

One Team, One Hospice: Involving Volunteers in Schwartz Rounds

St Wilfrid's Hospice, Eastbourne introduced Schwartz Rounds in February 2016 and they have been a welcome addition to the hospice calendar.

The hospice works with approximately 600 volunteers who compliment the work of our 171 employees in a variety of roles, many of whom provide front line support to patients, carers and family members. We recognise that providing compassionate care impacts the lives of all team members and it was important to us to include volunteers in Schwartz Rounds from the outset.

Time is always factored into the steering group meeting agenda to discuss how to encourage volunteer attendance at the rounds and how to ensure our topics were inclusive and accessible for all.

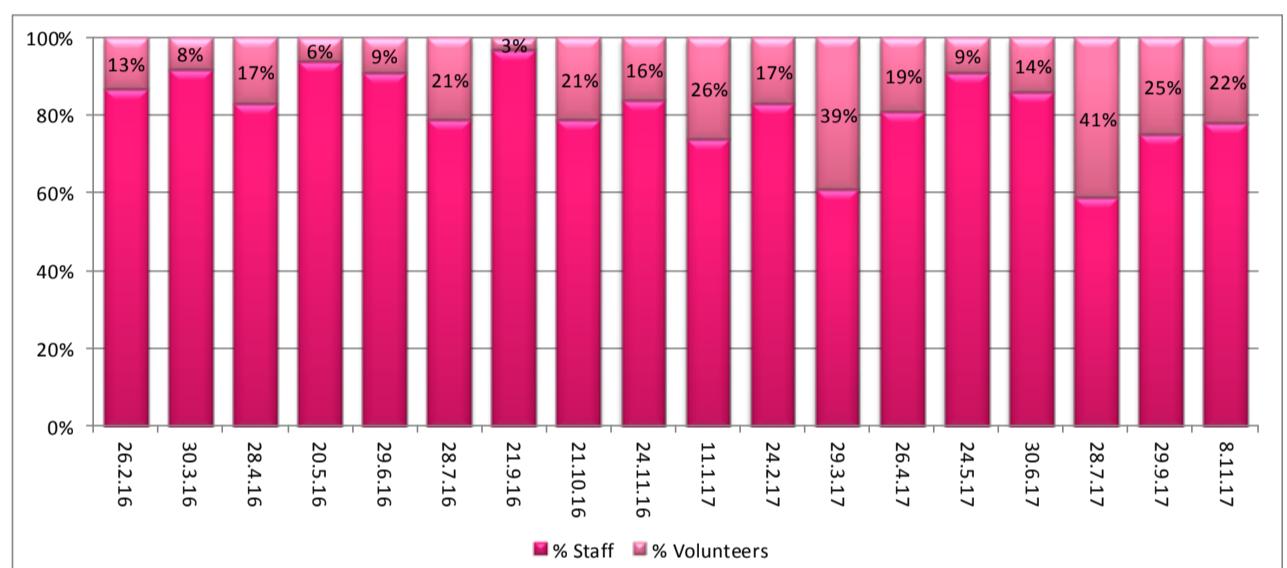
Encouraging attendance

The steering group was initially formed of ten multi disciplinary, clinical and non-clinical team members including the Voluntary Services Coordinator, a trustee and key managers were invited to help with encouraging attendance from volunteers as well as employees.

In September 2017, three volunteers working in different roles and shift patterns across the hospice joined the steering group. It made sense for volunteers to be able to directly join in with strategic discussion and decision making about the rounds as well as communicate the benefits to other volunteers and encourage attendance.

Volunteer and employee attendance in figures

Given the ratio of staff to volunteers, the steering group were initially unsure whether there might be more volunteers attending than we were able to accommodate. On the other hand, the group were unsure whether volunteers would turn up at all. As you can see from the chart, the numbers have been steady and manageable.



What do attendees tell us?

The fact that people from all walks of hospice life come together at the Schwartz Rounds is amazing. It's the simple fact that everyone can participate that means they work best – they help us gel as a team. We get to understand each other and consider aspects of life and the hospice and its impact on us better - Volunteer

It gives us a good insight into different roles; we didn't know they were experiencing those kind of things — Employee

It can be tricky sometimes as someone who has had a professional relationship with a volunteer but the benefits of having the whole hospice involved outweigh this —Employee

They are very thought provoking and make me feel involved —Volunteer

Although they can be intensely moving they are also fun and hearing how aspects of the Hospice care affects staff reassures me that my own feelings are perfectly ok —Volunteer

It's a brilliant idea marrying up all the disciplines as it really helps to build unity — Volunteer

It's really helpful that we can air our thoughts in such a comfortable atmosphere alongside staff – Volunteer

We have had some volunteers as storytellers and I think their stories have been some of the most interesting —Employee

It is a very good reflective practice which helps to understand and appreciate our colleagues' roles and feeling less stressed and more supported in our work at the hospice - Volunteer

It stops an 'us and them' which I hate — Employee

When there are different perspectives on a single theme, delivered by volunteers and staff, it really gives a 360 vision —Volunteer

