

the PEACOCK

Issue 80, August 2024

The Friends of Moorfields Magazine



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**Friends of
Moorfields
Eye Hospital**

A note from our Chairman

I am not often stumped when asked a question but I had to reflect carefully when I was asked by one of our volunteers, 'what else can we do?'

The volunteer explained that he spent at least a day a week reassuring patients before and during surgery, another day assisting in the pharmacy and, when not doing either, calling patients to remind them about forthcoming appointments.

Before I could answer that surely he was already doing enough, he continued, saying, 'I'm extremely proud of being part of Friends of Moorfields, not only because of the work its staff and volunteers do but also the way it has developed.'

I share that volunteer's sense of pride. I strongly believe that Friends of Moorfields is an exemplar amongst organisations that provide a hospital volunteer service, not simply because of the high standards it sets, but also through the wide range of support it provides.



That support is growing all the time, responding to what is most needed from us. This year, we've established new volunteer roles supporting the PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) office and Admissions, helping make patients' visits as smooth as possible.

In truth I don't know yet 'what else we can do', but as the service at Moorfields evolves, we will keep evolving alongside them, and I'm certain that whatever it is it will be done to the highest of standards by volunteers who are completely reliable and professional in their approach, and supported by our outstanding staff team.

Tim Hutchings
Chairman of the Board
of Trustees, Friends of
Moorfields

Friends donate £1 million for new centre for advancing eye health



We are delighted to announce that we have pledged £1 million to Moorfields Eye Charity towards a new centre for advancing eye health, opening in 2027.

The centre, in St Pancras, Camden, will be the new home for Moorfields Eye Hospital and the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology when they move from existing sites in Islington.

Our 300-strong volunteer service, alongside our staff team, will move to the new centre as it opens, continuing to provide the support we offer patients today.

Our chief executive, Angela Smith, said: "We're delighted to support this pioneering eye centre of the future. Our gift is an important part of our vision and it emphasises the vital role Friends of Moorfields plays in ensuring the new centre delivers an outstanding experience for patients."

Robert Dufton, chief executive, Moorfields Eye Charity, said: "We're so very grateful to the Friends of Moorfields Eye Hospital for their donation. This gift is helping to make the new centre possible – with patients' needs at its heart."

Since you last saw us...

Here's just a small taste of what we've been up to since the last issue of Peacock.



Volunteers from Friends of Moorfields took part in Moorfields Eye Charity's tenth anniversary Eye to Eye walk.

As part of making the walk as accessible as possible, Friends of Moorfields and Moorfields Eye Charity worked together to make Friends volunteers available to walkers who needed guiding on the route. Some Friends volunteers also completed the walk on their own account, contributing to a total of over

£100,000 raised on the day to support Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology and fund research and innovation in eye health.

Our Senior Volunteer Support Officer Liam took part in an event with the University of East London's volunteering programme, exploring how volunteering can shape careers in healthcare.



The recently refurbished exhibition space at Moorfields City Road, managed by our Health Information Hub team, has been very busy over the last few months, with events including a celebration for International Nurses Day, an event for National Healthcare Estates and Facilities Day, and an information session about DrDoctor, a new patient engagement platform.



Our chief executive Angela Smith and Health Information Hub Manager Sabina Uddin attended Moorfields' annual nursing conference to talk to nursing colleagues from around Moorfields about our services and how we can all work together to make sure patients have the best possible experience.



They attended sessions to learn more about the work nurses do at Moorfields, with topics including patient safety and health and wellbeing.

Career success for A&E volunteer

Mihir began his Moorfields journey as a volunteer, and now has a paid role after taking part in our Volunteer to Career pathway.

Last year the first cohort of 24 successfully completed our Volunteer to Career programme, with 7 of them finding employment in the NHS and a further 10 securing further education or training relating to health and care.

The programme, supported by Helpforce, was so popular that it has now been integrated into our standard offering for volunteers, as the Volunteer to Career Pathway. Volunteers who are interested in careers in health and care can start the pathway at any time, getting support and advice from our team about applying to permanent roles, apprenticeships and further training.

Mihir, who joined us as a volunteer in September 2023, has benefited from this new pathway and is now a paid member of staff at Moorfields.

“I discovered my current role as an ophthalmic technician with assistance from Friends of Moorfields,” says Mihir. “Their encouragement played a crucial role in my decision to apply. Volunteering in the A&E reception inspired me to pursue a career where I could contribute to improving patients’ vision and overall quality of life.”

When Mihir expressed an interest in following the Volunteer to Career Pathway, the team were able to support

him with targeted training, advice on preparing his CV, and interview coaching. Mihir’s experience as a volunteer also gave him a better idea of what to expect from a paid role in the NHS.

“In the A&E reception, I developed strong interpersonal skills by interacting with patients, understanding their concerns, and providing assistance,” Mihir says. “For other volunteers aspiring to transition from volunteering to a career, I would encourage you to fully engage in your volunteer role. Treat it as an opportunity to immerse yourself in the field, gaining invaluable hands-on experience and insights. Each day offers a chance to learn and grow, both professionally and personally.”

There are currently 14 volunteers actively participating in the Volunteer to Career pathway, including 5 applying for positions. Two have recently been employed in the NHS, including Mihir, with one



more working temporarily at Moorfields through their staffing bank. In a recent survey, 51 volunteers expressed interest in the pathway.

“The Volunteer to Career pathway continues to be very successful,” says Natalia Tomashpolskaya, Volunteer Service Manager. “The pathway means we can work with Moorfields to address some of their workforce needs, but we’re also upskilling volunteers and supporting them with opportunities to step into careers across the NHS.”

Celebrating National Volunteers' Week

This June, we celebrated National Volunteers' Week - a time to recognise the incredible work our team of over 300 volunteers do.



Moorfields chief executive Martin Kuper joined volunteers at Moorfields City Road to mark the occasion.



Volunteer Service Manager Natalia and her team members Robert and Liam posed for snaps with some long-serving volunteers

Staff gave cupcakes and other treats to volunteers as a thank you for everything they've done over the past year!



Ahead of Volunteers' Week, Senior Volunteer Support Officer Liam dropped by Moorfields at Ealing to chat to volunteers there, thank them for all their hard work and get their feedback about their experiences.



Members of the Friends staff team visited volunteers at our newest site, Moorfields at Stratford, to find out how they're getting along.

Interview with Jon Spencer

Our chief executive Angela Smith sat down to talk with Jon Spencer, chief operating officer of Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Tell us a bit about yourself and what led you to become chief operating officer at Moorfields.

I've worked in the NHS for just over 23 years, initially in Manchester and then moving down to London. I spent about nine years in human resources before moving into general management, and I've since then undertaken a variety of operational and strategy roles across a couple of different NHS

trusts, which is what eventually led me to apply for this current role.

I've been in post, and at Moorfields, for about three and a half years now.

What's the best thing about working at Moorfields?

The first thing, I think, is the people. I've always found everybody here very welcoming, and everybody strives for high standards, which I think you'd



expect at a specialist trust, but it's something that's struck me throughout my time here.

The second thing for me is the clarity of purpose that you get from working in a specialist trust. Everybody here is very focused on preventing sight loss and providing the very best services that we can for our patients.

What do you see as the biggest challenge for yourself and for your team coming up?

The biggest challenge for me is the quantum of change that we're facing over the next couple of years. We are planning the introduction of a new electronic patient record (EPR), which will be great because it

will fit around our OpenEyes clinical noting system, providing all of the functionality that we currently don't have, including the digitisation of our pre-assessment pathway.

We've obviously got the new centre for advancing eye health coming as well - Oriel is a joint partnership between Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology and Moorfields Eye Charity that will move services from Islington to a new, integrated centre in St Pancras, Camden. It's going to be really exciting, and we'll be moving shortly after the EPR lands. We're also trying to undertake a number of other changes such as the introduction of the Single Point of Access service - a streamlined pathway for ophthalmology referrals which will be more convenient for patients.

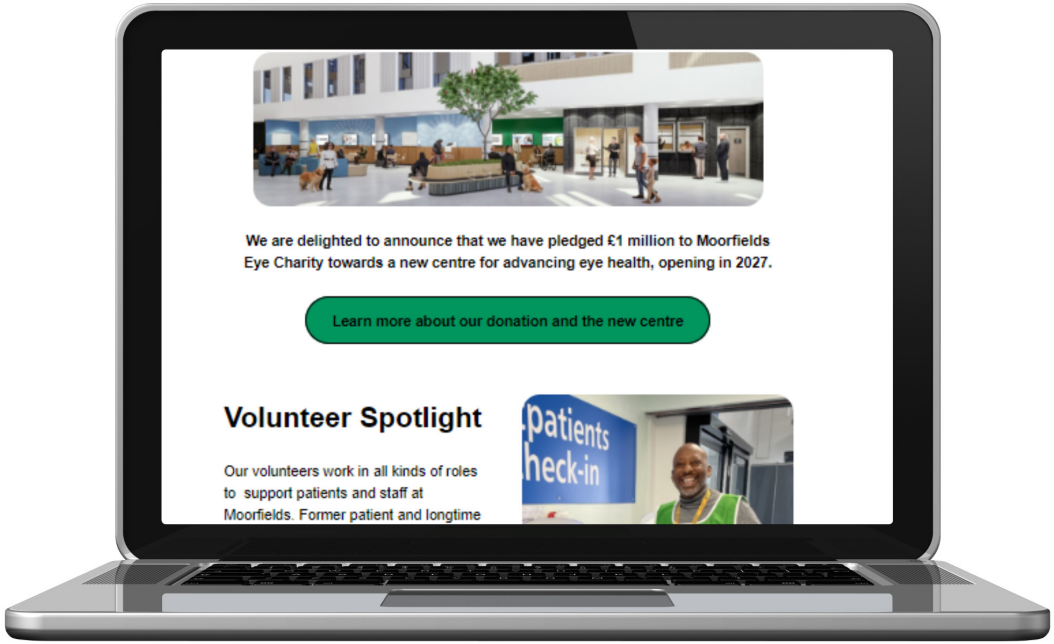
So a lot going on and I think that's both exciting and a big opportunity, but also something that is a challenge and we've got to work really hard to

make sure that these initiatives are coordinated and that we bring everybody with us and communicate effectively, so that everybody knows what's happening when and the particular role they need to play to support the introduction of the various initiatives.

How do you see Friends of Moorfields helping and supporting you and your team in the future?

I think it's a question of building on the excellent support we already get from Friends. Particularly the volunteering service, I think we're going to have to work together to look at how that needs to adapt for the new centre, maintaining the high-quality service that we already receive and looking at how the support needs to evolve based on the new floor plans, the slightly different ways services might work once we move to the new centre. But we're building on an already excellent platform.

Keep up to date with our email newsletter



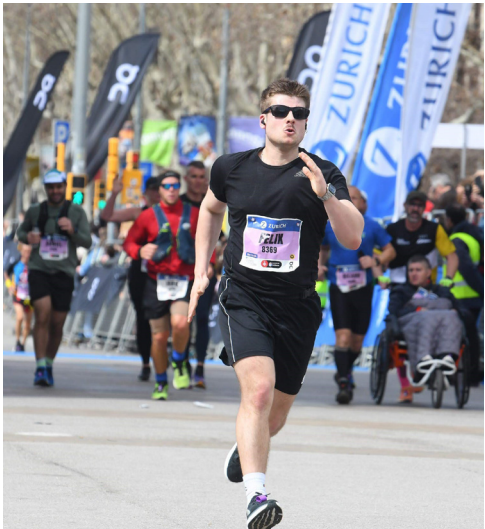
If you want even more news and stories from Friends of Moorfields, you can sign up to our email newsletter!

Our newsletter goes out six times a year, and it's packed with stories from our website about our volunteers, our latest updates, and the services we offer.

If you'd like to receive emails, visit our website - friendsofmoorfields.org.uk - scroll right to the bottom of the page, fill in your email address and click the Submit button!

Thank you!

We're so grateful to all our fundraisers and donors. If you've done something special to raise money for us, let us know so we can shout about it here!



Thank you so much to Felix, who ran the Barcelona Marathon for us earlier this year, raising hundreds of pounds!

Felix was inspired to fundraise for us following his experience as a young patient at Moorfields. The money he raised will help fund our projects around Moorfields, including our continued support of the health play team for young patients.

Mr Shah and the team at Mayhew Newsagents have raised over £300 for us this year with their shop collection tin.

Thank you so much, to Mayhew Newsagents and to all their generous customers!



The lovely folks at Marlborough Highways raised £372.50 for us by holding an event in the office, and popped into Moorfields City Road to give us the donation in person!



Our volunteers have been busy collecting for us at tube stations from Angel to Canary Wharf!

So far this spring and summer, our station collections have raised £1995.46 towards our work.

Give us a call or drop us an email if you'd like to take part in a station collection.



Thank you to Moorfields Eye Charity who generously contribute towards the funding of our Volunteer Service.





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