

MEDIA RELEASE

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LPT celebrates Volunteers' Week

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) is celebrating national Volunteers Week (1-7 June) by saying thank you to our 435 volunteers who help our services to go above and beyond to give patients and service users the best experience.

The volunteers hold various roles in locations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, ranging from volunteer drivers who help patients get to and from appointments, to dietetic assistants, breastfeeding peer supporters, pet owners who provide pet therapy and bread making sessions for mental health.

At a special awards ceremony on Friday 17 May, LPT awarded their **voluntary drivers** the 'Volunteer of the Year' award, in recognition of their exceptional commitment to taking patients and service users who have difficulty in using public transport and/or cannot drive, to and from their appointments: journeys which totalled 137,369 miles in a single year.



Michal Zawislak, transport co-ordinator, nominated the voluntary drivers for the award. He said: “Our drivers are a loyal team and we are very grateful for their flexibility in times of exceptional demand for the service, extending their volunteering days and hours. We have had amazing feedback from patients and service users for whom the service is a lifeline.

Some of our drivers say that volunteering has literally changed their lives and all of them are aiding the recovery of our service users, so thank you to all the drivers in the team, you are the best.”



Lisa Garvey, a yoga instructor, was one of the volunteers shortlisted for this year’s award. Gemma Ablewhite, health and wellbeing lead, said: “Lisa contacted LPT having returned from living in America for a number of years. Lisa knew she wanted to share her love of yoga on return but it wasn't until her son had to attend a hospital here that she knew she wanted to give something back to the NHS, (on leaving the hospital her son had turned to her and queried why they weren't going to pay for the treatment he had received).

“Lisa has been offering 8 week yoga courses to staff since June this year. Not only has she run these courses in her own time but she has also come and helped out at team days and wellbeing events for staff, wanting to give staff a taste of what can be achieved with yoga and share her love for it!

“The feedback from staff has been really positive, with many saying they leave her session relaxed, rejuvenated and sleep better than they usually do – which in turn enables them to provide the best care to our patients. Lisa's sessions are warm and compassionate, actively encouraging attendees to show the love they show their service users to themselves.”

Malcolm Heaven is a bread making volunteer who has been volunteering for LPT for the last 15 months. Malcolm was also shortlisted for this year’s Volunteer of the Year award.

When asked about his volunteering experience, Malcolm said: “I always had a strong sense of community and that’s what led me to volunteering. I’ve always thought if you have skills and experiences to share, why wouldn’t you?

I’ve done a lot of work with young people with mental health conditions and because of my experience, it felt only natural to join LPT.



I enjoy watching the progress patients make in a short amount of time, watching their confidence and self-esteem grow over a morning for example, and that is wonderful.

I was surprised to be nominated for Volunteer of the Year at the Celebrating Excellence awards, but very humbled. I am delighted that the organisation recognises the efforts of staff and volunteers.”

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.

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Note to editors

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. Our registered charity is called Raising Health (charity number 1057361). The charity fundraises to support 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. See www.raisinghealth.org.uk

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