

# Supporting the involvement of younger volunteers

Workshop evaluation

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# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the three workshops that were delivered by Attend Academy on behalf of the Time for Health partnership as part of the Volunteering for All initiative, funded through The Office of the Third Sector (The Cabinet Office) and CSIP (Care Services Improvement Partnership). This training session focused on providing delegates the opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the changing nature of volunteering and implications of failing to manage and embrace change effectively at operational and strategic levels.

### **The report seeks to:**

- Identify the key strengths and areas for development of the workshop design and delivery
- Establish the benefits to the individuals who attended
- Establish how the learning can be applied in volunteering programmes, together with identifying.

This workshop was delivered in three locations and was attended by a total of 46 delegates.

NB. Six further Volunteer Services Managers (VSMs) wished to attend the workshops, but were unable due to prior commitments and the limited notice available. These VSMs were added to the distribution list and received a write-up of the sessions and additional follow-up resources.

This evaluation is based on an abridged version of Hamblin et al's model of training and development evaluation. The following levels are considered in turn:

### **1. Reactions of delegates**

This focuses on the content of the course together with venue and quality of delivery.

### **2. Impact on learning/job behaviour**

This can be broken down further to establish the effect of the workshop on delegates' knowledge and skills and confidence in applying learning within their volunteering programme.

### **3. Impact on the department/organisation**

Assuming there is an effect on job behaviour, it is likely that this will contribute to department/organisational goals.

Questionnaires were distributed prior to the close of the workshop. A 61% response rate was achieved.

Also, additional interviews were undertaken 2 months after the workshops to explore issues in further depth. The questions focused around:

- Have thoughts and ideas of engaging volunteer diversity been developed around volunteering programme(s)
- Has there been anything carried out differently as a result of anything learned from this training session
- Has there been an any impact and benefits developing practice/service delivery.

# Supporting the involvement of younger volunteers workshop evaluation and findings

## Section A – Content

1. Of the sessions that were included in your workshop, please could you rank them in order of usefulness (5 = high, 1= low)

	Manchester	Leeds	London
Practical Exercises	5	5	5
Presentations	4.5	4	4.5
Discussion with other delegates	5	4.5	5
Handouts and other information provided	4.5	4.5	5

(the above averages have been calculated from 28 completed questionnaires)

2. On reflection, do you feel there should be any additions/deletions to the subject areas covered at the workshops you attended?

### Any specific comments?

I found the course very informative and materials very useful. *x6 London*

The warm up exercises could have been slightly shorter to allow for more time for the post-it note activity. *Leeds*

Some extra examples of good practice working would have been welcome. *London*

## Section B – Venue

3. How suitable was the location for this workshop?

Very Good	Good overall	Fair	Poor
<b>70%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Manchester 65%	Manchester 20%	Manchester 15%	Manchester 0%
London 70%	London 20%	London 10%	London 0%
Leeds 70%	Leeds 20%	Leeds 10%	Leeds 0%

### Any specific comments?

Food great/workshop room and layout was great. *x3 Leeds*

Perfect environment for the session and excellent food. *x4 London*

4. How suitable was the venue for this workshop?

Very Good	Good overall	Fair	Poor
<b>65%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Manchester 65%	Manchester 20%	Manchester 15%	Manchester 0%
London 65%	London 25%	London 10%	London 0%
Leeds 65%	Leeds 25%	Leeds 10%	Leeds 0%

# Supporting the involvement of younger volunteers workshop evaluation and findings

### Any specific comments?

Hotel undergoing renovation work, occasionally noisy. *Manchester*

Excellent hot lunches. *All venues*

Layout and refreshments very good – very comfortable and relaxing. *Leeds*

Room temperature varied. *Manchester*

Car park a problem being not attached to the hotel. *Leeds*

It was a very inviting venue. *Manchester*

Very close to the train station which is always ideal. *London*

### 5. To what extent do you feel learning was enhanced by working with other delegates?

Significantly	In many areas	In some areas	Limited overall
60%	35%	5%	0%

### Any specific comments?

Interaction very good. *Leeds*

A good eclectic mix of delegates and trainers. *Manchester*

There was a good number of delegates with varied backgrounds which assisted in strong interaction. *London*

Enjoyed the opportunity for discussion with delegates to find out their current issues/concerns in the volunteering sector. *Leeds*

## Section C – relevance/impact in the workplace

### 6. How would you rate the potential impact of the workshop on your volunteer programme?

#### a. Identify potential opportunities to work with younger volunteers

Positive impact	Some impact	Little impact
55%	40%	5%

### Any specific comments?

Addressed many of our needs. *Leeds*

Discussed the idea of working with an NHS Magazine to look at local volunteer recruitment. *London*

Going to implement a steering focus with the emphasis on youth involvement. *Manchester*

Strong approaches were highlighted to directly engaging younger volunteers. *London*

My volunteering organisation is small and has limited capacity to direct resources into additional volunteer recruitment strategies and support programmes, but this has given me some great insight into many possibilities. *Manchester*

#### b. Analysing the interests of those affected by this engagement

Positive impact	Some impact	Little impact
60%	40%	0%

# Supporting the involvement of younger volunteers workshop evaluation and findings

### Any specific comments?

Encouragement to think more broadly, has improved my own confidence and I will endeavour to positively engage younger volunteers to come on board. *London*

### c. Implementing initiatives to engage with younger volunteer needs

Positive impact	Some impact	Little impact
65%	35%	0%

### Any specific comments?

Since today I have realised my organisation needs to actively encourage younger volunteers to voice their opinions. *Manchester*

Networking and links to other organisations has helped me think things can be achieved. *London*

I am now more aware of the practical perspectives to engaging disabled volunteers. *Leeds*

Raised my enthusiasm to tackle this issue head on. *London*

Can't wait to get started and working with my team proactively! *London*

## Section D – Benefits to the Individual

### 7. How beneficial did you find the workshop?

#### a. Knowledge/skills

Updated knowledge in a range of areas	Update knowledge in some areas	Limited updating to knowledge overall
55%	40%	5%

### Any specific comments?

I was not well informed beforehand. *Leeds*

We already have a supported volunteering project. The workshop will help us think more creatively in our activities. *x2 Manchester*

The key aims and strategies were clearly highlighted at this session which I already have some ideas to develop. *London*

#### b. Confidence to manage and engage younger volunteers needs

Greater	Slightly more	Indifferent
65%	35%	0%

### 8. Are there any additional comments you would like to pass on about the workshop?

Consider this to be the best seminar so far! *Leeds*

Facilitators were very engaging and informative. *London*

A very pleasant day overall, good trainers. *Leeds*

# **Supporting the involvement of younger volunteers workshop evaluation and findings**

Enjoyed meeting trainers and thinking issues of working with younger people. *Manchester*

Personally I didn't need the refreshments breaks. *London*

Opened further avenues for inclusion in Royal British Legion working with volunteers. *Leeds*

Enjoyed the presentations. *x6 Manchester*

It highlighted where work was needed but did not produce the solutions anticipated. Perhaps my expectations were too high. *Leeds*

Liked the workshop style and not too formal. *Manchester*

Information I found useful was organisational barriers to volunteering. *London*

Well structured, liked to hear the effective case studies. *Manchester*

I appreciated the significance of the Chief Executive taking the time to open and close the session. *London*

# Follow-up interviews with delegates

## Interview one

**1. Please briefly describe if your thoughts and ideas of engaging with younger volunteers have been developed since the session.**

I think that the session was brilliant from the point of view that it made me think “outside of the box” in engaging with younger volunteers in an NHS environment. Prior to the session I would say that I was quite restricted with my perception of duties that could be carried out by the younger volunteers in this type of environment. I think that this has come about as a result of me offering the same range of duties, which have been approved and risk assessed, for the past five years. I have always focused on what I think would be beneficial to the patient (always having in my mind that the patient is central to all that we do). I think that this session has made me look long and hard at what type of activities the younger volunteers would enjoy, rather than just look at what will benefit them from a future career point of view.

**2. Can you highlight if you have implemented any new strategies/plans to explore and develop opportunities to engage younger volunteers as a result of the training.**

Since attending the session, I have met with the Trust Board to look at implementing new plans around inter-generational activities on the wards which would benefit both the younger volunteers and the patients. An idea that I had in mind, which evolved as a result of discussions at the above session was to introduce Nintendo DS and Wii consoles on the wards and use the younger volunteers to teach the patients how to use the different games available. The introduction of this activity was very well accepted by the Trust Board, but it will depend totally on securing external funding. Our part-time fundraiser is at present writing bids and looking at ways in which we can acquire this funding and at this stage we are hopeful that we qualify.

**3. Are you able to highlight any impact and benefits gained to your organisation in developing a positive approach at engaging younger volunteers?**

I have to say that younger volunteers are very well accepted here at Aintree Hospitals. However, a recurring problem is that staff do not always have the time to spend with younger volunteers. With this in mind I am always looking at ways in which the younger volunteers can be helpful on the ward, and at the same time enjoy their role without taking too much of the Nurses/Ward Managers time. Recently I arranged for a group of younger volunteers to be trained in basic hand massage and for this to be piloted as a role on the wards. I have to say that this has been successful and has been a role that the younger volunteers can just get on with without too much supervision from ward staff. I have to say also that the patients are delighted with this service and have commented on how this has made their stay in hospital more enjoyable.

The idea of introducing Wii and Nintendo DS consoles has been extremely well accepted by Trust Board and Heads

# Follow-up interviews with delegates

of Departments. It is seen as a positive move forward to develop the work of younger volunteers and to introduce stimulating activities for the patients, which will ultimately aid their recovery.

Engaging further with younger volunteers can only be viewed positively from a PR point of view in highlighting the Trust's involvement with the local community.

Our statistics show that many young volunteers apply to work in the NHS as a result of their time at Aintree as a volunteer/work experience student. From the Trust's point of view it is felt that we are in fact "growing our own workforce" by engaging positively with younger volunteers, allowing them to make an informed choice about their future career.

Gail Bruen  
Volunteer Development Manager  
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust

## Interview two

**1. Please briefly describe if your thoughts and ideas of engaging with younger volunteers have been developed since the session.**

This has been an area in volunteering that I personally have always wanted to see the organisation explore further. I have reported back a lot of the training solutions and made the handouts available to my team to take particular interest in the case study solutions.

**2. Can you highlight if you have implemented any new strategies/plans to explore and develop opportunities to engage younger volunteers as a result of the training.**

I have made contact with the local Universities seeking younger volunteers, none forthcoming as yet, but approaches have been made. The reason I am looking for younger volunteers is to help with the YUMS (Young United against MS) which is a Kent wide group. Initially it was set up as a self help group but it is evident that we need people not affected by MS to help, but they need to be from a similar age group (under 40). I have had plenty of offers from 40-80 age group but trying to attract younger people has been difficult. It is all very much in the early stages but I have started on the groundwork.

# Follow-up interviews with delegates

### **3. Are you able to highlight any impact and benefits gained to your organisation in developing a positive approach at engaging younger volunteers?**

If successful in recruiting new people it will take the pressure off the existing team (4 on the team, only 2 active at the moment due to ill health). If you would like to seek further progression on this please feel free to get in touch.

Janet White

Local Support Development Officer

MS Society (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)

# Analysis of findings

## Reactions of delegates

### Course content

- Delegates felt more confident and enthusiastic in engaging with younger volunteers
- Delegates were encouraged by the range of possibilities that could be implemented within their own volunteering programme with only limited resources
- The combination of presentations and activities were all conducive to learning
- The depth of discussion and coverage of topics was appropriate given the time constraints
- Presenters brought a range of complementary experience to the workshop
- Some delegates had differing levels of experience and would have liked the opportunity to explore specific solutions in greater depth.

### Venues

- Overall the venues were suitable in terms of location and facilities.

### Networking

- The opportunity to meet other volunteer services managers was most welcomed as many were able to draw on the experiences of their fellow delegates. Delegates also welcomed the distribution of email addresses to follow up the session to enhance idea sharing and potential partnership working.

## Impact on learning/job behaviour

- A number of initiatives have already been put in place including: convening steering groups with a remit to engage with younger volunteers, contacting colleges and universities, developing pilot volunteering programmes focused on reducing the level of supervision required for younger volunteers.

## Impact on the department/organisation

- Overall, delegates perceived that attending the workshop would have a positive impact on working practices
- Constraints to developing practices were essentially identified as organisational regulations restricting the involvement of younger volunteers
- Implement new entertainment technology to the hospital wards which will be assisted by younger volunteers
- It is much easier to demonstrate the organisations inclusivity to key stakeholders and key funders.

# Analysis of findings

## Findings from interviews

The strategies and ideas for supporting involvement of younger volunteers are:

- Feel confident that will be able to put in place actions designed to overcome barriers that had been preventing full engagement as able to now think 'outside of the box'. This includes focusing on why younger volunteers would enjoy, not just what may benefit their future career
- Patients fully support the new services involving younger volunteers as this makes their stay in hospital more enjoyable
- Able to engage with and potentially influence management and funders
- As staff do not always have sufficient time to support younger volunteers, the placements for younger volunteers has been successfully developed to manage this
- Trusts perceive that engaging with younger volunteers is potentially expanding the workforce if there interests remain within health and social care
- Consulted local universities to increase recruitment and awareness of volunteering opportunities
- Recruiting more volunteers will assist in reducing stress and pressure faced with the current group.

# Conclusions and recommendations

## Conclusions

- The workshop was delivered at the right level and engaged delegates with an appropriate mix of activities.
- Delegates were able to develop creative volunteering initiatives with limited resources that involve younger people as a result of this workshop.
- These initiatives are positively impacting on patients' experience in hospital.
- The opportunity to network was particularly welcomed in this topic and this will aid continued understanding into this area of health and volunteering.
- Some delegates were seeking to explore solutions in greater depth.

## Recommendations

1. Repeat the delivery of workshops in other locations with suitable promotion and notice given to VSM networks.
2. Continue exploring partnership-working opportunities between youth volunteer organisations and the Time for Health Partnership.
3. Link the workshop to an accrediting body so it can be developed into a module and support the professional development of volunteer services managers.
4. Develop a bank of case studies to include a full range of youth volunteer related issues to capture successful practice at varying stages of volunteering involvement, and develop 'tool kits' for dissemination.
5. Undertake further research to explore and promote the impact of engaging with younger volunteers needs on the experience of patients and clients and on wider organisational goals.
6. Seek funding to deliver this workshop in other volunteering sectors.
7. Explore how to promote effective ongoing networking in this area of volunteer management.