Major NHS Trust Reports Rise in Volunteers in the Wake of the Recession

RealWire

As Volunteers' Week [1] gets underway, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (UHCW [2]) has highlighted the growing number of people who are giving up their time to help deliver services.

The Trust is just one workplace which enables and encourages volunteering, enjoying the support of 850 unpaid individuals across its two sites.

UHCW had 450 active volunteers in January 2010 and has experienced a spike in volunteers since the recession hit. It currently has over 300 people going through the recruitment process with enquiries continuing daily.

Kristine Horne, Voluntary Services Facilitator at UHCW, said: "With the Government calling on us to contribute to the Big Society, it's very encouraging to see so many people motivated to help others and contribute to the life of their local hospital.

"However, in the current economic climate we are also seeing a rise in the number of people volunteering to build up their skills and improve their employment prospects".

According to research conducted by TimeBank [3], a national volunteering charity, 73% of some of the UK's leading businesses would employ someone who has volunteered over someone who has not.

Volunteering at UHCW can range from reading to the blind and helping prepare people for surgery to managing the hospital radio and helping with administration.

Vandana Kalia from Birmingham, has qualifications in marketing and has been volunteering at University Hospital in the Quality and Patient Safety department as a way to boost her confidence and improve her job prospects.

"The recession made me realise that I needed to broaden my experience and skills to get the kind of job I'm looking for," said Vandana.

"Volunteering at UHCW has been a rewarding way to do this whilst doing my bit for the community. I would recommend it to anyone."

Brian Stratford, 72, was one of the first volunteers to assist in an operating theatre at the Hospital of St Cross [4], scrubbing up to hold the hands of patients undergoing eye surgery so they can alert the surgeon through him if they need to move for any reason.

Brian said: “Many of the patients I help are elderly and quite frightened before their operation, but I can help reassure them because they see me as ‘one of them’.

“I find being a volunteer so rewarding, being able to provide a helping hand to those undergoing surgery. The role has enabled me to make many new friends.”

Find out more about volunteering at UHCW [5]

Read more about our volunteers [6]

Visit the National Volunteers’ website [1]

SOURCE [7]

Source URL (retrieved on *12/18/2013 - 3:49pm*):
http://www.mdtmag.com/news/2011/06/major-nhs-trust-reports-rise-volunteers-wake-recession

Links:
[1] http://www.volunteersweek.org.uk/
[2] http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/
[3] http://timebank.org.uk/
[4] http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/find-us/hospital-of-st-cross
[5] http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/work-with-us/volunteers
[6] http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/work-with-us/volunteers/volunteer-profiles
[7] http://www.realwire.com/releases/Major-NHS-Trust-Reports-Rise-in-Volunteers-in-the-Wake-of-the-Recession