



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

# **Our Volunteering Strategy**

## **2020 - 2023**



“If you are someone who has experienced the amazing work a volunteer does then you are like us and very lucky to see that there are lovely people in the world. If you’ve never experienced the work of a volunteer and you have spare time and a big heart then maybe you could be one and be the reason someone believes in the goodness of people...”

Amy (Caleb and Zac’s Mum, supported by a CHAS home support volunteer)

## **CHAS and Volunteers**

Each week, three children die in Scotland from an incurable condition. CHAS is dedicated to supporting every single member of these families as they face the toughest challenge of their lives.

Whilst our mission of reaching all these families is a simple one, delivering that mission requires a huge amount of effort from everyone supporting our cause. As a charity with 300 staff and over 860 volunteers we know that it is only by working together that we will achieve our goal.

Staff and volunteers work together as one team. Our people are focused on one common goal - reaching every family in Scotland who needs our support. CHAS is committed to the involvement of volunteers. The charity was founded by volunteers, and our board of trustees who govern the charity are all volunteers too. Volunteering is part of our organisation's ethos.

Volunteering is critical to the success of CHAS. We value the unique role that volunteers play within the organisation. The skills and experiences of volunteers enhance and enrich the work of staff. They help CHAS to provide a high quality of care to children and families. Volunteers also allow CHAS to develop strong links with communities the length and breadth of Scotland which raise awareness of CHAS and of the care and support that we provide.

Volunteers in CHAS come from all walks of life, diverse age groups, backgrounds, and cultures. Involving volunteers from a variety of backgrounds ensures CHAS has a wider reach within the community. Involving local people as volunteers builds a connection with our communities and demonstrates CHAS' commitment to supporting families, babies, children and young people throughout Scotland.

The families we support tell us that they want volunteers to be involved in their children's care and that they see no difference between staff and volunteers. The enthusiasm for volunteering further supports our commitment to developing volunteering in CHAS.

Volunteers bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to CHAS which complements the existing skills of staff, making the organisation more effective. Volunteers outnumber staff three to one. The bottom line is, we simply couldn't do what we do without our volunteer force.

Our volunteering strategy (2020-2023) has been informed by the Scottish Government's National Volunteering Outcomes Framework and the National Council for Voluntary Organisation's 'Time Well Spent' research as well as the national 'Volunteers Count' benchmarking survey 2019 in which CHAS was a participant. This survey allowed us to compare ourselves to other volunteer-involving organisations, identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement. This strategy has been informed by the CHAS People strategy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. Although there is not currently a CHAS strategy on minimising our environmental impact, this has been raised as a priority by

volunteers, therefore we will be working to minimise the environmental impact of our volunteering programme.

Most importantly this strategy has been informed by volunteers, staff and the families that we support.

## National Context

The Scottish Government launched their National Volunteering Outcomes Framework in April 2019. CHAS was involved in the development of this framework, which contains a number of priorities for volunteering in Scotland. Equality, diversity and inclusion feature heavily - volunteering opportunities must be inclusive and accessible to all. Flexible volunteering and new ways of participating are also themes with employer supported volunteering (ESV) being explicitly mentioned as an area for growth. The themes of the framework mirror the themes identified in the National Council for Voluntary Organisations recent research, 'Time Well Spent' (January 2019) which contains the most current and comprehensive data on UK volunteering.

The image below shows the key outcomes and themes of the Framework in relation to the wider outcomes for Scotland.



## Our Strategic Outcomes

For the period of 2020 – 2023, we have developed four strategic outcomes for volunteering in CHAS. The outcomes we have set will enable us to attract, support, develop and retain a broader diversity of volunteers, which in turn will enable us to reach more children and families.

By 2023 we want to be able to say:

- 1. Our volunteers are diverse, coming from a wider range of backgrounds, age groups and communities.**

Diversity of thought, background, experience and understanding is a driver of creativity and performance. Furthermore, it's critical that our volunteer force reflects Scotland's communities and in particular the diversity of families using CHAS services.

The volunteer equalities data that we gather and cross-reference with census data, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data and data of families being supported by CHAS will enable us to measure the success of this outcome. In this strategy we are aiming for growth in our diversity. If required we will set targets in the next volunteering strategy.

- 2. CHAS is recognised as an inclusive and enjoyable place to volunteer.**

Enjoyment and feeling connected lie at the heart of a positive volunteer experience. We want volunteering at CHAS to be accessible to everyone, which means that we need to make it easier for those who face the most barriers, to get involved. Evidence shows us that those who are least likely to volunteer also have the most to gain from volunteering. We want to cement CHAS as a leading volunteer-involving organisation when it comes to inclusion.

Our annual volunteer survey will enable us to measure the success of this outcome.

- 3. All volunteers are fully integrated in to teams and have a positive experience of volunteering with CHAS.**

Retention is a challenge across the volunteering sector, as people opt for more time-limited engagement than they did in the past. As volunteers are opting for more short-term, time-bound roles, retention is not always an accurate measure of success. However we aim to influence retention where we can, by gathering more data from leavers and from current volunteers about their volunteer experience. We will identify themes from the intelligence we gather, consolidating positive practices and taking steps to improve where needed so as to deliver a positive experience for volunteers and maximise the amount of time volunteers stay with CHAS.

We believe that by developing more flexible roles and investing time in the development of staff volunteer management practice, volunteers will be retained for longer. Volunteers will be better integrated in to teams, with staff taking ownership of the volunteer experience. Fully integrating volunteers in to teams is critical if we are to continue to grow volunteering in CHAS and embed volunteering in our culture and day to day activity across all teams. Research into the specific issues affecting retention of volunteers in CHAS, together with the development of a clear volunteer manager journey will be critical to the achievement of this outcome.

The annual volunteer survey together with exit interview data and retention data will enable us to measure the volunteer experience. The total establishment of teams (staff and volunteers) together with the total number of volunteer and staff hours in teams will enable us to measure integration.

**4. There is a more flexible volunteering offer, with opportunities for people to make an impact, regardless of how much time they have to give.**

This outcome will drive both recruitment and retention and ensure that our volunteering programme is fit for the future as people choose to give their time in new and different ways. This in turn will ensure the sustainability of our income generation and service delivery. Where people are looking to get involved in one-off, low risk opportunities, we will enable them to get involved quickly and easily, harnessing digital technology where possible to improve their experience whilst making the most of CHAS resources. We will work with teams to develop meaningful, impactful and exciting opportunities that are both flexible and located across Scotland, in the community, home and hospital.

The number of new flexible opportunities being developed annually and the annual volunteer survey will enable us to measure the success of this outcome. The priority in this strategy is to develop flexible opportunities. Once in place it will be possible to monitor the uptake of more flexible volunteer offers

## **Critical Success Factors**

In order for the Volunteering strategy to be successful, the following factors are key:

1. A cross-organisational commitment to a devolved model of volunteer management, where volunteers are integrated and managed within teams as opposed to being 'owned' by the volunteering team. This includes staff having access to volunteer data in order to support their volunteer teams effectively. This is critical as we scale up volunteering across the whole organisation.
2. CHAS values of care, respect, honesty and accountability are experienced by volunteers in all their day to day interactions with CHAS staff.

3. The volunteering team are involved early-on in service design and workforce planning, to ensure that volunteering options are explored fully at all times, in order to secure the most appropriate roles and resource for teams.
4. The environmental impact of all new volunteering developments and projects in this strategy is considered and minimised.
5. All new volunteering developments consider impact measurement so that we can continue to showcase the impact that volunteering is having on volunteers, children and families and CHAS.

Working in partnership with staff and managers across CHAS, the Volunteering Team will lead on the implementation of this strategy. The table below shows the key initiatives that will be delivered under each of the four strategic outcomes. The outcomes highlight the need for Volunteering in CHAS to be everyone's business and full organisational buy-in, commitment and support of the critical success factors will be a key influence in the success of this strategy.

<b>OUTCOME 1</b>  <b>Our volunteers are more diverse, coming from a wider range of backgrounds and communities</b>	<b>OUTCOME 2</b>  <b>CHAS is recognised as an inclusive and enjoyable place to volunteer</b>	<b>OUTCOME 3</b>  <b>Volunteers are fully integrated in to teams and have a positive experience of volunteering with CHAS</b>	<b>OUTCOME 4</b>  <b>There is a more flexible volunteering offer, with opportunities for people to make an impact, regardless of where they live and how much time they have to give</b>
<p>Working with people from the communities we are striving to involve, we will ensure our volunteer recruitment materials and approach are appealing to a wide range of communities</p> <p>We will do targeted work to recruit volunteers from broader socio-economic backgrounds</p> <p>We will actively recruit volunteers who speak different languages to support families using our service.</p>	<p>We will review our approach to recruitment and selection to ensure it is inclusive and flexible</p> <p>We will scope opportunities for families using our service to volunteer with CHAS.</p> <p>We will work with young people to ensure our volunteering programme is accessible and engaging for under 25s</p> <p>We will develop both our learning and development offer and our provision of support for volunteers</p> <p>We will develop our approach to volunteer recognition and ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for volunteers to give and receive feedback.</p> <p>We will gather more intelligence about the volunteer experience to understand any issues that may be impacting on retention, creating action plans to find solutions to any issues.</p>	<p>We will develop a clear volunteer manager journey and an enhanced learning and development offer for staff, to ensure they are confident, capable and enthusiastic volunteer/relationship managers</p> <p>We will ensure volunteer management skills are tested in the recruitment and selection of staff, and that staff receive a thorough induction in to their responsibilities as volunteer managers</p> <p>We will ensure that volunteer managers across CHAS have access to the data and support they need to enable them to be effective volunteer managers.</p> <p>We will partner staff to think creatively about volunteer involvement and to generate meaningful, impactful and environmentally responsible volunteer roles that benefit both the volunteer and the organisation.</p>	<p>We will segment our audience so as to better understand our current volunteers and their needs</p> <p>We will develop a clear spectrum of participation with roles for varying levels of time commitment and involvement</p> <p>We will scope opportunities for growth of Employer Supported Volunteering and group volunteering</p> <p>We will develop clear volunteer journeys for the different levels of involvement with CHAS</p> <p>We will work with colleagues to scope volunteer involvement in the community, home and hospital.</p> <p>We will measure the impact of new volunteering programmes, on volunteers, children and families and on the organisation.</p>





**Keep the joy alive**

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