

# Virtual Volunteering Times

**A GREAT PLACE TO VOLUNTEER**

Volume 3 Issue 8

22 April 2022

## Ideas for the May Bank Holiday

It's the season of bank holidays and if you're lucky enough to have some time off, we've got some ideas of what you could get up to:

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### Asymptomatic Testing

Before leaving for your volunteer shift, please ensure you have had a negative lateral flow test. Tests are available at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>



### Bank Holiday

The main Voluntary Services office will close be closed for the Bank Holiday on Monday 2 May 2022.



Cook a fabulous meal with seasonal veg



Take up a new hobby



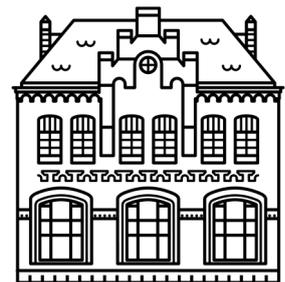
Appreciate the late spring flowers and blossom



Play some sport



Go for a bike ride



Explore a country house estate



Paddle down a river



Explore the countryside on foot



Visit the coast

## Where in the Trust?



## Friday Fact

The first woman to win the Nobel Prize was Marie Curie

### Answer's to last week's puzzles:

Riddle: Frog

Where in the Trust? Main Theatre doors, Level 3

## A day in the life .... Katherine, Occupational Therapist (OT)

### What is your role?

I am a Senior Occupational Therapist in the Occupational Therapy department found in F2. I am currently working within our Therapy for Older Persons (TOP) team so based on the DME and frailty wards found in the hospital.

The conditions which I mainly work with include dementia, delirium and Parkinson's disease; however we will also assess and treat other old age related and generic conditions/illnesses such as small vessel disease, falls, and chronic kidney disease and heart conditions.

My role as an acute Occupational Therapist is to assess patients to ensure they have a safe discharge from hospital whether this is home or to another discharge destination whether this be at a rehabilitation setting or to a residential home.

### How long have you been doing your role?

I completed an Undergraduate degree in Occupational Therapy at Plymouth University which was 3 years long before making the move from my family home in Cornwall to Cambridge to start my career.

I started as a Band 5 Occupational Therapist back in 2016 in a rotational post before progressing to a rotational Band 6 Senior Occupational Therapist in 2018. I have now been qualified for 5 years and 7 months with the 5<sup>th</sup> September marking my 6 year anniversary at CUH!



**OTs with their Covid Stars**



**An OT working with a patient  
(image taken pre-pandemic)**

### What are the main things you do?

In the mornings I screen any new patient referrals and prioritise my day. This means I read through patient notes to gather as much information about them as possible – what their home is like, who do they live with, what they normal do and what are they currently doing on the ward. From this information I am able to make a decision whether I need to see them or not and when I need to see them by.

If I have deemed a patient to need Occupational Therapy input, I will go and see them on the ward to complete an assessment. During this assessment I will ask them more in depth questions about their home such as:

- Where the location of rooms are – do they have to complete the stairs to access the toilet? Is their bedroom downstairs? Are there steps between rooms?
- What equipment do they already have – Do they have equipment to help them on and off the toilet? Do they sit on something when having a shower or wash?
- Do they have help with anything at home? – Do family help with anything? Do they have carers visit them? How do they get their shopping? Who does the cleaning?

I will also ask the patients what they enjoy doing at home and what is meaningful to them – these answers continue to surprise me. I have had answers from spending time with family, to gardening and restoring old motorcycles to going to re-enactment days. This is a key part of Occupational Therapy as we look at what is meaningful to the patient in order to apply this to therapy sessions to increase motivation and interest. We also enable patients to return to participating in their meaningful activities as independently as possible.

## A day in the life .... continued

Now comes the part where I can determine whether a patient is safe to return home. I observe how independent a patient can be in everyday activities this includes getting out of bed, going to the toilet, getting washed and dressed and how they are making a cup of tea.

From this observation I can then prescribe equipment, care and community therapy input as well as the most appropriate place of discharge. This could be home, an inpatient rehabilitation hospital or to a care home.

The other main duties I have include:

- Supporting the junior members of the team with their caseloads
- Providing training to the team in order for them to develop their skills and knowledge
- Liaising with relatives, community teams and equipment services when making recommendations for discharge

### What do you like about your role?

There are so many things I enjoy about being an Occupational Therapist but I think the one thing that I enjoy above all is seeing my patients smile again. For most patients when they become unwell feel that their life has stopped, however when I'm able to then show them how to adapt to be independent or work towards being independent again you can see it on their faces that there is light at the end of the tunnel. That's what I look forward to every day is making sure at least one of my patients is smiling at the end of it.

### What is less enjoyable/more difficult in your role?

The less enjoyable aspect of my role is the amount of paperwork we have to complete! It is an important part because this is how we communicate with the wider team and show the reasons for why we are choosing a particular method of treatment and intervention however it takes a lot of time during the day to complete just because of the amount of detail we have to provide and the different forms we have to fill out.

### What is your shift pattern/length of a shift?

I work flexi hours meaning I work Monday-Friday 08:00 – 16:50 with every other Thursday off. Some of my colleagues work Monday-Friday either 08:00-16:00 or 08:30-16:30. We also cover our orthopaedic wards at the weekends however this is about 1 weekend in every 3 months and only half days 08:30-12:30.



**OTs doing a craft session  
(image taken pre-pandemic)**



**An OT helping a patient  
(image taken pre-pandemic)**

### Something which may surprise us about your role?

As Occupational Therapists we are trained to be holistic this means during our training we are taught to look after everyone from birth to death with any barrier to living their life independently; meaning we assess both physical and mental health! We only choose which pathway we want to pursue after qualifying. For me it's the combination of both the physical and mental health that is my speciality and passion. We also don't just work within the hospital setting, we also work in GP practices, schools, out in the community, on farms and in furniture and game design.

### When not at work...

I'm naturally a very creative person and enjoy spending my free time doing something creative be that baking, sewing or playing a musical instrument. And when I do have time I love to share my baking experiments/ achievements on my baking blog. I also love to share my knowledge and passion about Occupational Therapy and have recently started up my own educational Instagram page called Occupational Therapy Talk.

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[www.volunteering.cuh.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.cuh.org.uk)

### CUH Volunteers

We're on the web!  
[www.volunteering.cuh.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.cuh.org.uk)

## Paws Corner

Its Throwback Friday in Paws Corner this week.

Here's the gorgeous Bertie all ready for his PAT dog shift back in October 2018.

We hope to be able to welcome you back soon Bertie!



### Help is a call away

Health Assured offer a free confidential advice and counselling service for CUH staff.

24/7 helpline: **0800 783 2808**



## Pssst!

Don't forget to vote in the Governor Elections. As a volunteer you should have received your ballot to vote for the Staff Governor seat.

## CUH Arts: Last chance to see CUH Community Exhibition

This week is your last chance to see the CUH Community Exhibition, The Best of Us, which consists of vibrant creative work made by staff and volunteers!

We have absolutely loved having so much staff talent enliven our Addenbrooke's Gallery, and thank every single artist who contributed to this truly dazzling display. The exhibition will end on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April, so – if you are already on site – do pop along. But if you can't make it down, never fear – our online Facebook Gallery will remain.

Next up is a new exhibition focusing on the origins of the CUH Art Collection, and some of the incredible Alecto prints which were acquired in the 1980s, including by Howard Hodgkin, Gillian Ayres and David Hockney. This will open on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April, so save the date!

