mindset throughout the organisation that any service can consider including volunteering opportunities within their team.



# Collaborative

**Working together with colleagues within the Trust and with Community, Voluntary and Statutory organisations to grow volunteering.**

## It is our ambition to:

- Identify volunteering champions within Directorates to create a range of volunteering opportunities, support volunteers and create a sense of team
- Enrich volunteer programmes by welcoming the skills and opportunities brought by partner organisations
- Establish a programme to enable students from local schools and colleges to gain experience to complement their studies and build practical knowledge through experiential learning
- Work together with external organisations such as community and voluntary sector, PHA, Trusts, Volunteer Now, to consider new roles to enhance volunteering and promote volunteering opportunities that will further develop skills
- Maximise opportunities to influence, for volunteering to be included in strategic plans across the region.

# Voices of the Future

*"Volunteering helped with my recovery, giving me a purpose and a routine. It felt good to be helping others. Also got the opportunity to be back in a work environment and was able to build my confidence and strength, so when I went back to work, I knew I was ready."*

*"I feel heard. The staff are grateful for my feedback and I feel I am making a difference."*

*"The training I received gave me the knowledge to be able to help my friend when she was ill and in crisis. I was able to signpost her to healthcare services."*

*"Volunteering gave me the opportunity to gain experience in the workplace that enabled me to apply for paid employment. I am now working in the Trust and I am delighted and proud to be in the job of my dreams."*

*"My Volunteer Champion is so friendly and supportive. I got induction training so I know exactly what is expected of me. I feel like part of the team. All staff know who I am and what my role is."*



## How We'll Measure it:

- ❖ Establish key performance indicators (both quantitative and qualitative)
- ❖ Run regular surveys of our volunteers, patients and our people
- ❖ Engagement events with volunteers.

