Volunteers enjoy well deserved tea party

THE work done by volunteers across Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was celebrated during a series of tea parties.

The events, which were held to coincide with Volunteers’ Week 2016, took place at all three hospitals run by the trust, with the hard-working volunteers enjoying a well-earned cup of tea and slice of cake.

Volunteers help us care for patients in a variety of ways, including driving them to and from appointments, helping staff on wards, helping at mealtimes, talking to and entertaining patients, answering phones, helping with back office functions and even recruiting and training new volunteers.

Iona Jewitt, who is 20, attended the party at Royal Hampshire County Hospital, in Winchester. She has been working as a dementia volunteer at the hospital for the last year, combining her voluntary work with her final year studying psychology at the University of Winchester.

She said: “Being a dementia volunteer is great fun because it’s all about spending time with the patients. You just chat with them, or help them with things like crosswords and wordsearches, things that the nurses don’t often get time to do.

“I really enjoy it. I really like helping people and the patients really appreciate it, which makes it so rewarding. It even inspired my dissertation at university, which I did on the stigmas around dementia.”

Iona was so inspired by her time as a volunteer that she applied for a job at Royal Hampshire County Hospital, where she is now employed as an activities co-ordinator, working with elderly patients.

“I’m enjoying the job and I think that having done the volunteering, it makes it easier for me to interact with the patients. I know how to approach them.

“I would really encourage other people to volunteer at the trust. It’s a really good programme.”

Sophie Knox started volunteering in 2013, working on D4 and the Firs at Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital. Last year, she was offered an apprenticeship by the trust and she is now a housekeeping assistant in the Firs.

She said: “I like working with older people and my duties as a volunteer included getting supplies from the shop for patients, handing out lunches and helping to feed patients.

“I’m really enjoying my job and the most enjoyable part of is chatting to patients and listening to their stories.”

Jane Davies, volunteer manager, added: “We have wonderful support from a very loyal and dedicated group of people who donate their time to helping us care for patients. Their support is appreciated by everyone who comes into contact with them.”
To find out more about volunteering opportunities at Hampshire Hospitals, visit www.hampshirehospitals.nhs.uk/work-with-us/volunteers-and-work-experience.

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Photos:
Tea Party 1: Chief executive Mary Edwards enjoys a cup of tea with volunteers at Basingstoke hospital
Tea Party 2: Donna Green, chief nurse at Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, meets volunteers at Winchester hospital
Tea Party 3: Iona Jewitt
Tea Party 4: Sophie Knox

Notes to Editors

1. Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides hospital services to a population of approximately 600,000 people in Hampshire and parts of West Berkshire.
2. HHFT has around 5,500 staff and a turnover of £345.6 million a year.
3. HHFT delivers one hospital service across multiple locations including its own hospitals, Andover War Memorial Hospital, Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital and Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester. It also provides outpatient and assessment services from Bordon and Alton community hospitals.
4. As a Foundation Trust, HHFT is accountable to the local community through a system of local ownership with members and elected governors. HHFT has around 18,000 staff and public members. Foundation Trusts are free from central government control and can reinvest any surplus to develop clinical services. They are authorised and regulated by Monitor, an independent regulator.

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