

MEDIA RELEASE

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LPT celebrates its 425 volunteers

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust is celebrating national Volunteers Week (1-7 June) by saying thank you to our 425 volunteers who help our services to go above and beyond to give patients and service users the best experience.

The volunteers do more than 50 different roles in locations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, ranging from volunteer drivers who help patients get to and from appointments, to dietetic assistants, breast-feeding peer supporters, pet owners who provide pet therapy and bread making sessions for mental health.

Between them, the volunteers contribute around 70,000 hours per year, which is the equivalent of approximately £600,000.

LPT will be thanking its volunteers at a special celebratory event on Wednesday 6 June at the Involvement Centre in the Bradgate Mental Health Unit. Annie Peel, LPT's voluntary services manager, said:



“We really value all our volunteers who are giving their time and skills freely for the benefit of our patients and service users. The Trust just wouldn't be the same without them and Volunteers' Week is our opportunity to say a big thank you.”

Penny Butler, a canine concern volunteer, provides pet therapy on the wards at Rutland Memorial Hospital and Melton Mowbray Hospital, with her two toy poodles Henry and Tinkermouse.

Henry and Tinkermouse are both nearly eight. Henry has been visiting for six years, Tinkermouse for just under two years.

Penny, who won the Trust's Volunteer of the Year Award in 2014, said: “Both the staff and service users look forward to the dog's visit, so I try to be as regular as

possible. I always approach the patients first and ask them if they like dogs and if they would like to stroke the dog before we sit with them. The dogs love their job - they are both very excited when I put on their uniform and are always happy to go to work.”

Malcolm Heaven recently trained as a bread making volunteer to help people with their mental health and wellbeing. Having run a few groups now he says:

“I’ve always had a strong sense of community and helping others is close to my heart. Volunteering for the NHS has allowed me to share something I’m passionate about (making artisan bread), with those facing additional challenges in life.

The structure, support, and expertise provided by the NHS, allows me to focus on making a real difference to those that attend the workshops. That way I can give them the individual attention they deserve, and hopefully build their confidence as well as teaching them a new skill.”



Volunteering opportunities are posted on the Trust’s website at www.leicspart.nhs.uk/volunteering

All volunteers have a one-day general induction with the Trust, and local induction with the team they are joining. Depending on the role, they may be offered further specialised training. In return, volunteers are asked to commit at least two hours a week for at least six months.

For more about the service, visit www.leicspart.nhs.uk/volunteering; phone the team on 0116 229 4055/6, or email volunteering@leicspart.nhs.uk .



1-7 June is declared national Volunteers’ Week by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Note to editors

1. **Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT)** provides community health, mental health and learning disabilities services for the one million people living in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. We have a budget in excess of £275 million and employ approximately 5,500 staff. For more information visit: www.leicspart.nhs.uk

2. **Raising Health** is our registered charity (number 1057361) which raises funds to support LPT’s excellent care initiatives, equipment and innovations which go above and beyond core NHS provision, to enhance the experience of our patients, service users and staff. www.raisinghealth.org.uk

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