

Helpforce Cymru



WINTER UPDATE 2022

A brief update and news in relation to volunteering for health and social care in Wales.

VOLUNTEERING RECOVERY GRANTS

The Welsh Government Volunteering Recovery Grants earlier this year encouraged County Voluntary Councils, Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to work in partnership on projects to sustain volunteering and community action. Some of the funded projects have taken a regional, strategic approach and many align with the themes we identified in the [recommendations](#) accompanying our Framework for Volunteering in Health and Social Care.

For example, several explored collaborative approaches to the recruitment and training of volunteers. In Pembrokeshire, a model ‘passport’ has been developed for volunteers within community transport; in Carmarthenshire they are developing a bank of shared volunteers across Public Service Board (PSB) partners.

‘Partnerships are stronger and the profile of volunteering has been raised, and we will continue to develop our approach to volunteering in order to benefit local communities’

Gaynor Richards, Director, Neath Port Talbot CVS

West Glamorgan Regional Partnership developed and [published a range of resources](#) for multi agency use, including a [guide on volunteering for primary care practitioners](#). Two CVC staff members have been seconded, on a job share basis, to drive forward the regional developments in volunteering, in recognition of the need for strategic leadership in developing a coordinated approach.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE VOLUNTEERING

A number of Volunteering Recovery Grant projects looked at how volunteering can add support in the case of future crises. It is good news that, subsequently, British Red Cross has been awarded funding which will build on this work, taking a Wales wide look at how we improve the coordination of volunteers within the context of emergency planning. We look forward to supporting this important development.

EVALUATION AND LEARNING FROM VRG PROJECTS

Research has been commissioned by Welsh Government to evaluate the 27 funded Volunteering Recovery Grant (VRG) projects, including an in depth case study on our own project to develop a [Volunteering Framework](#).

At an online event to be held on 10th March 2022 'Volunteering beyond the pandemic - collaborative approaches', you can hear more about the VRG grants and what they have achieved. There will be a choice of workshops for sharing experience and ideas, on themes such as volunteer recruitment, training, emergency response and volunteering in service delivery. Judith Paget, Director General Health and Social Services/Chief Executive NHS Wales, will give a short address. Further details available in January.

OTHER GRANT FUNDED ACTIVITY

We have been supporting a number of other grant programmes:

Winter pressures

In response to a request from Welsh Government, we consulted with voluntary sector partners to quickly establish some clear proposals for activity that could be extended, with additional funding, in order to relieve the winter pressures on health and social care services.



As a result, more than £2.25m was distributed to voluntary sector organisations, for work including home from hospital support, early intervention and prevention activity, community transport and A and E support – much of it dependent on volunteers.

Loneliness and social isolation

Three year grant funding was available to support the Welsh Government [strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation \(connected communities\)](#), which was published in February 2020. This funding aims to strengthen front line, grass roots community organisations, many of which are volunteer led and which are key to building cohesive and connected communities.

Proposals were submitted jointly by local authority and CVC partners. In many cases a local small grants scheme is being set up to distribute funding to local community groups, with small sums of money and proportionate, light touch monitoring and evaluation requirements.

VOLUNTEERING STRATEGIC GRANTS

This latest grant round sought to unlock the strategic potential of volunteering in the longer term – focussing on a small number of strategically significant, ambitious projects. Six of the 13 grant awards support the development of volunteering in health and care in some way.

‘Volunteers are regarded...as an essential and equal part of the future workforce of health and care services’

Amongst them is Powys THB, which is developing a programme and resources for the newly established School of Volunteering and Carers, within the Health and Social Care Academy. Volunteers are regarded, within the RPB’s Workforce Futures Strategic Framework, as an essential and equal part of the future workforce of health and care services in Powys.

Helpforce Cymru is delighted to be on the steering group for this project.

HELPFORCE SUPPORT SERVICES

Helpforce has developed a number of digital tools and services over the past five years, to help organisations raise the bar and accelerate the growth of volunteering: developing roles which have positive impact on health and social care, adopting and adapting 'tried and tested' roles and gathering evidence to make the case for further investment.

'It's a no brainer. Having experts in your corner helping to bridge those gaps in knowledge and expertise is priceless'

Lucy Boulter, Volunteer Service Manager,
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust

Helpforce sets out its offer to partner organisations in its 'Back to health' campaign ([watch the launch video](#)). The offer is open to partners in Wales, whether from NHS, local authority or community organisations and services are free of charge.

VOLUNTEER TO CAREER

Following the publicity launch in August, we have been seeking partners who would like to be part of this pilot project in Wales. It will involve developing a volunteer to career pathway within a clinical field, working with internal and external colleagues according to local needs and opportunities. [This article](#) describes the project in more detail.

We are delighted that Aneurin Bevan UHB is taking up the offer and look forward to working with them. They will be exploring volunteering within pharmacy, supported by £21,400 grant funding from Burdett Trust and by the expertise, training and peer learning opportunities available from Helpforce, Helpforce Cymru and Bevan Commission.



STANDARDS AND LEARNING RESOURCES FOR VOLUNTEERS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE



Helpforce Cymru has developed an [information sheet](#) which is published on the TSSW Knowledge Hub.

The volunteer standards provide a useful benchmark for planning induction training or for ensuring consistency between different health and care organisations.

There are links to free online learning resources from NHS Wales and from Social Care Wales.

CONGRATULATIONS

Many congratulations to volunteers at Cardiff and Vale UHB whose amazing contribution was recognised in the Helpforce Champions Awards.

In the ‘outstanding volunteer team’ category, the team of 41 hospital ‘runners’ was highly commended. They help family and friends to get essential items to or from patients, in University Hospital Wales and Llandough hospital - a particularly valuable service during lockdowns when no visiting is allowed. Between them they have walked more than 2 million steps along long hospital corridors! [Read more...](#)



In the category ‘partnership working’, the health board was again ‘highly commended’ for its partnership with British Red Cross Cymru and St John Ambulance Cymru. Volunteers from these organisations and from the health board have worked together to support the mass vaccination programme across four community and two hospital locations. [Read more...](#)

Louis, who studies computer security at the University of South Wales, began as a volunteer ‘runner’ in October 2020. He also used his IT skills to help staff

to reconfigure 250 tablets when new wifi was installed at Llandough hospital. He has since been a 'meet and greet' volunteer within the hospital and at mass vaccination centres. In his spare time he volunteers for St John Ambulance Cymru. [Read more about Louis...](#)

HELFFORCE CYMRU – IMPACT REPORT

Helpforce Cymru was funded by Helpforce and by Welsh Government for two years and subsequently by Welsh Government this year. We have newly had confirmation of Welsh Government funding for the work to continue beyond March 2022. [This impact report](#) highlights key achievements so far.

COMING SOON... dates for the diary

Tuesday 11th January 2- 4.30 Mobilising Voluntary Action.

Dissemination of research conducted as part of a [4 nation study](#) on the impact of the pandemic on volunteering. [Book your place here.](#)

Wednesday 26th January 10 -11.30 Volunteering and care homes

Sharing experience, resources and implications from current pilot programmes

February/early March (date tbc) Volunteering and the pandemic - research updates

This first of two events will present findings from various research studies

Thursday 10th March 9.30 – 1pm Volunteering beyond the pandemic - collaborative approaches This second event is practice based, exploring themes from local and regional projects

[For details of these events email \[fliddell@wcva.cymru\]\(mailto:fliddell@wcva.cymru\) or look out for further publicity.](#)

Helpforce is working with Third Sector Support Wales (WCVA and 19 CVCs), Welsh Government and other partners to develop the potential of volunteering to support health and social care services in Wales.

Visit the [Helpforce Cymru web page](#)

Fiona Liddell Helpforce Cymru Manager, WCVA

fliddell@wcva.cymru 029 2043 1730 [@FionaMLiddell](#)



helpplu
helpforce