NCS SUPPORTING THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS TRUST

Cambridge University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

NCS PARTNERSHIP WITH  
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS  
NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

SYNOPSIS

NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT BRIEFING
SYNOPSIS

WHAT IS THE PROJECT?

Addenbrooke’s Hospital have secured external funding to support the development of ‘Activity Boxes’ for volunteers to use when they visit patients on wards. The aim of this project was to utilise the skills and creativity of NCS students, to help design and develop the boxes and contents, with students presenting their thoughts and ideas to an Expert Panel, at Addenbrooke’s Hospital, on the 17th August.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THIS PROJECT?

For 15 NCS students to get involved and support Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) NHS Foundation Trust by investing 60 hours each to research, plan and deliver a Social Action Project which achieves a positive impact for; the hospital including patients, hospital staff, existing volunteers and young people from Cambridge who are participating in the National Citizen Service (NCS) programme.

OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS:

- Increase their awareness and understanding of the needs of the elderly and the range of needs a dementia patient may have.
- Improve their communication and interaction skills, particularly with the older generation.
- Increase their awareness of the importance of long term volunteers to the Hospital and the variety of volunteering roles available.
- Improve their pitch and presentation skills.
- Gain a valuable addition to a CV, Apprentice or University Application.

OBJECTIVES FOR CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS:

- Generate a bank of practical and creative ideas to support the development of the ‘Activity Boxes’ and their contents, by utilising the skills and fresh thinking of young people.
- Raise young people’s awareness and understanding of the needs of the elderly, particularly those suffering with dementia
- Increase young people’s knowledge and understanding of how to interact and stimulate someone with dementia.
- Increase young people’s awareness of the vital role ‘long term volunteers’ play within the hospital and help to build a potential new pathway to encourage more.
- Provide an additional, alternative volunteering opportunity for young people, supporting CUH’s aspiration to become a world leading centre of innovation and excellence for volunteering.
- Engage with young people from a range of different backgrounds who are keen to make a positive contribution to the local community.
Students analysed and assessed a written brief for the project. Students attended a Briefing Session in the Simulation Suite at Addenbrookes, a suite which mirrors the conditions on an actual ward. Students met with and questioned a ‘Volunteers Helper’ and the Voluntary Services Manager to help them to understand the needs of different patient groups and to understand and appreciate the challenges and barriers that volunteers face when they visit patients on wards.

STUDENTS COMPLETED ONLINE TRAINING

Students conducted online research to help them to understand the needs of the elderly, particularly dementia sufferers, and signed up to become Dementia Friends. Students also organised and took part in a Dementia Training simulation which was led by a Nurse from Addenbrookes Hospital.

Once Students felt comfortable that they understood the needs of the elderly, they researched and sourced activities and games to meet patient and volunteer needs. Students then visited a Care Home, met with the Activities Coordinator and with residents to sense check their ideas.

Finally, students worked in teams to design and create three presentations which were shared with an Expert Panel on the final day of their social action project.

“TAKING PART IN THIS PROJECT WILL NOT ONLY ALLOW ME TO INCREASE MY CONFIDENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS, IT WILL GIVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO BRING SOME ENJOYMENT TO THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE AND UNWELL.”
IMPACTS FOR STUDENTS:

100% of students felt that they made a positive impact for the hospital.

100% of students undertook the online training and became Dementia Friends.

100% of students increased their awareness and understanding of the needs of the elderly and the range of needs a dementia patient may have.

100% of students felt the project improved their communication and interaction skills, particularly with the older generation.

- Students also identified a range of additional improvements in their skills and knowledge. These are outlined in full in the Social Action Report.
- Two students are keen to build on their experience by joining the Trust’s ‘Work Experience’ programme.
- The Team Leader, Arj Ayubi, is using the project to support her case to switch her University course from Pharmacy to Medicine.
- Both the Team Leader and the Mentor have asked for references to support their career development, acknowledging their contribution to this project.

“We are delighted with the work that NCS students completed for us. The students worked hard and developed a clear understanding of the needs of different patient groups, including dementia patients. We are delighted with the results and we are keen to incorporate their creative ideas into our new activity boxes. We would be keen to consider involving NCS students to help us with future projects.”

MAGGIE BROWN, VOLUNTARY SERVICES MANAGER, CUH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
NCS PARTNERSHIP WITH CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

SOCIAL ACTION REPORT
WHY CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS TRUST?

• CUH is one of the largest and best-known Trusts in the county.
• CUH have an ambition to become a world leading centre of innovation and excellence for volunteering.
• CUH have an established volunteering, youth volunteering, work experience and apprenticeship programme in place with a dedicated team to oversee it.
• CUH have an ambitious sustainability strategy in place and they are always seeking ways to innovate and work collaboratively to achieve excellence in healthcare.
• CUH see the engagement of young people as a critical part of their work.

HOW THE TEAM SELECTED THE PROJECT

A written brief was provided to all teams and students were asked to pitch for the project. The team, led by Arj Ayubi provided the most compelling pitch.

Four team members had special needs, these included: ADHD, Dyslexia, Asperger’s and one young person had traits of Autism and asthma.

REASONS THE TEAM PITCHED FOR THE PROJECT

• Family members with dementia
• Better understanding of dementia
• “Wannabe” psychology student interested in cognitive disorders
• Directly helping others
• Developing skills (teamwork, caregiving etc.)
• Good experience (especially for those interested in caregiving)
• Give back to the community/be more involved
• Dementia is a worsening problem
• Learn to help patients
• Rare opportunity
• Confidence in interaction with strangers
• Parents with professional dementia care-giving
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES REFLECTED:

My grandad suffers from very mild dementia. He can remember things from many years ago, but his brain is more affected on leaving the tap on. I think by doing this project, I would increase my knowledge of dementia and learn a lot more things and would know what to do in the future if my grandad or any other family member is actually affected seriously.

I am a responsible 16 year old who can be left alone to do a task or job and it will be done without complaint. I am someone who has a lot of patience which will be important and needed within the project as the dementia patients/residents as they forget what they have said and forget how to do day to day tasks so you have to help and keep patient as it’s not their fault, working within this project will further my knowledge about the illness, as my nan suffers from dementia I have to go to hers and help her with day to day life skills for example helping her make a cup of tea so that she doesn’t burn herself or help make a sandwich just so that she still has responsibility of her own life but with some guidance and help. By doing this project and working and doing activates with people who suffer from dementia will help develop my knowledge of activities to do with my Nan and help me with the future with her as her condition gradually gets worse.

I have previous experience in care from volunteering at a shelter for the homeless, and the skills I learnt can help me with those who have dementia. I believe that these qualities I possess will be an added value to our group in assisting your patients. Overall this experience will help to give me an insight of how psychology is used outside the classroom, but applied in the real world.

This is a great opportunity and I’m looking forward to working with the patients. I feel like this would help to develop skills that I already have. It would help to widen my knowledge and understanding about with the disease is like and how it effects the patients. It would strongly benefit helping me if I wanted to carry on caring for people in care homes outside of NCS.

In the future, I am hoping to study Economics and accounting at university but in the mean time I am hoping to develop my social skills and do more volunteering to help others who are more vulnerable. Taking part in this project will not only allow me to increase my confidence and organisational skills, it will give me the opportunity to bring some enjoyment to the lives of people who are less fortunate and unwell.
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES REFLECTED:

“...My motivation and strive to push myself and achieve the best possible results will help to benefit the planning and presentation of the activity box for dementia patients at Addenbrookes. Furthermore, I believe that my ability to listen to others and communicate my own ideas is a key quality that will be an advantage within the group. Overall, I am resilient when faced with difficult tasks as well as a resourceful and responsible person in general.

“I have aspirations to progress within the care sector, hopefully becoming a manager in a care home or supported living environment. The Addenbrooke’s activity box project will help me with this as it’ll help me gain further experience and develop my knowledge in working with people with different needs and ability.

“When I was younger, I used to visit my local residential home with my mum, and we would sit with the residents and get involved with their social activities. I also used to volunteer at Christmas in this care home to sing carols to residents and keep spirits high during the festive season. This will help me with this project as I already have experience with residents in care homes and have worked with patients who had dementia.

“Adapting to new situations to meet the needs of others (e.g. working with people with dementia) is also an important aspect of working in the modern world and so this is a good opportunity to experience it. By carrying out this scheme, I hope to understand and empathise with dementia patients as well as to bring them a way to find enjoyment despite their conditions. I believe I can make a positive contribution to the team project and hopefully, also improve myself along the way.

“Taking part in our Addenbrookes dementia patient activity box project will also help me develop many skills such as social skills and teamwork.”
On the 8th August a briefing session took place in the ‘Simulation Suite’ in the Deacon Centre, at Addenbrookes Hospital. The Simulation Suite mirrors the conditions on an actual ward and is commonly used for nurse training. This provided an ideal environment for the briefing session, as students could take photographs, measure the size of furniture, the space available and see equipment, such as blood pressure monitors, in situ.

Our students met Maggie Brown, the Voluntary Services Manager and Rose, a ‘Volunteers Helper’. Maggie and Rose helped to bring the project to life by explaining more about the needs of the different patient groups within the hospital and their aspirations for the Activity Boxes. The team had prepared thoroughly for the briefing session and had developed a comprehensive set of questions for Addenbrookes.

The session helped the students to understand and appreciate the barriers that volunteers face when they visit patients, it also provided an excellent opportunity for them to learn more about different patient needs.

At the end of the briefing session, Students were encouraged to use their initiative and investigate other methods of researching the needs of different patient groups, particularly the elderly and those suffering with dementia.
• What are the age ranges for patients?
• How do you suggest we act around the patients appropriately?
• According to your experience in the wards, what have you seen that works best according to the activities?
• How developed is the dementia generally?
• What other illnesses are present within the ward?
• Are most of the patients mobile?
• Where else do the patients spend their time other than the wards?
• How many patients per ward?

• From experience, would you think the patients would prefer one to one interactions or in groups?
• What is the ratio of males to females?
• What do the volunteers normally do with the patients?
• Are there any specific patient requirements?
• What percentage of patients in your ward suffer from dementia?
• What age is the onset likely to happen?

I was really impressed by how prepared the students were for the briefing session. They had clearly worked hard to understand the brief and had developed a comprehensive set of questions ready for Maggie and Rose.

Rose Gardner NCS Partnership Engagement Manager at Learn by Design
The knowledge base in the Group about the needs of the elderly was generally low, however, two of the students had relatives with dementia, one of whom was currently in Addenbrookes Hospital. There was a genuine and impressive desire from these two students to share their experiences to help other group members.

The students conducted extensive online research and all of the Group completed the online Dementia training and signed up to become Dementia Friends to help build their knowledge base.
Nadine Beckwith, a Dementia Nurse from Addenbrookes conducted a Dementia Simulation training exercise to help to give the group an insight into what it might be like to live with dementia. The training is designed to give individuals the ability to identify with, and understand, people with dementia’s behavior and needs by attempting to “walk in their shoes”.

As part of the training, the student’s senses were impaired with glasses and headphones. The group were also asked to wear gloves and asked to perform basis tasks. The Group then recorded their thoughts on the session.

"I learnt that there are lot more things to consider when working with dementia patients. For example, those who are not mobile or or those who can get easily frustrated or might have an infection."

Link to teams dementia simulation training session.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf0165BVKRE
STUDENT FEEDBACK ON THE DEMENTIA STIMULATION EXPERIENCE:

“ I found it quite weird because I had gloves on and certain tasks I couldn’t do such as doing up a shirt."

“ It was challenging because I couldn’t see what was around me and I couldn’t move my fingers due the strapping. I couldn’t hear what was being said either!"

“I learnt that there are lot more things to consider when working with dementia patients. For example, those who are not mobile or or those who can get easily frustrated or might have an infection."

“I found that I easily forgot the instructions and therefore confused on what to do. This gave me insight to how a dementia person must feel."

“I couldn’t remember half the tasks I was asked to do. However having the glasses that disrupted my vision, I found it hard to match the pairs of socks as it was dark in the room. The noise coming through the headphones didn’t disrupt me at all."

”My experience was fun but also very hard to do."

“ The experience made me feel very confused and frustrated with myself. I felt very lost."

“ The noises were making completing the task and activities difficult and confusing."

“ My experience was fun but also very hard to do."

“ The experience was fun but also very hard to do."
CARE HOME VISIT

On 15th August the students visited Cambridgeshire Care Home and met with Valda Raynor, Activities Coordinator. Students took the opportunity to discuss some of their thinking and ideas with Valda, they also met and talked to residents, to get their feedback on some of the games, puzzles and other products that they had selected.

PRESENTATION DEVELOPMENT

The Team were split into three groups for the final phase of the project. This was to generate as many ideas and as much creative input as possible for Addenbrookes. It also helped to ensure as many students as possible got the opportunity to present in front of a panel.
On the 17th August, NCS students pitched their work to an Expert Panel. The panel comprised:

- Anne Saucier - HR Advisor - Work Opportunities
- Alison Wilkinson - Clinical Nurse Specialist (Dementia)
- Maureen - Volunteer
- Maggie Brown - Volunteer Services Manager
- Linda Hering - Employee Development Manager

The students provided an overview of the NCS programme for the benefit of the panel and introduced the project. Each group then presented their work and ideas. The presentations and handouts produced by the students are included in the report pack.

At the end of the presentations, the panel conferred and then shared their feedback and comments with the students. The panel were asked to nominate a ‘winning team’. The overall feedback from the panel was excellent. See comments overleaf.

Following the presentations and awards, each student was presented with a certificate to acknowledge and recognise their contribution to the Trust.
Panel comments for each of the five elements of the project are outlined below.

**Meets the Brief comments:**
- Really thought about the brief.
- Liked the way the team had thought about potentially elderly volunteers.
- Very thorough presentation.
- Excellent.
- Thought about the needs of the volunteer.
- Suggested good sturdy trolley, easily mobilised.
- Thought about infection control.

**Creativity**
- Highly creative.
- Imaginative.
- Rationale well thought through.
- Well researched contents.
- Imaginative choice of contents.

**Demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs of patient groups**
- Thought about impaired vision.
- Gave good references of how these stimulating activities may help different patients.
- Thought about not being able to hold a book or read.
- Good reasoning of patient needs.
- Loved the art therapy.
- Demonstrates a good understanding.
- Lots of evidence to support their choices.
- Thought about vision and colour.
- Thought about different activities to appeal to different patient groups.
- Good range of items chosen.
- Excellent explanations.

**Clear understanding of the needs of dementia patients**
- Very well researched.
- Thought about difficult conversations.
- Aware of importance of music therapy.
- Good statistics.
- Good range of board games.

**Overall presentation**
- Very Good.
- Good clear reasoning.
- Excellent.
- Shared between the team.
- Very clear presentation.
- Really well done.
**IMPACT**

**BENEFITS NCS STUDENTS**

- Involvement in a tangible and unique project that will have a positive impact on patients, particularly dementia patients and their volunteer helpers.
- Increased their awareness and understanding of dementia and the range of needs a dementia patient may have by completing online training and signing up to become ‘Dementia Friends’.
- Improved their communication and interaction skills, particularly with the older generation.
- Increased their awareness of the importance of long term volunteers to the Hospital and the variety of volunteering roles available.
- Improved their pitch and presentation skills
- Students also identified a range of additional improvements in their skills and knowledge. These are outlined overleaf.
- Gained a valuable addition to a CV and an Apprenticeship/University Application.
- Two students are keen to build on their experience by joining the Trust’s ‘Work Experience’ programme
- The Team Leader, Arj Ayubi, is using the project to support her case to switch her University course from Pharmacy to Medicine.
- Both the Team Leader and the Mentor have asked for references to support their career development, acknowledging their contribution to this project.

**BENEFITS TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL**

- Supported CUH’s aspiration to become a world leading centre of innovation and excellence for volunteering.
- Raised young people’s awareness and understanding of dementia and increased their knowledge and understanding of how to interact and stimulate someone with dementia.
- Demonstrated support for a growing national youth programme which has cross party support.
- Provided an opportunity to engage with young people from a range of different backgrounds who are keen to make a positive contribution to the local community.

**BENEFITS TO WIDER SOCIETY**

- The students conducted extensive online research and all of the group completed the online dementia training and signed up to become Dementia Friends to help to create dementia friendly communities.
- The project contributed towards increased social cohesion between young people from different backgrounds and between young and old.
What we have learnt

- Organisation Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Communication Skills
- Research Skills
- Patience
- Time Management
- Speaking infront of others and presenting to others
- How to talk to new people and find new information through appropriate questions
- Teamwork Skills... how to work well with others
- How to adapt to new situations and to cater to the needs of others
- One person's motivation is good but a whole team's is better
- Facing fears and going outside our comfort zone
- Working with a budget and adapting to fit within it
- How to adapt to new situations and to cater to the needs of others
Huge thanks go to the team from Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and in particular, the following individuals:

Maggie Brown, Voluntary Services Manager, CUH NHS Foundation Trust.
Maggie, you generated the original concept for this project and invested a huge amount of time and effort to help to make this project such a success. You worked miracles to overcome and work around all the potential barriers, carefully balancing the needs of everyone involved - patients, volunteers, staff and students.
You extended such a professional, yet warm welcome to everyone throughout and really helped to educate, engage and inspire our team of NCS students. I am deeply grateful to you.

Rose, Volunteer at Addenbrookes Hospital
Rose, thank you for coming into the hospital specially to help to brief our students and giving so much of your valuable time. The insight that you gave into the role of a volunteer at Addenbrookes was just fantastic and really helped to educate and motivate the students.

Our Expert Panel from Addenbrookes
Thank you for support of the National Citizen Service programme and for being such a wonderful Expert Panel. You demonstrated exceptional empathy towards the students. You made them feel proud of what they’d achieved and that their work was genuinely appreciated, valued and would be used.

Valda Raynor, Activities Coordinator, Cambridgeshire Care Home
Thank you for allowing our students to visit and talk to you, they found it really useful to share their thoughts and ideas with you. Please pass on our thanks to the residents for meeting the Students and giving their feedback on the types of activities that they appreciate and enjoy. It helped our Students with their work and helped them to produce a presentation to be proud of.

Huge thanks also go to:

Our NCS students for delivering such an outstanding project. You took a challenging brief and really applied yourselves diligently throughout. You interacted with many different stakeholders during the project and demonstrated exceptional empathy and courtesy. I felt extremely proud of you all and what you achieved.

Arj Ayubi, NCS Team Leader
What can I say about Arj? Just a brilliant Team leader...You planned the project meticulously, demonstrated an excellent ability to relate to and inspire young people and a natural empathy with all the other stakeholders. You kept the team motivated and on track throughout and the quality of the final presentation was exceptional.

Tommy Porter, NCS Mentor
Tommy, you complimented and supported Arj brilliantly. GREAT JOB :)

Inez Mihaldinecz, Wave Leader
Thank you for your support and your wonderful filming and photography. With your creativity and patience, you helped to bring this project and the achievements of this wonderful NCS Team to life.