



**Volunteer  
Responders**

# CTA Conference

**16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

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## Background of NHS Volunteer Responders (NHSVR)

- Set up at pace as a COVID-19 response programme in March 2020 to support the NHS and help clinical vulnerable people to stay at home
- Delivered via smart phone by Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) using the GoodSAM platform
- Pioneered flexible forms of volunteering to enable Volunteer Responders to pick up single tasks such as shopping, fetching medication, providing friendly phone calls, offering lifts to essential medical appointments
- Expanded to provide Steward Volunteers in January 2021 to help roll out the COVID-19 vaccination programme
- More than 2.2m tasks have been delivered to c200,000 people and more than 1.5m hours of steward volunteering provided to vaccination centres across the country
- By May 2022, the programme had delivered as intended and COVID-19 roles were suspended. Steward Volunteer and Transport Volunteer roles continued to remain live. Check In and Chat was relaunched in February 2023



## Where are we now?

- RVS and GoodSAM have been recommissioned to provide an NHS Volunteer Responders programme that can meet current health and care challenges, and local needs
- NHSE has commissioned a design partner – the Innovation Unit - to help us develop the programme over this year
- We continue to work with the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme team to deliver booster programme
- We are finalising discussions with DHSC to expand NHSVR to adult social care organisations



## Supporting the needs of the system – NHS England’s strategic aims

### 1. CREATE A RESILIENT VOLUNTEER POOL

**Provide a resilient, national pool of volunteers who can step up to help in a national, regional, or local emergency:** NHS Volunteer Responders are available at short notice to provide practical assistance to the NHS, social care and communities to support and emergency response and help reduce pressure on local and national services

### 2. PROVIDE REAL-TIME INCREASED CAPACITY

**Increase capacity within the local health and social care economy and respond to ‘real-time’ needs in the system:** Health and care systems - including VSCEs - will be able to use NHS Volunteer Responders to support local activities directly related to health and care.

### 3. ENSURE INCLUSIVITY AND FLEXIBILITY

**Enable more individuals to step forward to support the NHS and social care through flexible volunteering opportunities:** Volunteers can switch between ‘on duty’ and ‘off duty’ in the GoodSAM app, to fit around other commitments. This flexibility supports volunteers from more diverse communities and backgrounds to participate.



### Volunteer Roles

#### We currently have the following roles live:

- **Check In and Chat** – one off or repeat telephone befriending – professional or self-referral
- **Vaccination Steward**
- **NHS Transport** – logistics and delivery role

#### The below roles are scheduled to go live in early June and be available to health and care:

- **Check In and Chat Plus** – matched telephone befriending for an initial period of 4 weeks
- **Community response** – supporting people with essential items at home
- **NHS transport for hospital discharge and virtual wards** – supporting speedy discharge

#### Roles in development/pilot phase:

- **Telecare support** – supporting telecare organisation with no – response alarm activations. Pilot due to start in June, in Suffolk.
- **Ambulance crew welfare** – volunteers supporting ambulance crews to provide refreshments and a friendly face when waiting to handover patients. Pilot to commence end of May with Yorkshire Ambulance Service.



## Service Design support

- **Innovation Unit working with People Powered Results team at Nesta** – engaged to support
- **Commitment to the 'co-design' piloting approach** working in collaboration, learning as we go as we work alongside local integrated care systems, volunteers and VCSE sector to ensure real change
- **100-Day Challenge approach** – methodology is about working at pace, permissioning everyone to try and it being okay for things not to work. As long as there is learning it's worth while. Currently on Day 43.
- Three pilot areas
  - **Gloucestershire** – working with health, social care and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations to test four roles alongside a locally developed “Go VolGlos” programme.
  - **Sussex** - working with grassroots VCSE organisations to test roles which aim to meet local need around physical access and transport, as well as providing encouragement, support and social connection.
  - **Greater Manchester** - working with the CTA and local community transport / car scheme providers piloting four transport roles which aim to meet local needs relating to patient discharge from





## Volunteer Responders

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### Regional Relationship Managers

- East of England - Charlie Rossi - [charlie.rossi@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk](mailto:charlie.rossi@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk)
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