



**Autumn 2015**

*VFocus*

Great Ormond Street   
Hospital for Children  
NHS Foundation Trust

**Volunteering at  
Great Ormond Street  
Hospital**

## Welcome from Jamie Wilcox, Head of Volunteer Services



### **Hello everyone**

Well that was our summer - hope you all had a break and managed to get some relaxing in there.

You may have noticed that this edition of VFocus is a bit later than usual - we have decided to slightly change when VFocus comes out, aligning it better with some of our big events throughout the year and fitting in better with the seasons. So, from now on you will receive VFocus in February, May, August and November.

Christmas is almost upon us and there will be some things to look out for: Santa will be coming on the 22nd

and 23rd December, so we need

Elves! Please let Patti know if you can help out. The Make a Difference Awards and End of Year Party will be on Thursday 3rd December - keep the date free and we hope to see you there at this fun event!

Please do let me know if you have any stories about your volunteering or the hospital, event or news that you would like to be published.

Best Wishes *Jamie*

## Welcome Wave! A big hello to our new volunteers

**Activity Centre** - Jane

**Beauty Therapist** - Maddy

**Camp Simcha** - Chavi

**Chronic Pain Clinic** - Louisa

**Crocodile Club** - Faye

**GOSH Guides** - Bhupesh, Debborah, Elysa, Emma, Esra, Eunice, Flora, Hannah N, Hannah W, Josephine, Lara, Laura, Margaret, Matteo, Nasiba, Natasha, Pamela, Rebecca, Robyn, Selbi, Shirej, Sophie, Tabassum, Zarrin

**Language Support** - Roulla

**Occupational Therapy** - Katz

**Performer** - Chloe, Georgia, Maria, Serena

**Pat Dog Owners** - Caroline, Urva

**Patient and Parent Support** - Susie

**Play** - Darcy

**Saturday Club** - Alexandra, Szilvia

## Movers and Shakers. Volunteers who have moved to new roles

**Baby Buddy** - Firoza, Jen, Lucy S

**Badger Buddy** - Dimitra, Izzy, Nathalia

**Crocodile Club** - Anne (team leader), Becky, Chris (team leader)

**GOSH Guide Team Leader** - Pauline

**Play Support** - Laura, Patricia, Shira, Sophia

**Patient and Parent Support** - Jess

**Urodynamics** - Ameeta

**Ward Host** - Lizzie



# Patient becomes Volunteer

*Di Robertshaw (Di) has worked at GOSH for more than 40 years and is passionate about delivering the highest quality care. Now Practice Educator for the cardio-respiratory department, Di has a particular passion for heart kids, London and Donkeys! James (JC), GOSH volunteer and heart patient presenter at one of Di's recent cardiac workshops, interviews Di for VFocus.*

**JC:** Tell me a bit about yourself, how did you get into nursing?

**Di:** I was born in Wimbledon and went to school there. When I was young my sister was very sick and was a patient at the country branch of GOSH. I loved visiting as there were lots of toys and donkeys, which are really my thing! I was sad when she had to come home!

Later my sister trained as a nurse and 8 years later, I followed her. I had ups and downs along my journey but got there in the end.

I had an athletics accident in lower 6<sup>th</sup> but was motivated to carry on by my passion to one day work at GOSH.

I came and trained at GOSH and after qualifying started on the cardiac unit which was (and is) my favourite ward. I have always been fascinated by the heart and it has been a constant theme throughout my career.

I left after becoming a senior staff nurse (to do the sensible thing) but was very pleased to come back to London and GOSH.

**JC:** You enjoy London...

**Di:** London doesn't go to sleep; it's active and lively with lots of sports, arts and everything you could want.

**JC:** You're now Practice Educator...

**Di:** It's a privilege to pass on all the information given to me as a junior. I

was told by a teacher that I'd end up teaching; I just laughed at the time. I love to share information I have and see people I teach start to say 'now I understand'. It takes years to gain the special knowledge for heart kids and all the special points you have to take notice of.

Some of the kids I look after now come back with their own children, you see people go through all sorts; it really is a family affair!



**JC:** You particularly like the heart...

**Di:** I like the practical aspects of cardiology, the blood flow etc. I find it easy to explain to parents. I always liked the anatomy and physiology. These kids really want to get up and do things; they often go on to achieve a lot more than those with good health. I find that invigorating.

**JC:** Heart treatment has changed a lot over the years, things go generally so much more smoothly, must be interesting to have seen all the hard work behind that...anything you feel particularly proud to have been part of?

**Di:** Helping people understand; In the 60s, 70s we had no ops (for some). In the 80s, 90s it exploded. Working with adult heart nurses (looking after these patients) they

share that knowledge; new nurses don't know about that. It's nice having that perspective and explaining to nurses we would just investigate a blue baby and send them straight to theatre. Now we have the time to assess, understand what's going on. For the small number needing a transplant; I feel it quite an achievement to have seen that all start in 1988.

**JC:** Any big changes at GOSH?

**Di:** The buildings! I remember moving into the new cardiac building in 1980, when there was a big bang! When I looked out the window, I discovered one of the concrete walkways had crashed to the ground! We had to evacuate, it only reopened around 1987. But the new GOSH started with VCB in 1990; the MSCB is brilliant and beautiful to work in. Interestingly, my office in the nurses' home is 3 old rooms knocked into one, one of which was my original room from 1980, it's like being 18 again!

**JC:** You undertake charity work, including tours...

**Di:** When you work for a world renowned establishment, you should be a good ambassador. I go and represent GOSH at conferences, all over the world. I feel a responsibility for nurses wanting to come and visit GOSH and see the developments. I do a lot of 30 to 50 year reunions, I see familiar faces and it's useful to know the history. Some of the 45, 50 years are very feisty, I'm sure some of them would have been terrifying ward sisters!

*James continues his interview with Di in part 2 in the next edition of VFocus. Di shares her thoughts on GOSH volunteers, talking sensitively to heart baby parents, driving across the USA and more!*





# Halloween Party 2015



*Our reporter and photographer, Peter tells us about the big party.*

The time to get scary came again last week. The kids love a party, obviously, but to be allowed and encouraged to get scary and dressed up, and

GOSH volunteers sometimes take the amazing kids and parents as part of the scene, but for the volunteers from our corporate partners, one off visiting, it is something they may not experience again. And so many said they will remember the day for ever!

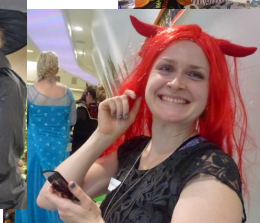
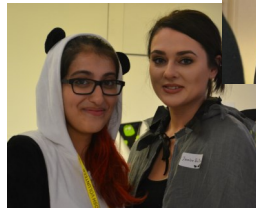
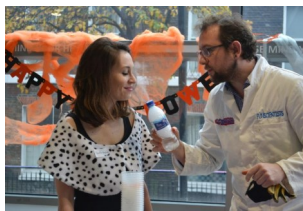
Is it really another year before we can do it all again! Everyone loves it and if you haven't attended one, put it in your diary for next year.

Be there, and be scary....very, very scary!



face painted and have transfers, and indulge making chocolate shapes, and seeing a mad professor make scary experiments with chemicals, AND to see the grown-ups do the same for a three hour fun packed party in the hospital, where they normally come to have 'not' nice things happen to them, was amazing!

Well to be there and take part is heart-warming to say the least. The costumes were not all scary but they definitely were impressive and the enjoyment of the experience by the corporate volunteers was something to behold. Many of the hospital sponsors and donors were represented and they were truly elated to be there.





# Meeting Emma James

I am the new Patient Involvement and Experience Officer at GOSH and wanted to introduce myself so you could stop me to say hello and let me know if you have any ideas on how we can improve our patient's and parent's experiences, here at the hospital.

I have been in the NHS for two and half years, my first position was in the Patient Experience Team at Queen's and King George Hospitals in Essex. This is where I grew up and where my mum and dad still live. During my time at Queen's and King George, I listened and involved patients and their families in new feedback initiatives and made improvements as a result of this engagement.

Before this I worked in politics, both for an MP here in England and on the 2008 Obama Campaign in America, and I'm sure you won't be surprised to hear that I studied



Politics, this was at the University of Nottingham.

I am so happy to be joining Great Ormond Street Hospital as this is a really exciting time to be involved in the 'patient experience agenda'. We know that having a great clinical experience isn't always the same as having a fantastic patient experience, so whilst we do amazing and outstanding work, there is always room for improvement and

I'm glad to be helping the hospital find out from children and their families where we are doing well and where we could make changes.

In my first two weeks I have met a number of committed and active volunteers, parents and patients. I'd love to meet more of you to find out if you'd like to get more involved in the Patient Experience Team, and/or whether you feel patient's/parent's voices are being heard and acted upon.

Please do email me at [emma.james@gosh.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.james@gosh.nhs.uk) or call me on extension 1378, to share your ideas, I can't wait to hear them.

Emma James  
Patient Involvement and Experience Officer

## Goodbye to Angela

Angela has been volunteering with us for 14 years and today is her last day before she retires.

Angela has been coming on Tuesdays since June 2001 to Squirrel ward working with patients siblings and parents. Angela says 'the best thing about my volunteering is seeing the children go home after successful treatment.

The staff, particularly Lucy, are a joy to work with – always supportive and appreciative of my input. I have enjoyed this experience immensely and feel I



have gained far more from it than I have given'.

We have loved having Angela as part of the Volunteer Team. We have enjoyed her easy going manner and quiet sense of humour and been impressed by her ability to adapt to the ever changing circumstances at GOSH.

She has been a terrific ambassador for the volunteer programme, got involved in many extra events and been a role model for volunteering.

We will all miss her very much.



# Alicia's story

My motivation to volunteer with GOSH was my interest in pursuing a career in medical social work.

Having worked in several areas of social work previously, I wanted to make sure a children's hospital was the setting for me before taking the plunge. My time at GOSH was incredible and affirmed my ambitions to pursue medical social work in a children's hospital. After receiving news that my husband was being transferred back to Canada for work and with my newly discovered love of helping children and families in the hospital, I was so excited to find out I was accepted to the Master

of Social Work clinical graduate program just weeks before moving.

For the program I am enrolled in I must complete an 8 month practicum for which I applied for a placement in the local children's hospital. I was accepted into one of the two positions they were offering and am thrilled to be starting a social work practicum with Alberta Children's Hospital Oncology unit in September.

I believe the time I spent guiding and facilitating Crocodile Club enhanced my application for the



program and practicum placement and gave me a foot up in the interview as I was able to speak about my experiences working within the hospital and

enhancing the experience of the families and children I was so lucky to have met.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time with GOSH Volunteer Services and am so pleased that my time at GOSH has proven to be rewarding not only personally but now professionally as well.

# Teresa's story

I have been a volunteer at GOSH for 2 years now and it makes me incredibly sad to be leaving!

Throughout these years I have volunteered in various different departments and have met lots of patients and their families.

Initially, like everyone else, I was a guide for a few months. Then I moved to the Neuromuscular Clinic where I was doing administrative work. After that role, I worked alongside London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for a few months as a research assistant investigating children's perceptions of their health. Finally, my last role at GOSH involved being part of the

Crocodile Club, making arts and crafts with the children!

Having the opportunity to work in various departments at GOSH has been interesting because I was able to interact with different patients and see many different parts of the hospital. In each role I was able to encounter different experiences and learn something new.

My favourite role has to be working in the Crocodile Club because I was able to directly work with children.

I have loved how these children are able to make a difference in your life without you even realising. They always somehow

manage to make your day that little bit happier with the funny things they do. My best memory was when making craft fairies with a 1-year-old baby, after our fairy was finished, she decided to tear the fairy's dress apart and ripped the head off!

We were all laughing so hard because she seemed so proud of herself!

It has been an honour working at GOSH and I will miss everyone and everything about this hospital. It has been a pleasure meeting and working alongside all of you. I wish everyone all the best in the future!

Lots of love, Teresa



# New building tops out at 12 storeys high

Great Ormond Street started its life as a children's hospital 163 years ago at No.49 with just 12 beds.

The latest new building, Premier Inn Clinical Building is due to open next August with an addition of two state of the art operating theatres and more patient beds will increase the capacity for patients by an impressive 20%.

The structure reached its highest point recently and the traditional "topping out" ceremony took place with a day of celebration and general congratulations to all responsible including donors, fundraisers, design team, construction team, project managers and hospital staff. Many staff and departments were invited and I was honoured to represent the volunteers.

As a retired structural engineer I was doubly interested and was very impressed by background and achievements this far.

To give a resume of the achievements is not easy in a few paragraphs but I will try:

There are 14 multi storey buildings forming the whole hospital. The ambition is to rebuild 2 or 3 within the next 20 years!! Why is the obvious question? The answer is that the buildings built in 1980's, almost 40 years ago, are being overtaken by new methods and technology within the field of childcare, modern methods of

construction and to refurbish existing structure is becoming more expensive and surprisingly more time consuming than to demolish the old and rebuild as new.



The challenges however to achieving that task within a working high dependency children's hospital does indeed require planning and execution of "surgical precision". The design team of structural engineers, architects, building services and construction company, Skanska, have achieved the first stage of this with flying colours and need and deserve huge congratulations. They have designed and built a 12-storey building using modern slim flat slab, concrete frame on top of an existing 4-storey building with the highly technical "imaging department" underneath and in full operation! An astonishing achievement by any standards.

All demolition was carried out of the upper ten floors of the 1980's building using monitoring of dust and vibration so the hospital could continue to function without any

disruption.

The remaining four floors below were then checked for safety by the Engineers and deemed safe to build the new 12-storey block on top, thereby limiting the need for more disruptive demolition and very noisy new foundations.

The remaining light framed steelwork has started on the roof ready for installation of power generators, air conditioning units and lift motor rooms. These will be concealed from view by extension of the buildings cladding system.

The structure however is now complete and waterproof and as with the tradition of the Scandinavian background of the construction company Skanska, a "topping out" fir tree will be erected and ceremonially chopped down!!

The internal fit out of the wards, theatres, external façade and so on takes place over the next 10 months ready for the grand opening next August.

The new building, named the Premier Inn Building after one major sponsor, will of course be integrated into the whole hospital network and so the next new build will already be in the planning stage.

Hopefully this short article gives you some idea of the continuous inspiring progress made over the 163 years which we are all proud to be part of.



# GOSH Charity news



## Charity office volunteers wanted!

We're looking for enthusiastic administrative based volunteers to help us support our amazing fundraisers. From calling and emailing supporters, to updating the charity database and day-to-day administrative support, you will help with a range of tasks and be an integral part of the team. We will provide you with training and ongoing support. If you're confident on the phone, organised, computer literate and able to come in for a minimum of one day per week, we'd love to hear from you.

Email the Fundraising team on [fundraising@gosh.org](mailto:fundraising@gosh.org) for more information, or call us on 020 7239 3179.



A brand new fantastic festive run is coming to Clapham Common this December. A sea of Santas will descend on South London and conquer a 5k or 10k route dressed as Santa.

Everyone's welcome! There'll be loads of Christmas fun and entertainment on the day, with brass bands, carol singers and a complimentary mulled wine as you cross the finish line.

Sign up a team now at [londonsantadash.co.uk](http://londonsantadash.co.uk). If running it isn't your sack, we'd love you to volunteer on the day and help make our amazing event happen. Email [londonsantadash@gosh.org](mailto:londonsantadash@gosh.org) for more information.



## Decorate and Donate

### Get creative this Christmas and support the children at Great Ormond Street Hospital!

This year, whether you deck the school hall or make your staff room or office sparkle, you can raise money to help Great Ormond Street Hospital – it's simple and everyone can get involved.

Use our festive tree poster, bauble stickers and stocking and gift templates to brighten the walls and send festive messages to your friends and colleagues. Perfect for schools, offices and community groups!

Visit [gosh.org/decorate](http://gosh.org/decorate) for more information and to order your poster pack or email [decorate@gosh.org](mailto:decorate@gosh.org) with any queries.



# Thanks & Final Thoughts

The volunteers, to me, are a hugely important part of the team.

**Carolyn Akyil**

**Ward Sister, Bear Ward**

Without all the volunteers I would be lost this summer, with the Activity Centre being closed. We have been so busy recently we really would be lost without all the volunteers.

**Lynsey Steele**

**Play Specialist, Eagle Ward**

Dear Patti

Thank you again for your help with getting some GOSH volunteers to assist with our Open Day last Saturday. I was impressed by how lovely they all were to work with!

Kind regards,

**Dr Erin Walker**

**Joint Lead for Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement in Research .**

## Be a flu fighter

Over 30% of our staff have already taken advantage of the free vaccination. Be a flu fighter today and get your flu jab, Clinics are in Frontage Building Outpatients all next week from 13.00 to 16.00.

The vaccine is completely safe, and with the highly transmissible nature of influenza we have a duty to protect ourselves and our patients, friends and families. Take your ID badges with you too.

## Support Jonathan

Jonathon Solomon, one of the Citizens Advice Bureau volunteers, will be running the Heartbreaker Marathon in New Forest to raise money for GOSH. If you would like to support him please go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/Jonathan-Solomon1/>

## GEMS awards

We continue to celebrate our outstanding members of staff/ volunteers and teams. If you know an individual or a team who you think deserves recognition, please make your nomination by the last day of the month. Anyone can nominate by sending an email to [staff.recognition@gosh.nhs.uk](mailto:staff.recognition@gosh.nhs.uk) indicating who you would like to nominate and why they deserve to win.



## Crocodile Club

The club is now running on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The club is a fun packed 2 hours in the Lagoon, with arts and crafts, games, story-telling and relaxing. There are still places for more volunteers, so if you are interested speak to Patti.

## Quote of the Month

### To the Saturday Club

A big thank you for the amazing job you do in supporting families while they are at GOSH.

Eddie and Anna (and William) all really enjoyed the activity centre and instead of a boring Saturday in the hospital they were excited and wanted to go!

William finally got home in June and is doing well. We love having him here and it's so great to have the family together.

We will have good memories of GOSH and the Saturday Club and a heartfelt thank you to you all for making such a difficult time that much easier.

Best wishes Emily, Mark, Eddie, Anne and William

## Reminders

# Keep Smiling!

The Next V-focus will be out in February. If you want to get involved please contact Patti

Editorial team: Jamie Wilcox, Patti Hogan and thanks to all the contributors

**Thank you to all the volunteers at the hospital! Your continued support means that so much is possible!**

