Extending volunteering from the hospital into the community

How volunteers are helping an NHS Trust to tackle some of the biggest challenges faced by the NHS

Becky Millward
Head of Patient Experience & Volunteering

Jenni Northcote
Chief Strategy, Improvement & Partnerships Officer

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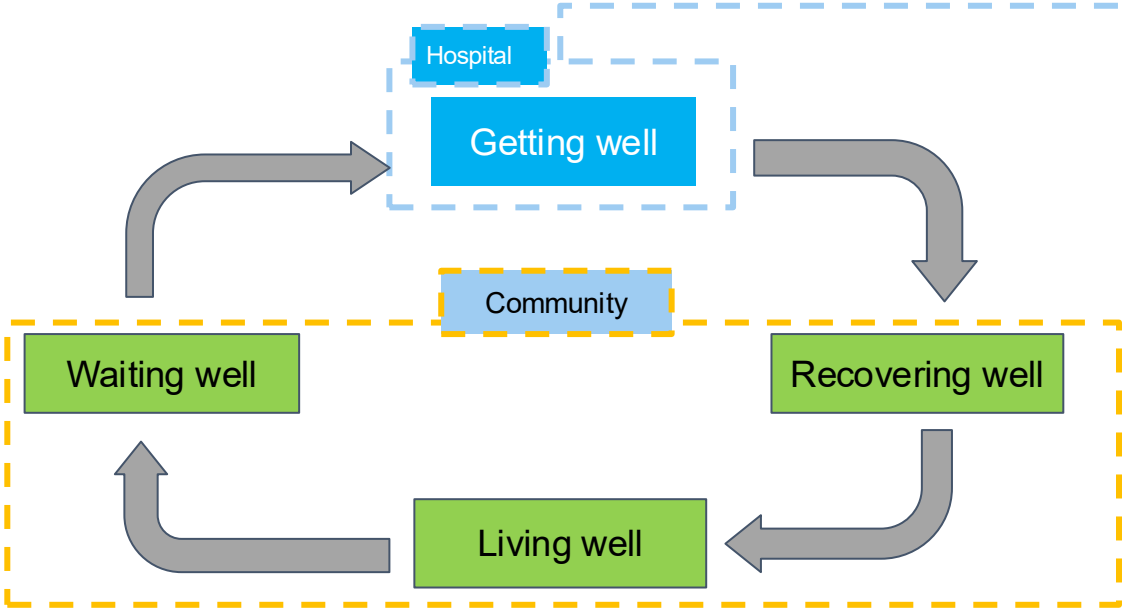
About George Eliot Hospital

- ✓ District general hospital providing range of services including urgent and emergency care, surgical, medical, women's and children's, diagnostic and therapeutic care (358 general and acute beds)
- ✓ Serves a population of over 300,000 covering North Warwickshire, South West Leicestershire and North Coventry
- ✓ Provide a range of community services including sexual health, special care dentistry and TB services
- ✓ 2,600+ staff

The Back to Health Pathway

An integrated health and care volunteer supported pathway



Volunteers on hospital site

- Volunteer contact centre
- Responder volunteer team/OOH volunteer drivers
- Hospital volunteers

Community Engagement Officers

- Aligns to the NHSE CORE20PLUS5 framework to tackle health inequalities
- Supports the prevention and early identification agenda
- Strengthen existing volunteering capacity and capability
- Help build resilient communities that put less pressure on the health and care system

Benefits:

Reduce pressure on services and increase flow - Improve patient experience and outcomes - Reduce pressure on staff and support staff wellbeing

reduce DNAs – increase appointment utilisation - reduce unnecessary A&E admissions - reduce length of stay – optimise patients for surgery

Volunteer Contact Centre (2023/2024)

- ✓ Making Comfort Calls to patients recently discharged, referring patients to support when needed.
- ✓ Making appointment/procedure reminder calls to patients to encourage attendance and reduce DNAs. (7531 patient reminder calls across 15 specialties)
- ✓ Working with Artificial Intelligence firm ‘Deep Medical’ who have developed an algorithm to identify patients most likely to DNA

Contact Centre

Reducing DNAs by an average of 20 per month

	ENT	Physio	Maternity	Oral & Max	General	T&A	Urology	Opth'ogy	Rheu'ogy	Pain	Resp	Breast	Plastics	Gastro	Frailty
DNA average rate	7.9%	8.9%	14.8%	12.0%	7.1%	7.1%	6.8%	8.9%	8.5%	9.1%	5.0%	6.1%	2.2%	10.2%	10.3%
DNA when made calls	6.7%	7.4%	12.2%	9.7%	6.5%	7.2%	6.1%	8.6%	10.6%	6.6%	5.4%	6.0%	0.0%	9.9%	5.8%
DNA when did not make calls	8.8%	10.2%	15.6%	12.7%	7.6%	7.0%	7.1%	9.0%	6.3%	10.2%	6.7%	6.7%	8.7%	10.7%	13.5%
% Drop as result of calls	23.6%	27.0%	21.7%	23.6%	14.2%	-1.6%	14.0%	4.0%	-67.3%	34.7%	20.0%	10.6%	100.0%	8.1%	57.2%
Average appts / week	58	54	29	46	76	182	38	157	67	33	37	70	16	47	15
Average DNAs per week	5	6	5	6	6	13	3	14	4	3	2	5	1	5	2
DNA prevented per week	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	-3	1	0	0	1	0	1
Number of weeks we have made calls	21	28	7	4	7	4	5	7	5	9	2	1	4	3	5

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Volunteer Responders (2023/2024)

- Responder Team
- Out of hours drivers
- Supporting Emergency Department

33
Average out of hours medicine deliveries per month

100
Average Responder Hours Per Week

Hospital volunteering

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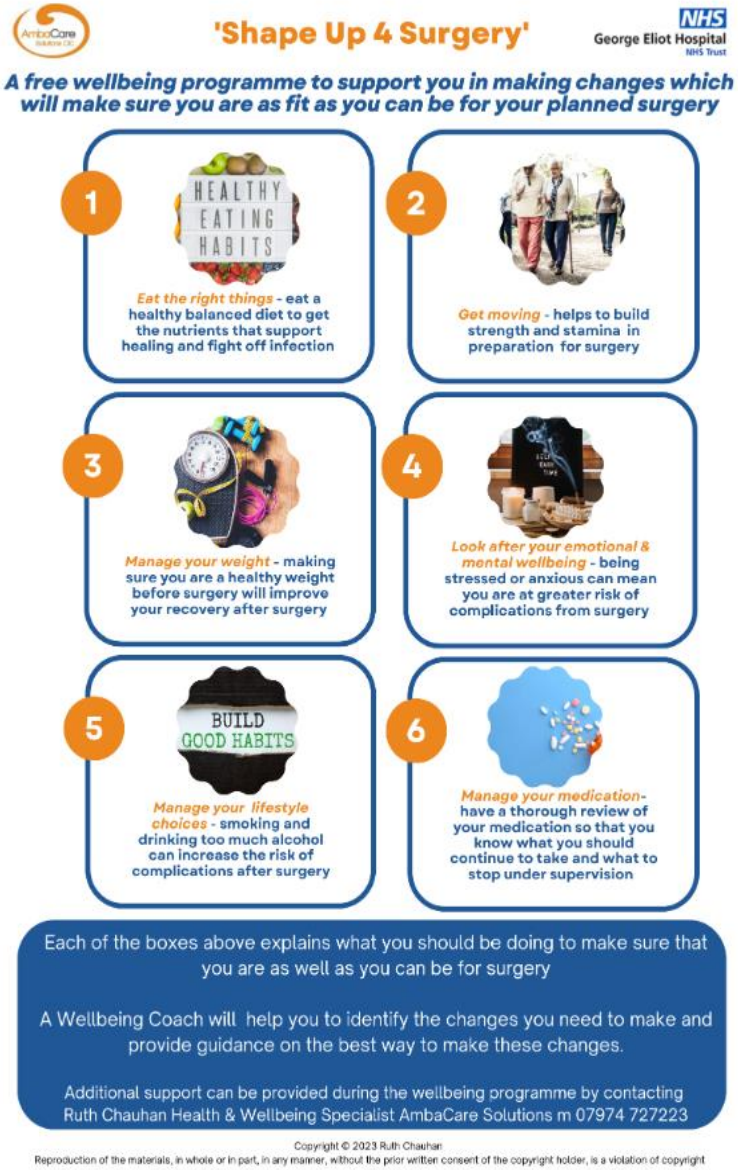
Shape Up For Surgery (2023/2024): Helping patients get fit for surgery, impacting positively on their health outcomes and length of stay



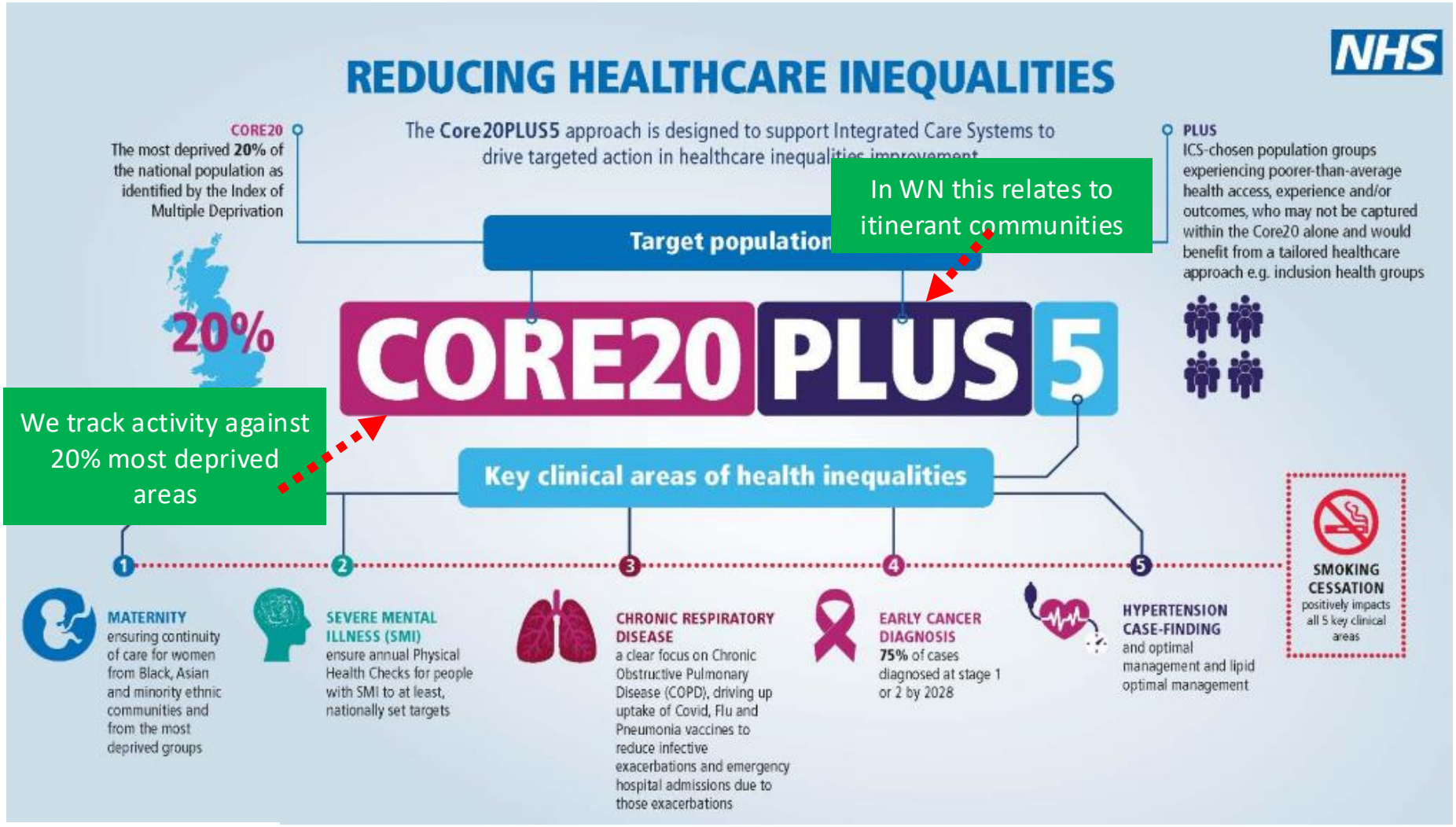
245
Referrals to
Shape up For Surgery

Shape Up For Surgery

Referrals are being received from Orthopaedics, and General Surgery.

- **73 patients supported**
- **65% reduced BMI**
- **68% had an improved wellbeing score**

Community Engagement (2023/2024):



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The Back to Health Team

Voluntary Services Manager

Contact Centre Co-ordinator	Recruiting, training, managing, overseeing and reporting on contact centre activity. Liaises with directorate operational teams re call lists and escalates patients who wish to cancel or rearrange their appointment so that it can be backfilled
Community Engagement Officers	Engaging with deprived communities, work aligns to CORE20PLUS5 to reduce health inequalities, prevent ill health by encouraging screening, immunisations and vaccinations.
Back to Health Nurse	Develop bespoke roles for clinical settings designed to meet needs of wards/services, carries out risk assessments and develops training. Oversee Contact Centre and driver service, provide clinical escalation, identifies new responder tasks that increase flow and create capacity.
Shape Up For Surgery	Supporting patients to become optimised for surgery aiming to improve patient outcomes and reduce length of hospital stay. Reduced chance of infection because patients are fitter. Readmission risk is lowered.

Securing Funding to Develop The Pathway:

- ✓ **External providers (NHSE, ICB, WN PLACE)**
- ✓ **GEH Charity**
- ✓ **GEH Hospital Trust (business case)**

Important to:

- Identify sources of funding
- Identify Project Management support
- Align to Trust objectives and outline 'estimated financial benefits/added value/impact on patient experience'
- Align to objectives of other organisations (PLACE, ICB)
- Think about how to present case

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I wish I had…

- ❖ Carried out more detailed future proofing
- ❖ Better understood process of developing and submitting business cases

Developing a team of Responder Volunteers:

Important to:

- ✓ Connect with frontline nursing staff and huddles for tasks
- ✓ Recruit a Back to Health nurse/clinical champion (clinical connection, by-in and risk management)
- ✓ Link to command structure
- ✓ Develop wide variety of tasks across site
- ✓ Make sure volunteers are visible
- ✓ Encourage volunteer suggestions (drivers suggested developing OOH service)

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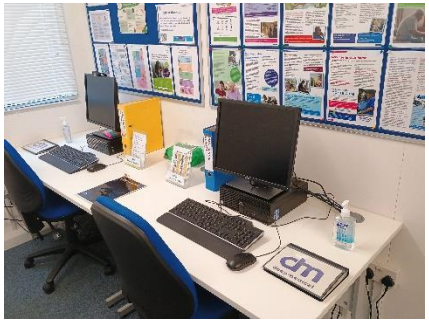
I wish I had…

- ❖ Developed a better system of communication across all wards (including matron and nursing huddles)

Developing a Volunteer Contact Centre:



Important to:

- ✓ Understand sources and flow of data
- ✓ Don't be scared to make changes
- ✓ Standardise the process
- ✓ Commitment from the services to regularly provide us with call lists – needed to keep pushing for these
- ✓ Need to involve the right people
- ✓ Dedicated space

I wish I had…

- ❖ Become part of the Outpatient Utilisation Group (or any improvement group) earlier
- ❖ Better understood cost saving for new appts versus follow ups
- ❖ Understood appointment utilisation
- ❖ Considered bigger accommodation for the centre a lot earlier

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Developing Shape Up For Surgery:

Important to:

- ✓ Be clear where it fits in the elective surgical pathway
- ✓ Be clear on objectives (optimise patients for surgery to reduce risks)
- ✓ Develop clear referral criteria
- ✓ Ensure good communication (posters, emails, discussions etc)

I wish I had…

- ❖ Increased focus on supporting MH and measuring impact
- ❖ Had better engagement with doctors from the start
- ❖ Aligned to new physiotherapy group 'pre-hab' sessions
- ❖ Done more to encourage referrals from GPs

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Developing Community Engagement:

Important to:

- ✓ Align to CORE20PLUS5
- ✓ Talk to ICB about their additional priorities
- ✓ Give Officers time to develop networks
- ✓ Recruit people that know local communities
- ✓ Link with PCNs
- ✓ Agree how to evidence impact
- ✓ Link to interpreting and translation
- ✓ Be prepared to recruit volunteers to support

ICB Market Place

Bramcote Barracks Health Fayre

SWPB Big Conversation Tackling Discrimination Event

Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Open Day

I wish I had…

- ❖ More robust hospital data about hospital pressures linked to postcodes/areas/specialties at the beginning
- ❖ Better engagement from doctors and medical professionals to help steer community engagement work

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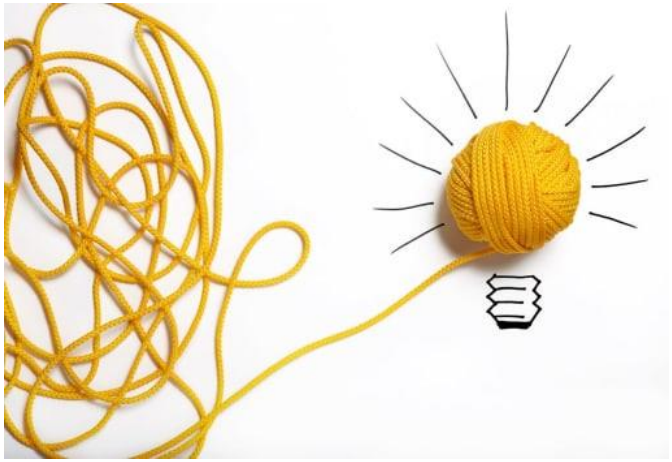
Golden threads that run through the pathway:



Health Inequalities

- ✓ Track patients you are supporting
- ✓ Many sources of funding available
- ✓ Priority for all

Align to Patient Experience

- ✓ Use pat exp data to inform and steer
- ✓ Use pat exp metrics to measure
- ✓ Use pat exp platforms to engage

Data and relationship with informatics team

- ✓ Benchmarking
- ✓ Measuring
- ✓ Drive

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More golden threads…

Supporting volunteers

- ✓ Outline benefits to volunteering - what's in it for them?
- ✓ Start by talking about what motivates them to volunteer
- ✓ Training, support and information
- ✓ Take time to say thank you
- ✓ Mix and match roles
- ✓ Retention
- ✓ Culture – social element

I wish I had…

- ❖ Understood PHM as a source of data
- ❖ Linked in with Library and Knowledge services earlier
- ❖ Walked the wards and engaged with frontline staff more

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Help from Helpforce:

- ✓ Wide range of resources and online discussion forums
- ✓ Project management advice and resources
- ✓ Mentoring, coaching and support
- ✓ Business case development and advice
- ✓ Particularly helpful financial advice; attributing value to volunteering, help with forecasting costing and benefits realisation
- ✓ Essential and outstanding support to help measure the impact of volunteering and understanding the insight

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- ✓Access [Helpforce report](#) on the Back to Health pathway

- ✓Contact us for help!