

# Careers in Healthcare

## A Guide to Working in Voluntary Organisations



# Acknowledgements

**This guide has been produced by Skills for Health with the input of many partners and stakeholders across the Voluntary Sector. Thank you to all who contributed their ideas, feedback and case studies.**

**In particular we would like to thank Janet Fleming from Skills – Third Sector and Elaine Smethurst from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations for their invaluable contributions and suggestions.**

**Special thanks also to:**

Action for Blind People [www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/](http://www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk/)  
Altogether Better [www.altogetherbetter.org.uk](http://www.altogetherbetter.org.uk)  
Beatbullying [www.beatbullying.org/](http://www.beatbullying.org/)  
Brain Tumour UK [www.braintumouruk.org.uk](http://www.braintumouruk.org.uk)  
Groundwork Cheshire <http://cheshire.groundworknw.org.uk/>  
Help the Hospices [www.helpthehospices.org.uk](http://www.helpthehospices.org.uk)  
Médecins Sans Frontières [www.msf.org.uk/work.aspx](http://www.msf.org.uk/work.aspx)  
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St Ann's Hospice [www.sah.org.uk/jobs/why-work-for-st-anns-hospice](http://www.sah.org.uk/jobs/why-work-for-st-anns-hospice)  
St John Ambulance [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)  
St Wilfrid's Hospice [www.stwh.co.uk/](http://www.stwh.co.uk/)  
The British School of Osteopathy [www.bso.ac.uk](http://www.bso.ac.uk)  
The National Autistic Society [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

Thanks also to Annette Clark from Skills for Health who acted as reviewer and to Rosie Hopley who wrote the guide.

[www.rosiehopley.com](http://www.rosiehopley.com)

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## Foreword

I welcome this guide from Skills for Health which illustrates some of the opportunities for health related careers and development available in the third sector. At Skills – Third Sector we have as much interest in this work and we have a united commitment to draw people into fulfilling and rewarding careers.

A common concept of health is the NHS, but there are many organisations and teams of people that play an important part in health delivery and support. Flexible, innovative, empowering, forward thinking – these are some of the terms which many associate with voluntary organisations, and the case studies of individuals and organisations contained in this document will help to illustrate why.

The good practice and innovation that characterise the third sector which is not necessarily found elsewhere are just two reasons why many choose to begin their career in charitable and voluntary organisations, or to develop it part way through.

Enormous strides have been made in creating a stronger network of healthcare services across all sectors and that's due, in so many ways, to the remarkable people who choose to deliver healthcare services through the third sector.

**Richard Hawkes,**  
Chief Executive Scope,  
and Trustee Skills – Third Sector

The logo for Skills Third Sector, with "skills" in a bold, dark purple font and "THIRD SECTOR" in a smaller, blue, all-caps font below it.

For many years, charitable, voluntary organisations and community groups have been at the forefront of specialist knowledge, care and campaigning in health. Some third sector organisations are well known, others have a much lower public profile. But there's a huge amount of knowledge in these organisations; they know their communities and they demonstrate innovative leadership. The wider health sector and the population generally, benefit enormously from the skills and experience paid employees develop in the voluntary sector to deliver the best healthcare possible throughout the UK and beyond.

For many people in the health sector, working in voluntary organisations offers opportunities to deliver services to client groups and in contexts that other publicly and privately provided services cannot reach. The skills that are developed in managing and delivering these services are invaluable and make a significant contribution to improved healthcare provision within and well beyond the third sector.

There is a growing network of relationships between public and private sector health organisations and voluntary organisations. Small charities and social enterprises have a strong track record in providing highly targeted services to meet patient and client needs. They have developed many areas of excellent practice – mental health, substance and alcohol misuse, end of life care to name a few.

Currently career opportunities in the voluntary sector do not have as high profile as they should have even though it is a real source of challenging and exciting career opportunities now and for the future. The information and case studies in this document show some of the wider job possibilities within the health sector, and demonstrate career development and progression opportunities for employees.

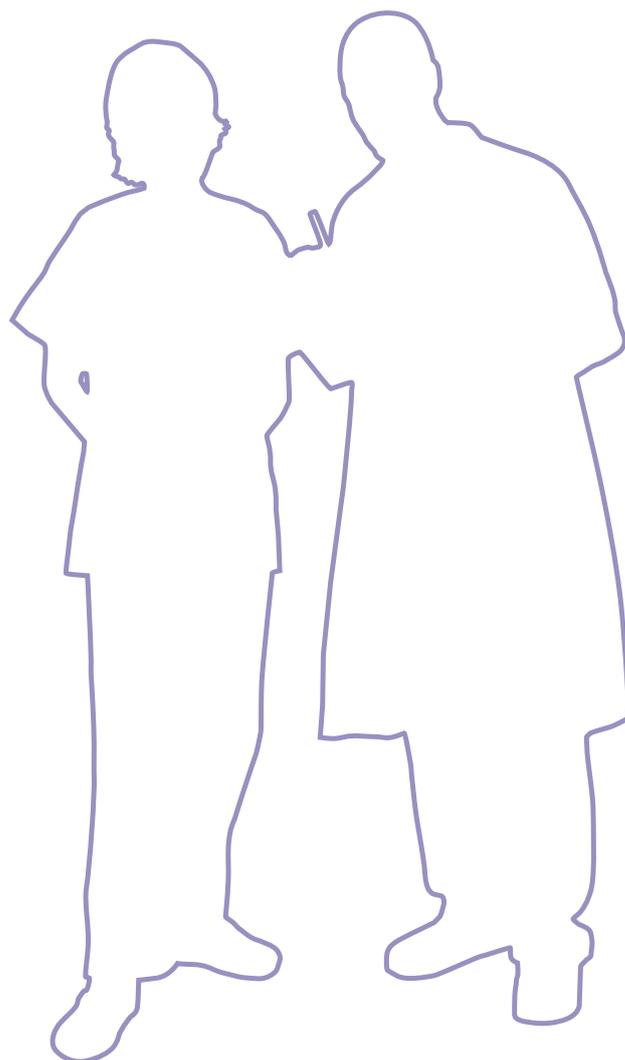
**John Rogers,**  
Chief Executive, Skills for Health

# Introduction

Welcome to Skills for Health's *Careers in Healthcare: A Guide to Working in Voluntary Organisations*, which has been produced for those who advise and guide people on career choices.

This document will show some of the opportunities for careers and development available in the voluntary sector, which has a key role to play in preventing ill health and helping people to maintain their wellbeing. It is part of Skills for Health's work to develop information for advisers on the whole health sector, and forms part of a suite of resources available at [www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/careersinformationandadvice](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/careersinformationandadvice)

Skills for Health wants to ensure that signposting is effective between the organisations involved in this area of work. This resource will help to inform advisers about some of the opportunities that exist. It also includes a short overview and some facts and figures about the voluntary sector.



## What is the voluntary sector?

The voluntary sector includes charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises – encompassing not for profit, community groups, and non governmental organisations. It is sometimes referred to as the third sector.

Their contribution to society was acknowledged by the coalition Government following the 2010 election. Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society, said:

“This Government values the economic and social contribution of Britain’s charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations, and the extraordinary work individual people do to improve the lives of others and of the most disadvantaged.

“It is the sector’s commitment and ability to support and mobilise people across the country that puts it at the very centre of our mission to deliver better public services and build the Big Society.”

Source: Cabinet Office press office May 2010

There is clearly a shift toward organisations such as mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises, and giving them greater involvement in the running of public services. Funds from dormant bank accounts will be used to establish a Big Society Bank, which will provide new finance for neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises and other non-governmental bodies<sup>1</sup>. The £100 million Transition Fund, announced in the comprehensive spending review of October 2010<sup>2</sup>, will be a new source of funding for third sector organisations in an increasingly tough economic climate.

### The role of voluntary organisations in the health sector

Voluntary organisations are focused on many different causes, such as social welfare, international development, public health and education. They have built a strong track record contributing to a society where people and communities work together more closely.<sup>3</sup>

Their activities occur across many aspects of healthcare delivery – from caring and campaigning for people groups, to community organisations that are helping to shift care closer to where people live. Areas of strength include mental health services, palliative and end of life care services, health and wellbeing interventions, and older people’s services. Countless organisations are there, working ‘at the sharp end’ to:

- Provide services – often that no-one else does
- Campaign – for a better world
- Tackle health inequalities and put in actions to counteract their effects
- Offer information and advice
- Provide counselling and advocacy
- Support people to reach their full potential
- Fund other groups or individuals – research, pilot projects, financial support.

<sup>1</sup> Cabinet Office, (2010) Building the Big Society, <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/407789/building-big-society.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news\\_releases/2010/101020-spendingreview.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/101020-spendingreview.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/407789/building-big-society.pdf>

## Skills in demand

Given their key role, voluntary organisations must have the relevant skills to continue developing a vibrant and effective sector. Recognising the variety of ways that these organisations interact, and in many cases are partnered with, public services, it's vital that they have the broad range of underpinning skills to support their activities – for example health advice, advocacy services, support services, public health delivery.

All of this requires an extensive range of skills and expertise. Voluntary organisations and social enterprises need to be flexible enough to fit the changing and diverse needs of the local communities they serve.

It's also important to have effective leadership in these organisations so they are well placed to work in partnership with other deliverers and partners across the public and private sector. With the increase in commissioning to the third sector, there is a pressing need for organisations to have the strategic skills to throw their hat into the ring and take part in commissioning.

It's clear then that there is a need for organisations to think strategically about how they recruit, train and develop people to keep them motivated and deliver to their full potential.

## Working across sectors

Another skills challenge faced by voluntary organisations is being driven by policy changes in healthcare. The shift in care from acute settings toward delivering health services closer to home in community settings is helping to drive through some of the biggest changes to the welfare state for decades.

With more commissioning of services from the voluntary sector, there are opportunities – both for organisations and individuals. For example, the sector's strong track record in drug and alcohol support services, and mental health services, underlines how the changes call for greater partnership working between health and third sector providers.

## Survive and thrive

As more organisations seek to explore ways of working in partnership, and in some cases sharing scarce resources in order to survive the economic downturn<sup>4</sup>, third sector organisations need their leadership and strategic planning skills to come to the fore.

There's also recognition that healthcare providers, whether independent, NHS or voluntary sector, have much to learn from each other. Indeed, according to the former Office of the Third Sector, now replaced by the Office of Civil Society, there is an argument that larger organisations should take the opportunity 'to move beyond traditional partnerships between business and a charity into bigger collaborations across the private, public and third sectors'<sup>5</sup>.

Accordingly, forward thinking third sector organisations need to position themselves correctly to take advantage of innovative partnerships, especially where this leads to joint bidding. This means looking at their workforce, so they have suitably skilled people to meet the health and social care needs of the community.

The case studies which appear further on in this document will illustrate how some organisations are tackling the challenges in order to secure the skilled workforce they need to underpin the provision of their services.

<sup>4</sup> Cabinet Office of the Third Sector (2009) Building Stronger Communities – Business and the third sector: Innovation in tough times

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, page 13.

## Facts and figures

According to the Skills for Health and NCVO Voluntary Sector Skills Survey:

- There are 668,000 paid employees in the voluntary sector, accounting for 2.3% of the UK workforce<sup>6</sup>
- The UK voluntary sector has grown by nearly 80,000 employees (14.9%) since 2000<sup>7</sup>
- Growth in the sector is linked to almost 20 years of public service delivery being contracted out by central and local government agencies to the sector
- In Wales and England, one-quarter of employers reported hard to fill vacancies within their organisation (27% and 24% respectively)
- In Scotland and Northern Ireland slightly less reported hard to fill vacancies (19% each)
- 66% of employers have an annual training and development budget
- 39% of voluntary sector employees are part-time and 69% are female
- Alongside the 668,000 paid employees in the UK, an estimated 17.1 million people volunteer formally once a month.

### Key challenges that voluntary sector employers are facing:

*Skills gaps are apparent across the sector... 3 in 10 employers report under skilled staff within their organisations*

*...particularly within specialist skills... for example, strategic use of IT, fundraising, marketing, legal knowledge, and within medium sized organisations, gaps in leadership*

*...and generic skills gaps... such as communication, partnership working, health and safety, team working*

*...with a detrimental impact on the organisation... leading to increased workload of other colleagues, and particularly for small employers resorting to using volunteers to cover the activities.*

Less of an issue is a lack of qualifications. Thirteen per cent of employers surveyed by Skills for Health and NVCO cited it as a reason for their hard to fill vacancies.

This is reflected in other research which confirms the large number of highly qualified voluntary sector employees. 1 in 3 of voluntary sector employees hold a degree or equivalent qualification and only 5% of voluntary sector employees have no qualifications at all.

Some of the difficulties around recruiting skilled staff are mirrored with challenges surrounding recruitment and management of volunteers. In recent research<sup>8</sup> which highlights the challenges for volunteer managers, 57% of organisations surveyed have difficulties recruiting volunteers with the right skills.

However, organisations which do manage to secure the services of highly skilled volunteers are adept at making the most of what they have to offer. There is evidence that some third sector organisations have a unique flexibility and ability to capitalise on using volunteers' range of skills – including their professional expertise – in the fullest sense.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> UK Workforce Almanac 2010, Skills-Third Sector, NCVO and Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC).

<sup>7</sup> Skills for Health and NCVO (2007) Voluntary Sector Skills Survey – England.

<sup>8</sup> Skills – Third Sector and Institute for Volunteering Research (2010) Valuing Volunteer Management Skills, Research Summary.

<sup>9</sup> See George House Trust case study in Skills for Health (2010) *Careers in Healthcare: A Guide to Volunteering in Healthcare Organisations*.

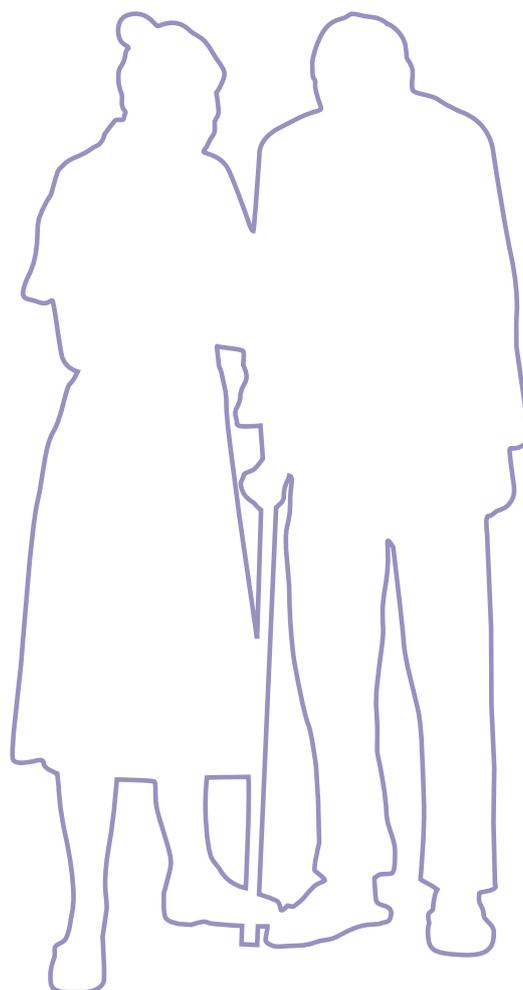
## Innovation that drives service improvements

Charities and social enterprises have the freedom of meeting patient needs and are able to develop innovation much more quickly – indeed, many have a strong track record in delivering change effectively, often against a backdrop of financial constraint. If this is indeed the case, with more partnership working between the public and third sector, we are on the threshold of an opportunity to drive further innovation into the public sector.

Given that much innovation comes from the third sector, without a lot of funding – the question to ask is ‘why?’ Perhaps it is that third sector organisations generally involve their users and beneficiaries to help them shape the way they work or deliver their services. They also recruit service users to their trustee boards, so that the service user directs and informs the work at both strategic and operational levels.

The third sector can be a very good place to begin an individual’s career or to develop it part way through. Skills which are in demand – communication, leadership, team working – are just as valuable to and transferable from the third sector to public sector, and vice versa. Plus the strengths of many third sector organisations – such as responsive and innovative ways of working – can benefit other organisations when staff move and take this learning and experience into the public sector. It presents a rich picture with great opportunities for both public and third sector to benefit either way.

**Janet Fleming,**  
Director of Knowledge Management,  
Skills – Third Sector



## Why choose to work in the voluntary sector?

There are many reasons people might choose to work in the voluntary sector. Often, it's the desire to work in a smaller organisation that affords the opportunity to 'see the change, make the change, and be the change'.

Recent figures from NCVO<sup>10</sup> indicate that in terms of the voluntary workforce:

- 32% of the workforce are in small workplaces with less than 10 people
- 54% work in organisations of less than 25 people
- Only 3% are in workplaces of more than 500

And the trends are good:

- Significant increase (25%) in paid jobs over last 10 years
- Part-time workers 39% (higher than other sectors)
- More temporary contracts in the sector (though 91% are permanent).

Given the plethora of smaller and medium sized organisations, many of which have a single issue focus, there may be greater scope for employees to have a more direct input into services, policy development and education. This appears to be backed up by anecdotal feedback in the case studies which follow.<sup>11</sup>



*"There is a greater immediacy working with MSF. In the field, the doctor to people ratio is much lower than we are used to in the UK. Being in environments such as a Sudanese treatment centre enabled me to have a bigger impact on saving lives."*

*Dr. Tejshri Shah, Head of the Manson (Medical) Unit of Médecins Sans Frontières UK*

*"I'm involved with working with children's services and older people's development, so forging links with partner organisations and raising awareness among policy makers is an important part of what I do."*

*Jim Lewis, Public Policy Assistant, Sense*

*"Action for Blind People is a caring organisation where you get a real chance to make things happen. Things are different when you work for a charity – it is hard work! People think it's all about a cup of tea and shaking a tin. But this is not a fluffy organisation. Action for Blind People does really good work – and that means being a strategic and forward thinking organisation."*

*Richard Tolson, Early Intervention Development Manager – Innovations and Projects, Action for Blind People*



<sup>10</sup> NCVO (2010) *Health Jobs in the Voluntary Sector*. Presentation by Elaine Smethurst at Skills for Health conference March 2010.

<sup>11</sup> See case studies on Action for Blind People, MSF and Sense.

# What type of health related roles are there?

## Benefits of working in the Voluntary Sector

As part of this report, Skills for Health commissioned a series of case studies with 15 organisations. Anecdotal evidence from the 31 interviews with participating organisations indicates that there are many benefits for individuals who work in the voluntary sector:

- Ability to improve things for a cause that is important to individuals
- Can be a flexible and fast moving environment
- Hands on culture driven by a need to 'get on with the job and get it done'
- A flatter management structure and less hierarchy
- Personal satisfaction, enjoy what you do
- Greater empowerment to make things happen.

Given that some charities come about to support the treatment of those affected with a disease e.g. The National Autistic Society, Diabetes UK, MS Society, Spinal Injuries Association among many others, such organisations afford a unique opportunity for individuals to work for a cause which is dear to them.

This reputation for a high degree of personal fulfilment is supported by other evidence<sup>12</sup> which indicates that job satisfaction is highest in the voluntary sector:

- 71% of voluntary sector workers are either satisfied or very satisfied with their job, compared with 64% in the private sector and 63% in the public sector
- 85% of voluntary sector workers felt they had control over the way they did their jobs, compared with 79% in the private sector and only 67% in the public sector
- 11% of voluntary sector workers said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, compared with 18% of private sector workers and 18% in the public sector.

There are many roles which are concentrated within frontline services. Examples include:

Help line manager	Training officer
Counsellor	Administrator
Information officer	Nutritionist
Family therapist	Community worker
Nurse practitioner – sexual health	Cancer awareness nurse
Health promotion advisor	Volunteer coordinator
Project worker – drug and alcohol	Bio-informatician
Policy analyst	Researcher

Source: NCVO Presentation (2010) *Health Jobs in the Voluntary Sector*

There are many other varied roles too within the voluntary sector e.g. fundraisers and campaigners, volunteering managers, employees involved in administration, research, IT support, finance, and those working in public health and patient voice organisations.

<sup>12</sup> Chartered Institute for personnel and Development Survey (2009) <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/careers/Article/925524/Job-satisfaction-highest-voluntary-sector/>

## What about education and training?

When it comes to people developing skills that are in demand in the third sector, flexibility, leadership, tenacity and being able to think in an innovative way are key. There are a range of sources of help for those looking to hone their clinical and non clinical skills.

[Skills – Third Sector](#) has a comprehensive section of information about qualifications and learning. Greater demand for recognised training and personal development is well supported through [National Occupational Standards](#) across a range of functions. In particular, those managing volunteers stand to benefit from accredited training and having access to national standards to which they and their organisations should be working<sup>13</sup>.

It's not just about training to manage volunteers though – there is also a need for fundraising, policy campaigning and for other expertise. In many organisations, clinical expertise is required, such as nursing, medicine, allied healthcare, management, support as well as a host of other skills.

Professional bodies can be a valuable source of education and training. For example VSO, RCN, RCM and Médecins Sans Frontières host events and produce resources that look at both volunteering and working overseas<sup>14</sup>.

Skills for Health is responsible for developing health related apprenticeships, which help employers reduce [skills gaps](#). Skills – Third Sector also has information on [apprenticeships](#). It is now developing apprenticeship frameworks for managers of volunteers, campaigners and for fundraisers, as all three are roles in third sector and public sector organisations. Many more charities in the third sector are recognising the value of apprenticeships in their organisations<sup>15</sup>. [Health, Public Service and Care](#) providers also offer opportunities to get a career off the ground.

The training for an expert patient is another excellent example where it's experience plus training that

counts<sup>16</sup>. In some organisations, it's the initial skills that can become a starting point for a career<sup>17</sup>.

For those looking to gain experience and a foothold in the sector, volunteering offers an ideal route<sup>18</sup>.

Various universities including the [Open University](#) offer a range of courses and training.

[UCAS](#) has information on a range of undergraduate courses which may lead to a career in the third sector. [Prospects](#) may be of value for those looking for postgraduate courses and information on opportunities in the voluntary and charity sectors.

The [Graduate Talent Pool](#) may have intern opportunities for those looking for charity experience. In Scotland, SCVO has details of [Third Sector Internships](#), a recently introduced four year scheme of graduate internships.

The [National Council for Voluntary Organisations](#) offers a wide array of training, events and lectures to help people add to their understanding and knowledge.

[Volunteer Development Scotland](#) has accredited awards in the management of volunteers, and the site also lists [introductory, intermediate and advanced](#) learning opportunities. The [Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations](#) also has a wide range of training courses.

[Wales Council for Voluntary Action](#) has a broad range of training events, including accredited training programmes and information on professional development for volunteer managers.

[Volunteer Now](#) lists upcoming training events across Northern Ireland, some of which are free.

[The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action](#) provides a variety of training sessions.

<sup>13</sup> Skills – Third Sector and Institute for Volunteering Research (2010) Valuing Volunteer Management Skills.

<sup>14</sup> Working with Humanitarian Organisations: a guide for nurses, midwives and healthcare professionals [http://www.rcn.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/78757/003156.pdf](http://www.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/78757/003156.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> See Beatbullying case study which details apprenticeship opportunities in Therapeutic Services, Volunteering, Finance and Fundraising Departments.

<sup>16</sup> Skills for Health (2010) Careers in Healthcare: A Guide to Volunteering in Healthcare Organisations.

<sup>17</sup> See St John Ambulance case study which shows how first aid volunteering can help to launch a career into nursing and paramedic services.

<sup>18</sup> See Sense case study which shows how a Public Policy Assistant gained valuable skills through volunteering which helped further his career progression.

To see how some examples of how education, training and development can impact a career in the third sector, whilst illustrating the range of opportunity, explore the following case studies:

Action for Blind People	QCF level 3 in Advice and Guidance
Altogether Better	Mental Health First Aid, Skills for Life
Beatbullying	Apprenticeships, Internship programme, volunteer management
Help the Hospices	Masters in Hospice Leadership, Diploma in Childhood Bereavement
Médecins Sans Frontières	Global public health, coaching and management skills
Rethink	Mental health awareness, Talent Management Programme
Scope	QCF qualifications in Health and Social Care, management
Sense	Clinical skills, Understanding Rubella, Project Management, policy campaigning
St Ann's Hospice	Clinical skills, end of life care practice development
St John Ambulance	First Aid, Community First Response, Emergency Transport attendance, Leadership skills
St Wilfrid's Hospice	Back to Nursing programme, Diploma or Degree in Palliative Care
The British School of Osteopathy	Master of Osteopathy
The National Autistic Society	QCF qualifications, Postgraduate Certificate in Asperger syndrome



\* All vocational qualifications are grouped together in different levels on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). The level shows how difficult the qualification is from entry level to level 8. Scottish qualifications are on the [SCQF](#)

## Where next – looking for employment

For those considering working in the voluntary sector, it may be useful to think through a range of options which will help to guide their search:

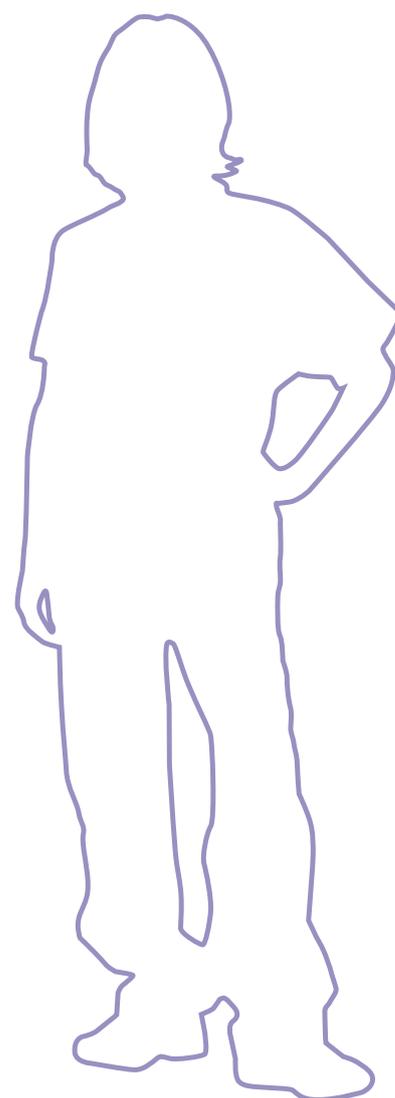
- Culture / management style / size of organisation
- Location – UK or international?
- Medical condition / cause
- Professional development
- Salary and status.

Useful sources for initial job searches include:

- Asian Post
- Charity trade press: Third Sector, Professional Fundraising, Engage magazine
- Evening Standard and Metro
- Local and regional papers
- National newspapers e.g. The Guardian
- Professional press: Marketing Week, TES, Health Service Journal, Community Care, Your Voice, Third Sector
- The Voice
- Websites, including online newspapers such as Guardian Online and Timesonline.

Prospective employees could also monitor organisations' own newsletters, as well as visit careers fairs and exhibitions. And of course, not forgetting word of mouth. Networking can be a powerful way for people to find their next role.

More suggestions can be found in the links to further information section at the end of this guide.



# Case studies

Read on to find out what people say about their work  
in voluntary organisations:

“

“exciting career opportunities”

“innovative”

“charities are dynamic and radical”

“remarkable people”

“passionate about what we do”

“creative in delivering solutions”

“empowering”

“a sense of joy”

”

## Action for Blind People – inspiring change and creating opportunity



In the UK, every 15 minutes someone will start to lose their sight. And over 90% of older visually impaired people live on less than half the national average income – a widely accepted definition of poverty. Action for Blind People is the friendly, multi-award winning charity that is helping to tackle the challenges and supporting people with visual impairment to make the transition to an adapted way of living.

Richard Tolson, Early Intervention Development Manager – Innovations and Projects, explains why many people choose to work with the charity:

*“Action for Blind*

*People is a caring organisation where you get a real chance to make things happen. Things are different when you work for a charity – it is hard work! People think it’s all about a cup of tea and shaking a tin. But this is not a fluffy organisation. Action for Blind People does really good work – and that means being a strategic and forward thinking organisation.”*

Glen Walker is Head of HR and he picks up the theme of the charity’s informal, yet empowering, approach to effective working:

*“Action for Blind People is a flexible, fast moving and hands on culture to work in. People know they need to get on with the job and get it done. We have a flat management structure so if we want to get on with something we can get agreement from the Senior Team and get on with things quickly – so there are no hoops to jump through.”*

### A dynamic working environment

The charity, which is part of the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Group, has pinpointed where there are gaps in provision and designed services to meet people’s needs. Liaising with clinical and healthcare professionals, the charity works hard to prevent people from slipping through the net when they are diagnosed. By acting as a bridge between medical/clinical input and social and welfare providers, staff help to raise awareness among a wide variety of groups, such as GPs, healthcare assistants, service commissioners, as well as the service users themselves.

Services include independent living advice and personal assessment; employment support; help with information technology; children, young people and families services; supported housing; resource centres; a mobile sight loss information service and four hotels in England.

The charity also takes a positive approach to supporting people to reach their full potential, including its own employees. Around 700 people work for the charity, a small number in health related roles such as Eye Clinic Liaison Officer and Activity Coordinator. Many others are employed in front line roles in their Action Teams, guiding people with their choices around employment, housing, welfare rights and assistive technology.

## CASE STUDY: Action for Blind People



Workforce development is a major priority for the organisation, with a six month long induction period, opportunities for work shadowing, and a buddying scheme for new recruits. The charity has also been awarded with the Investors in People Silver. A well structured training programme comprises:

**General** – Health and Safety, Protection of Vulnerable Adults, Equality and Diversity

**Management** – for those who want to move into management and leadership roles

**Advice and Guidance** – QCF 3 for all frontline staff. Action for Blind People is a holder of the **matrix** Standard

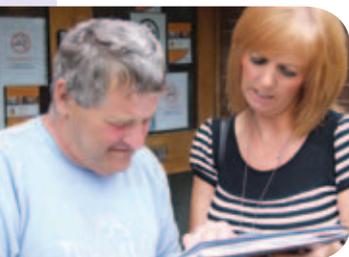
**Individual Learning** – if related to an individual's role e.g. Eye Clinic Liaison Officers complete RNIB training

**Learning loans** – up to £2500 if staff want to learn outside the workplace, in order to progress their career in a different direction

**Career Progression** – opportunities to work across other parts of the organisation i.e. RNIB

Equally important are people's customer facing skills:

*“Our recruits need to be customer focused and have good people skills. That's why we have service users on our interview panels. This started two years ago, and it has worked really well, since service users often ask the sort of questions that others might not.”*  
Glen Walker, Head of HR



### Former NHS nursing auxiliary retrains and finds her ideal role

The charity's workforce development approach has created an environment where staff feel encouraged to fulfil their potential. One staff member Maria Pikulski is an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO), one of 28 people working across England, some in community settings, some in hospital settings, as part of NHS ophthalmology teams.

Maria provides support and assistance at the point of diagnosis in the Eye Clinic at St Helen's Hospital in Merseyside. Before taking up her post, she worked as a nursing auxiliary in the NHS. However, failing eyesight meant she was unable to continue to working in her role. Maria initially joined Action for Blind People in 2007 as an administrator, but soon realised the role was not making the most of what she had to offer, as she explains:

*“I realised I wanted something that was more sociable as a job, and when I found out about the ECLO post, it seemed ideal.”*

With the help of 'workstep' funding, Maria completed the ECLO training, which is a RNIB certificate module. One month after gaining her qualification, she began her ECLO post in November.

*“I found so much support when I joined Action for Blind People, and it's really paying off. They all made me feel part of the team. In my role it's about getting out there, which I really enjoy, meeting the patients, nurses, consultants and everyone else at the clinic. The feedback I've had shows that without this type of support, many people wouldn't get the right information and could fall through the cracks. The role is so rewarding – I had one person I'd helped with the rehabilitation team ring me up saying how grateful he was for the support he received from Action for Blind People.”*

To find out more visit [www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk](http://www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk)

## Altogether Better – helping people to tackle health inequalities



Health issues can occur in charities that at first appear to have little link to the health agenda. An individual can be on the periphery of health care, but their role can mean that they have to have a holistic view of the people they are working with. All sorts of people can have an impact on health, even if they are not directly employed in a health related role.

Taking an Altogether Better Mental Health First Aid course enabled Mandy Torbitt to help a woman deal with shock after witnessing a suicide.

*Images: copyright Simon Vine Photography*

Mandy is the Skills for Life manager at the Swarthmore Centre, a voluntary organisation in Leeds that offers part-time educational opportunities for people who want to learn but might not feel comfortable in more formal educational institutions. In her role, which often calls on her listening and communications skills, she is used to working with all kinds of people including those with mental health problems:

*"I run courses in maths, English, ESOL and sign language. There's also a programme for people with learning difficulties and another for young people excluded from school."*

*"We get people from all sorts of backgrounds – a lot have had a variety of mental health problems. We try to help all of them to move on."*

Having previously studied emergency first aid, Mandy decided to add to her skills and take a course in Mental Health First Aid. Mandy tends to be the person who is called upon to deal with difficult situations, so she saw that a better understanding of mental health issues might be helpful in her role.

She was soon enrolled onto the Yorkshire and Humber Mental Health First Aid course, one of 16 flagship projects from the regions' Altogether Better Programme, which is hosted through NHS Yorkshire and Humber, which in 2008 was awarded £6.8m from the Big Lottery Well-being Fund to run its innovative, five year programme in Yorkshire and the Humber. The organisation delivering the Yorkshire and Humber Mental Health First Aid project which Mandy attended is Community Links, an award winning provider of mental health services in the region.

It wasn't long before the Skills for Life manager needed to put her learning into practice. Shortly after taking the two day course in Mental Health First Aid, Mandy helped a woman deal with shock following a suicide:

*"A woman had just witnessed a man tying a rope around his neck and jumping off a motorway bridge near where I work. I approached her and asked if she was OK. She was babbling and in shock but I listened to what she was saying. I just wanted to make sure she was safe."*

*"Drawing on my training I spoke really clearly to her, took her to my workplace and asked if she'd got anyone at home she could share her experience with. Then I explained that the situation could cause her problems later on and if that happened, she should seek help from a doctor."*

## CASE STUDY: Altogether Better



Mandy was able to use what she had learned during the course when she, alongside other other participants, spent time talking, listening and sharing experiences in a supportive atmosphere. The result was that many misapprehensions about psychosis, schizophrenia and depression were dispelled.

Attending the Mental Health First Aid course had given Mandy the skills and confidence to be able to recognise what was happening, and respond appropriately. She had learnt about the importance of taking care of emotional well being as well as learning practical skills – the do's and don'ts of responding to another's distress:

*“What the course taught me is that mental health belongs to each individual. If someone's having a difficulty with something, there's no point denying it. You support them to help themselves. You might feel very sorry for them but it's more important for you to be a rock to help them move on.”*

Mandy, Skills for Life manager at the Swarthmore Centre

The course has also helped Mandy to deal with a friend's depression and to be able to suggest alternative and healthy ways of coping. Relationships at work have improved too:

*“People are very interested in mental well-being now. They've realised that you need to know the whole person, including the issues affecting them outside work. We have 2,000 people every year coming through our door and if you can't get to know every one of them, you can at least make sure they are heard.”*

Mandy, Skills for Life manager at the Swarthmore Centre

**2,000**

people every year come through the door at Swarthmore Centre

**7,000**

community and workplace health champions have been recruited, trained and supported

Mandy's experience is just one example of someone who has added to her skills to gain a greater insight into a broad range of mental health issues and how they impact on individuals. It also shows what can be achieved by taking a partnership approach, with people and organisations working together to address health inequalities. It underlines the purpose of the Altogether Better programme which is to address these inequalities by empowering communities to help themselves – already over 7,000 community and workplace health champions have been recruited, trained and supported, who it is estimated have the potential to reach a further 43,000 people through their networks of family, friends and colleagues.

To find out more about the Swarthmore Centre visit [www.swarthmore.org.uk](http://www.swarthmore.org.uk)

To find out more about Altogether Better programmes visit [www.altogetherbetter.org.uk](http://www.altogetherbetter.org.uk)

For more about Mental Health First Aid visit [www.mentalhealthfirstaidyorksandhumber.org/](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaidyorksandhumber.org/)

## Beatbullying – shaping attitudes and changing behaviours



Beatbullying works with children and young people across the UK, encouraging them to make positive and lasting changes to their lives and outlook. The charity works intensively with those deeply affected by bullying, and focuses on children who are finding it difficult to face school on a day to day basis.

Over the past five years, more than 900,000 individuals have been helped through the charity's activities in schools and communities across the UK to re-educate and change the behaviour of children and young people that bully. It aims to prevent bullying by making changes in attitude among those involved in bullying, working with them to take responsibility and a sense of ownership over their actions, building foundations for change and improvement in their life chances and opportunities.

Beatbullying, staffed by 90 full and part-time employees supported by over 3,500 digital volunteers, offers a range of programmes which have peer mentoring and peer activism at their heart. There are a range of therapeutic services for young people, including online and offline counselling and cyber mentoring by peers/kids/mentors their own age. Through a comprehensive range of services, young people are able to access support on issues as diverse as mental health, physical well being and sexual health programmes that tackle sexual bullying.

### Volunteering paves a route to a rewarding career

Chlöe Morton, Beatbullying's Therapeutic Services Manager, explains how she came to join the UK's leading bullying prevention charity:

*"I started working with Beatbullying as a volunteer because I believe in what the charity stands for; creating a world where bullying, violence and harassment are unacceptable. I've always been passionate about helping people and being able to reach so many young people through a medium they are so familiar with, seemed innovative and such a force for good. After some time I was recruited into Beatbullying and now work in my full-time position as Therapeutic Services Manager."*

Prior to working at Beatbullying, Chlöe volunteered with other organisations and charities such as The Samaritans and a self harm support website called RecoverYourLife.com. Having completed her degree in Psychology, she went on to lecture in Psychology before moving to work with Beatbullying.



Images: All images are used with permission of Beatbullying

## CASE STUDY: Beatbullying

### Improving services for young people

The Therapeutic Services Team works across all programmes, with a particular focus on the provision of therapeutic outlets by refining and developing new programmes to support young people who are being bullied, or otherwise feeling in need of support.

Chlöe is particularly proud of how the online communication strategy has enabled Beatbullying to engage more deeply with those using the charity's services:

*"Beatbullying offers a number of services and through a medium that young people now engage with – online. As such, we can reach thousands of young people across the country and even further afield. We have even gained comments on our YouTube channel from as far afield as Cairo and Kenya. We also have users on our CyberMentors.org.uk site that are from Canada, Australia and America to name a few."*

The Therapeutic Services Team is made up of 46 people, comprising full time staff and an extended team of sessional and volunteer online counsellors. This includes:

- Team of online moderators who work on a rota basis to humanly moderate the website, making sure that pre-approved content is checked and that real time chat is a safe environment. They also signpost new users around the site
- Team of online counsellors who offer therapeutic intervention on rota basis. This can be mentoring or contracted counselling as well as highlighting any Child Protection cases
- Full time staff:
  - Work on their designated platform which is either MiniMentors, ReSync, CyberMentors
  - Support online staff
  - Offer mentoring, counselling and supervision to site users
  - Are involved in the planning and development of existing and new programmes
  - Are Child Protection officers within the charity – ensuring policies and training are up to date.

### Training and development underpinning an award winning service

During the past five years, the charity has won a string of awards in categories such as Best Communications Campaign (2010), Making The Internet Safer (2010), Best Use of Digital Media (2009), and Charity Principal of the Year (2009).

Whilst the charity has been gaining national recognition for its achievements, it understands that all staff need to

continually update their skills so that they can offer the best possible services to young people and children, as Chloe explains:

*"I see every day as an opportunity for personal development and reaching out to young people calls for continued self improvement. Since being here I have taken part in basic child protection awareness training as well as designated child protection officer training, as well as internal training on new technologies to engage the young people. I have also taken part in training days around specific issues such as self-harm. When the opportunity arises and if beneficial to the service we provide, we are supported in undertaking training and development."*

### Investing in fairness, equality and the long-term future of staff

Many Beatbullying staff have joined the charity simply by sending in their CV. In addition, the charity is keen to develop its long term investment in staff and succession planning by recruiting young apprentices, aged 16 to 24 years. Apprenticeships with Beatbullying last one to three years and lead to a recognised qualification.

Emma-Jane Cross, CEO of Beatbullying, recognises the value of recruiting young people in this way:

*"As a result of their training, our apprentices tend to be highly motivated and eager to learn and develop further. The investment and the responsibility given to them makes them feel valued and they end up highly skilled, therefore easier to retain and contribute in the long term."*

Apprenticeships are offered in a range of departments, such as Therapeutic Services, Volunteering, Finance and Fundraising. For each one, the job will be matched with a suitable apprenticeship training qualification such as Youth Work, New Media or Accountancy.

There are also opportunities for young people to join its internship programme, enabling recruits to gain invaluable skills, experience and knowledge of the charity sector. Internship placements last typically three months, and are an effective way for students, recent graduates or those looking for a change of job, to gain an overall view of the organisation.

Volunteering provides another exciting and rewarding route into Beatbullying. The charity's volunteers are a vital part of the team, and most opportunities are for online mentoring roles such as CyberMentors and ReSync Mentors. Digital Volunteering positions are flexible opportunities which offer a great first step into volunteering and the sector.

To find out more visit [www.beatbullying.org/](http://www.beatbullying.org/)

## Brain Tumour UK – committed to fighting brain tumours



While Brain Tumour UK may be small in size when it comes to staff numbers, the charity punches well above its weight in terms of impact on services, research, information and support for anyone affected by a brain tumour.

“We are a small organisation with a large vision: a future free from the fear of brain tumours. Our role is to deliver the best service we can sustainably,” explains Moira Dennison, Brain Tumour UK’s Head of Support Services.

The work of the charity focuses on three key areas: providing support, funding research and raising awareness. It is estimated that 16,000 people a year are diagnosed with a primary brain tumour and up to another 32,000 may be affected by a secondary brain tumour.

Since it was formed in 1997, Brain Tumour UK has funded several major research projects into the effects of brain tumour disease, hosted patient conferences and provided support to thousands of people affected by brain tumours.

### Research, awareness and support

Brain Tumour UK funds a wide range of research into brain tumours across the UK. With the support of thousands of generous donors and fundraisers, Brain Tumour UK funds world-class scientific research to improve the quality of life for brain tumour patients, identify better treatments and, ultimately, defeat the disease.

The growing research programme aims to help everyone affected by a brain tumour. It includes research into:

- childhood brain tumours;
- high grade brain tumours;
- low grade brain tumours;
- benign brain tumours; and
- the rehabilitation and care of anyone affected by a brain tumour.

Brain Tumour UK works closely with patients, carers, healthcare professionals, scientists and related organisations to raise awareness amongst key decision-makers, service providers and the wider public, to change things for the better for everyone affected by a brain tumour.

Looking at support the charity provides:

- A range of psychosocial services for anyone affected by a brain tumour
- A helpline which runs Monday to Friday 10am -1pm and 2pm -5pm
- Telephone support groups (Phone Pals) and a new service – Phone Pals Plus which explores topics such as epilepsy, depression and inoperable tumours
- Social networking on Facebook and Twitter
- Email, webmail and letter support
- A growing network of support groups across the country
- Information on line and in print on a range of issues
- An annual two day conference bringing together patients and key players in the neuroscience field.

Moira is enthusiastic about the way the charity is forging ahead with innovative ways of providing services to clients:

*“What Brain Tumour UK does can be summed up very neatly as follows – innovation and opportunism.”*

## CASE STUDY: Brain Tumour UK

Brain Tumour UK's services are driven by patient need, and keeping on top of what people present with on a day to day basis is a challenge:

*"There is no single 'type' of individual who comes to Brain Tumour UK for help, but the majority will be dealing with uncertainty. There are those with benign, inoperable or malignant tumours and so we have to cover all kinds of issues.*

*"We also support palliative care, to support people to find the end of life care they want, which is why we are part of the Dying Matters Coalition. If anyone is affected by a brain tumour, they can talk to us – our service does not cut off at any stage. We give people the space to explore the uncertainty in a supported environment."*

Some people want face to face support, others prefer a more hands off approach which is why the charity has put in a lot of effort to create a range of different ways of delivering services. Interacting via online applications such as Facebook or Twitter may suit some; others prefer the support of a phone call or an email. Whatever the form of interactivity, getting services right is a key driver for the organisation, as well as helping to educate people about brain tumour disease, as Moira explains:

*"Our aim is to raise awareness, working towards better understanding of brain tumours and further the cause through research. For example, there needs to be a better registration of the rates of primary and secondary brain tumours."*

Since rarer tumours are often under resourced in research, the charity is working closely with stakeholders to reverse the situation, which also has an impact of improving drug treatments, and therefore achieving better quality of services for patients.

### A sector where individuals can innovate

One of the advantages of working in the charitable sector is that there are plenty of opportunities for people to capitalise on previous experience and to bring transferable skills, as Moira has found with her career path:

*"I started out in the voluntary sector in the early 1980s having left school with O levels and then worked briefly before doing an intensive A level course. Initially I worked in PR, press and campaigns and then moved on to gain direct client access. From then on I moved into management. I returned to formal education 10 years*

*ago, completing a CMS, followed by a DMS at Birkbeck, University of London."*

Working for a charity is extremely rewarding, and Moira has been able to use a wealth of charitable sector experience for her new role at Brain Tumour UK. Before joining the organisation in 2009, she developed regional services for Breast Cancer Care, and had also run a small charity supporting people with life-limiting illnesses.

Gaining a foothold in the sector can seem daunting to those who are starting out, but as Moira explains, there are ways around this:

*"People need experience of the sector, so gaining experience in volunteering is hugely important. How a charity treats its volunteers is also indicative of how it treats staff, so people should treat their volunteer experiences as a barometer."*

A common entry point for gaining paid work in the charity sector is as a fundraiser. At the more senior level, for example in Moira's situation, having a good understanding of the broad issues e.g. health, living with life limiting or long term conditions, is important, as well as having a skills match and being clear on what you can bring to the organisation.

Once employed in the sector, there are often good opportunities for furthering a career:

*"Ours is not a fluffy sector, it's a fast paced environment, where you need to have quick reactions, and good people and communication skills."*

Charities are always looking for recruits with the right temperament and personality to develop credible and sustainable relationships with all sorts of people:

*"You don't know who will be on the end of the phone – it could be a parent of a child newly diagnosed with an inoperable tumour, or a fundraiser, or a fund holder. So you need the understanding to quickly assess the situation and skills to engage, whilst understanding your own limits.*

*"Be flexible in your attitude as well as the way you are prepared to work. If you can do this, and you have energy and enthusiasm with that belief in the morning that what you will do will make a difference, in terms of rewards, it's astonishing what you can achieve in the voluntary sector."*

For more information visit [www.braintumouruk.org.uk](http://www.braintumouruk.org.uk)

## Groundwork Cheshire helps to grow healthy communities



Groundwork Cheshire works with communities in need, aiming to improve people's health and quality of life by engaging individuals in the spaces around them. The charity has built a successful track record working with local partners and the local community in creating or enjoying outdoor spaces where people can play, meet others or even just work with nature. Through such partnerships, Groundwork Cheshire believes that participants' mental health and physical wellbeing can be improved and in turn acting as a catalyst for stronger communities. Charities such as Groundwork Cheshire illustrate how third sector organisations, seemingly unconnected with health, can contribute to healthier communities by their holistic approach.

The charity recognises the benefits of a healthier lifestyle and increased exercise within local communities. Innovative, imaginative projects have made a significant impact on people's way of life – from food-growing and fitness projects, to the building of BMX tracks and skate parks, and the creation of play areas. Areas suffering significant health inequalities are often the focus of Groundwork Cheshire's projects, and the results have been tangible.

### Bringing local people into employment

James Kerr, Groundwork Cheshire project manager, has been involved in the focus on communities living in fuel poverty, particularly on households that pay more than 10% of their income on fuel bills. James helped develop the Green Doctor programme in Cheshire which helps homes decrease their energy use, primarily by installing free energy light bulbs, reflector panels for radiators, fixing any draughty doors and windows, and by giving fuel-efficiency advice, preparing the poorest households for winter. James explains how two local unemployed people have been given opportunities through the programme:

*"We have seen these individuals recruited onto the Green Doctor programme really develop, and their confidence in the workplace has increased. Groundwork interviews, trains and seeks to retain wherever possible. When people move on, we send them out into the world of work with more training and skills under their belt."*

James is also project manager of Out-and-About, a Big Lottery funded project which is part of the Target: Wellbeing programme, which seeks to raise community activity levels and healthier lifestyles through cycling, walking, as well as through use of local parks in Ellesmere Port. The project involves collaborating with local schools to give cycle training to school pupils in years five and six, as well as putting on family cycle rides over the summer and working with groups to engage local young people. James says:

*"Our youth activity programme involves taking children to places they haven't been before, providing a digital camera to take pictures for a photo safari, giving them a map and clues for a treasure hunt over a two mile route. The result is that we see children invigorated with a love of the outdoors – something we hope will last for life. At the same time they have also increased their physical and mental wellbeing – which is ultimately what the project is all about."*

## CASE STUDY: Groundwork Cheshire



### An effective intergenerational theme

Groundwork Cheshire doesn't just look at the young when it comes to improving access to community-led opportunity, however. Recent developments include the creation of a Community Garden, where older volunteers work alongside long-term unemployed and young people at risk of social exclusion. Food grown in the Community Garden is shared between participants, encouraging greater awareness of the benefits of eating healthily – not to mention a tasty reward for the physical exertion of tending a garden!

Beth Brockett, another project manager at Groundwork Cheshire, explains how the Community Garden demonstrates how an unloved piece of neglected land can be revitalised with the aid of volunteers from the local community, in a project that links school students, local college students and retired volunteers. The result is both a beautiful garden and rejuvenated individuals feeling engaged in their local community, knowing that they have made a contribution:

*"We look at the physical wellbeing of volunteers – some want to get fitter, some have suffered from depression, some have been unemployed for a while and some of the elderly and retired want to come out of social isolation. We've worked with Age Concern Cheshire as well as the local high school, engaging youth in danger of social exclusion."*

This might seem a wide remit, but Beth says that the partnerships with local organisations and groups helped to foster the highly successful intergenerational project. Careful coordination with the local council and Stepping Stones and other local groups, as well as working alongside a mental health professional who works for Chester Council and Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT has helped to contribute to the project's success:

*"We've worked closely to bring about healthier and stronger communities, and it doesn't get much better than that."*

Beth Brockett,  
Project manager at Groundwork Cheshire

### Valuing employees and volunteers alike

The charity's approach to recruitment is as enthusiastic as its approach to its projects. Beth has been able to draw on her experience as an academic researcher to analyse Groundwork Cheshire's projects, helping to inform future strategies. However, she is quick to point out that Groundwork Cheshire recruits staff from a wide variety of backgrounds:

*"Charitable and voluntary organisations are very open to people with different skill sets and backgrounds. In the case of Groundwork Cheshire, we've been able to capitalise on this, expand in new directions, and capture people's experience that is really valuable."*

Beth also says that volunteering can be a route into a career with third sector organisations such as Groundwork Cheshire, as she has seen from her own experiences of working with volunteers:

*"If you volunteer – even for one day a week – that puts you in a position with some responsibility. If you are volunteering to improve your career prospects, it is helpful to volunteer with an organisation that helps you progress, so you can put your experience onto a CV. Badly managed volunteers soon give up volunteering so it is important that organisations think carefully about how they will manage their volunteers. Managing volunteers and line managing staff require some different skills and because we know at Groundwork Cheshire how invaluable volunteer contributions are, we manage them very carefully."*

To find out more about Groundwork Cheshire visit <http://cheshire.groundworknw.org.uk/>

## Help the Hospices – adding life to days



Help the Hospices was set up 25 years ago to support hospice care across the UK. Today it is a membership organisation with 186 full members, all of which are independent local charitable hospices. There are also 29 associate members, which are hospices where the clinical service is managed by the NHS but often have charities which provide financial support to them.

### Did you know?

- Most hospice care takes place in people's own homes
- Hospices care for families and friends too
- All the care people receive is free of charge
- Hospices have to raise £1m each day just to keep going.



As an advocacy organisation, Help the Hospices seeks to influence policy and education, to help make sure that hospices offer the best care for people facing the end of life and those needing palliative care. The charity has a strong UK focus and an active international programme so that anyone living with a life-limiting illness, wherever they live, can have access to quality, affordable care.

In the UK, the charity offers services to support hospice and palliative care professionals as they support their patients. These services include:

- The hospice information service, providing information and advice to the public and those working in hospices
- Championing the cause of hospice care in government, in the NHS and regulating bodies, and amongst the public
- Influencing policy and debate around end of life and palliative care
- Opportunities for professional development through education and training courses
- Supporting individuals and hospices through grants
- Sharing good practice through quality and standards, and developing innovative services.

## CASE STUDY: Help the Hospices



George Bell is Help the Hospices' Head of Education, and he explains how the charity aims to become a leader supporting education and workforce development for the sector:

*"One of our main aims is to support the development of the hospice sector workforce. Whether this is someone starting out on a career as a care assistant or volunteer or more experienced practitioners or managers who want to develop their leadership and management skills, we aim to offer a range of conferences, courses and qualifications that support the development of skills, competence, understanding and expertise."*

According to the Head of Education, the hospice movement is at an exciting juncture, as it explores different ways of bringing people into the hospice workforce, which numbers over 10,000. The challenge is meeting the needs of a very diverse workforce, made up of nurses, doctors, allied health professionals, social workers, palliative care managers, chaplains and volunteers.

*"There are increasing opportunities to enter the hospice workforce through vocational routes such as apprenticeships and national vocational qualifications. This opens up new routes for those who may decide to enter the workforce as a result of their volunteering experience. We know this is a valuable potential workforce as there are approximately 100,000 people who volunteer in local hospices and in the UK."*

### Increasing people's knowledge and skills

Help the Hospices can help people to access learning and education through its grants programme, and in 2008/09 it awarded 1,200 professional development grants so that hospice staff had the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills by attending courses, conferences and study days.

The charity also supports the development of good leadership in hospices, which it views as essential for future growth and success. For example it is helping to develop the next generation of hospice leaders by supporting more people to undertake a Masters in Hospice Leadership in partnership with Lancaster University. Others have been able to develop their personal learning and careers through accredited courses such as diploma and post graduate certificates in childhood bereavement and working with bereaved adults.

With a population increasingly affected by long term conditions in the UK, having a suitably equipped hospice workforce with a proactive view of end of life care is vital so that people receive the care they wish for:

*"Help the Hospices aims to be at the forefront in making sure this happens. The people who work in hospices, and the thousands of volunteers who help alongside them, bring a sense of hope and care and normality to the people who use their services. Help the Hospices is a great partner in this work, because we can help staff take their ideas for developing new styles of care and put them into practice."*

George Bell,  
Head of Education at Help the Hospices

To find out more visit [www.helpthehospices.org.uk](http://www.helpthehospices.org.uk) or call 0207 520 8200

# Médecins Sans Frontières – saving lives among populations in danger



Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent humanitarian medical aid organisation which operates in over 60 countries. It provides life-saving medical and technical assistance to people living in areas of conflict – countries where many have been displaced by war, and where the medical facilities are inadequate. It was founded in 1971 by doctors and journalists, and is now a worldwide operation with offices in 19 countries.



MSF recruits medical, paramedical and support staff in a wide range of roles such as:

- Midwife
- Medical doctor
- Medical coordinator
- Logistician
- Nutritionist
- Pharmacist
- Nurse
- Mental health
- Biomedical scientist
- Anaesthetist
- Surgeon
- Epidemiologist

MSF also recruits people with a non-medical background to fill a variety of support and coordinator roles.



## A personal perspective on humanitarian healthcare

Dr. Tejshri Shah is MSF's Head of the Manson (Medical) Unit of MSF UK which is focussing on the implementation of TB (TB/HIV and drug resistant TB) as well as supporting the field with decision-making utilising epidemiology.

Dr. Shah spent 10 years working as a physician, field and medical coordinator with MSF and she explains why she chose to take her career in this direction:

*“ There is a greater immediacy working with MSF. In the field, the doctor to people ratio is much lower than we are used to in the UK. Being in environments such as a Sudanese treatment centre enabled me to have a bigger impact on saving lives.*

*Field work is an incredibly satisfying job, and a real privilege. With many patients, you see that relatively simple interventions can save or make a radical improvement to their life.* ”

*Dr. Shah, Head of the Manson (Medical) Unit, MSF UK*

*Top image: © Alice Davies / MSF, Ethiopia, 2008. Middle image: © Juan Carlos Tomasi / MSF, Bangladesh, 2009. Bottom image: © Mads Nissen, Colombia, 2010.*

## CASE STUDY: Médecins Sans Frontières



Dr. Shah has recently decided to return to clinical practice in the NHS, where she started her career in 1994. Although she could have explored an NHS public health role having gained an MSc in Public Health in 2005, she decided to go back to her original interest in clinical paediatrics:

*"I love the patient contact so I plan to resume my career in Paediatrics in the NHS. I am coming back into NHS after a long time, and I hope that my experience of clinical work abroad, exposure to global public health as well as coaching and management skills will enhance my contribution to an effective clinical team."*



Dr. Shah exemplifies how many medical and healthcare professionals make the transition from NHS to charity based organisations, and then back again. It's this flexibility which enables organisations like MSF to benefit from valuable skills and expertise, and Dr. Shah would encourage others to take a wider perspective of career progression as she has:

*"You don't have to map everything out when you are in your twenties. The beauty of life is that you can take a new direction. Change should be embraced, so you shouldn't feel you must follow a particular route. Do what you feel will make you happy at the time, so if that involves a career break and going with MSF abroad, go for it! You only have one life."*

### Valuing a wide range of skills

Hundreds of people like Dr. Shah have pursued rewarding careers in MSF. The medical humanitarian charity is keen to retain talent long term especially with greater movement of personnel around and between the sectors.



Top image: © MSF, Sri Lanka, 2009. Middle image: © Tristan Pfund / MSF, Haiti, 2010. Bottom image: © Bruno de Cock / MSF, Armenia, 2010

A proactive staff development programme is helping the organisation to develop and nurture people's skills. It is also exploring accreditation of training in the field, which will lead to better recognition of doctors' time spent outside the UK. Another innovation is a recent collaboration with the NHS so renal specialists can be released for a week long stint to treat victims with crush injuries in the immediate aftermath of an earthquake.

Katherine Galliano is MSF UK's Head of Human Resources, and she explains how the agency values a wide range of skills and qualities:

*"Currently MSF needs foreign language speakers, particularly French, Spanish and Arabic, but this does change. We recruit resilient people able to cope with living in isolation and in stressful environments. People in the field understand that they will witness a lot of suffering, so they must be able work in very difficult conditions, possess strong management skills, and have the ability to lead and work with multi disciplinary teams."*

Although field staff live and work in challenging environments, this also provides the perfect opportunity for personal growth – both learning and career wise, as Katherine Galliano concludes:

*"Many of our medical and paramedical staff return to the NHS, or take their skills to other organisations. The nurses who work with MSF see a much bigger picture of healthcare provision in the field. They might manage a hospital and will be given much more responsibility than they would on a ward at home. It's not unusual for them to return to the UK, complete a masters in public health and progress into other very interesting roles."*

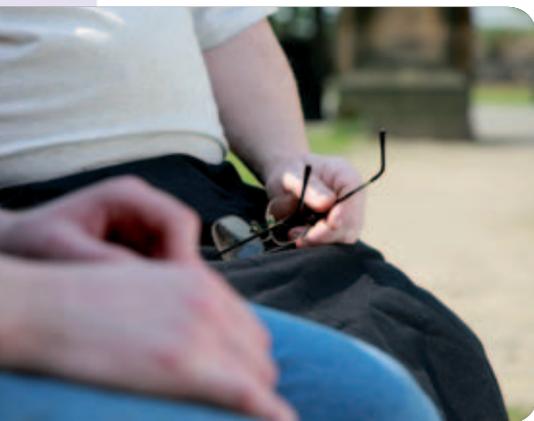
To find out more about working with MSF please see [www.msf.org.uk/work.aspx](http://www.msf.org.uk/work.aspx)

## Rethink – changing lives for the better



Rethink, the leading national mental health membership charity, works to help everyone affected by severe mental illness recover a better quality of life. It provides hope and empowerment through effective services and support to all those who need the charity and campaigns for change through greater awareness and understanding.

The charity's own survey shows that 29% of people with mental health conditions report being dismissed or forced to resign from a job. To enable organisations to become better informed, Rethink produced a series of guides for managers and employees detailing how they can make adjustments to people with mental health issues in the workplace.<sup>19</sup>



### Recruiting dynamic people into a dynamic charity

Rethink prides itself on having a person orientated culture, as illustrated in comments from a recent staff survey<sup>20</sup>:

*I was astonished at just how committed people were to making a difference to those affected by mental health. It is not just something said so that we can tick boxes, people believe 100% in the aims of the organisation.*

**Rethink employee**

*[Rethink] is an organisation which really cares about what it does. It doesn't just go through the motions of putting people in supported housing or care homes or helping carers, it actually lives its beliefs and it's not until you start looking at how it does things that you see how those values, which are on its website, actually get used in actuality in residential care homes and the rest.*

**Rethink employee**

<sup>19</sup> Rethink (2010) Working it out: a guide to rights at work for people with a mental health condition. Rethink (2010) Small change, big difference: a civil service line manager's guide to reasonable adjustments for mental health problems

<sup>20</sup> Stafford Long Research (2008) Rethink: Research to Employer Value Proposition

## CASE STUDY: Rethink



### Scope to develop

In order to maintain this sense of being a social organ for positive change, Rethink consistently seeks to improve its recruitment and career progression opportunities. Attracting and retaining motivated and dynamic staff required for such demanding and rewarding work is just the first step. New recruits – many of whom come from the NHS and other public sector organisations – will find an organisation that offers numerous opportunities for personal development and growth, rather than ‘pigeon-holing’ into narrow roles.



All staff receive mandatory training, which includes basic mental health awareness, as well as targeted training that helps them to do their job more effectively. The charity’s recruitment process is based on the knowledge and experience of individuals. Evidence of competence and life experience, measured through the use of the Knowledge and Skills Framework, enables Rethink to recruit, retain and even re-train where potential employees may previously have slipped through the net.

Workforce development opportunities include:

- Management and Leadership Development Programme
- e-learning, action learning, blended learning, coaching and mentoring
- Professional development and lifelong learning
- Funding for additional vocational and professional development.

### A personal perspective – how Rethink ‘grows its own’

Sophie Reed was in the first year of her degree in Health Studies when she was introduced to Rethink, then known as the National Schizophrenia Fellowship. She decided to combine part-time work at Rethink with studying during the next two years of her degree,

discovering a career path that would reward the effort she put in. After graduating in 1999 she progressed into full time work with the charity.

Over the next ten years, Sophie worked as both a project worker and as an acting manager, at one point working in a day service that supported over ninety people, managing groupwork and drop-in services for users of Rethink’s mental health services.

However, it was taking part in Rethink’s Talent Management Programme – which is now an ILM accredited course – that helped her career aspirations to become a reality. The aim of the programme is to identify individuals’ potential for promotion to more senior positions within the organisation, as Sophie explains:

*“The Talent Management Programme had a major impact allowing me to access great opportunities, such as attending more high level meetings, enabling me to carry out psychological profiling, and in getting me to complete a 360 degrees skill audit, which pinpointed skills I could develop.”*

At the beginning of the eighteen month programme, Sophie was assigned a senior mentor. Time with her mentor helped Sophie to facilitate reflective practice as a key tool for the development of skills, which gave her the time to think in depth and apply her practice.

Sophie discovered she could overcome her feelings about public speaking, and she was soon leading groups of people with greater confidence. Developing new skills was timely, as Sophie explains:

*“Rethink’s services continued to undergo major changes while I was on the programme, and I found that the change and project management skills I’d acquired, as well as my experiences in modernising day services helped me navigate the organisational developments that were occurring at the time.*

*“Fortunately, I was in the right place at the right time. It underlines that Rethink is a charity where we like to ‘grow our own’, and I am a very good example.”*

To find out more about Rethink visit [www.rethink.org/](http://www.rethink.org/)

## Scope – setting no limits on potential



Scope is one of the UK's leading disability charities. Its vision is

***'A world where disabled people have the same opportunities to fulfil their life ambitions as non-disabled people.'***

Scope's services focus on four main areas where disabled people face the greatest inequality: early years, education, independent living and work. It also provides local support services which respond to the needs identified by disabled people in their communities.



Around 3,300 people work for the organisation in a variety of roles based in:

- Adult social care (residential homes and support in a range of community settings)
- Five residential schools and a specialist post-19 college
- 250 high street retail outlets.

Over 25% of Scope's workforce are disabled people. The charity recognises that recruiting disabled people with personal direct experience and/or knowledge of disability helps to provide greater focus for the organisation. In its 2008 staff survey, 72% of employees said they could see a direct link between what they do and disabled people who use Scope's services.

All recruits are encouraged to learn and develop their career if they have the drive and willingness to progress and Scope has a strong training ethos to support this.

The charity uses innovative ways to draw in new recruits, which includes working with local job partnerships to target long term unemployed people. Many recruits are young people taking on their first paid role, as well as older people who are looking to make a career change.

## CASE STUDY: Scope



Roles in the organisation include:

- Support Worker
- Inclusion Team Leader
- Workforce Development Manager
- Education Support Worker
- Events Fundraiser
- Service Manager
- Team Co-ordinator
- Teaching Assistants.

New staff progress through a structured 26 week long induction period, covering a wide range of topics such as basic safety, safeguarding and protection, manual handling, health and safety.

There are also opportunities for employees to pursue vocational qualifications in health and social care, with a high proportion of staff undergoing accredited training each year. Everyone has some form of career development, and this can mean moving up the organisation structure, or taking on extra responsibility, mentoring and shadowing opportunities.

Around 1,500 staff are involved in front line care, and 200 in supervisory/management posts. Registered staff also find opportunities to progress their careers, and Scope employs 72 individuals in nursing, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy, working within its schools and providing support to people in their own homes. Although the majority work in residential settings, as the charity develops more community focused Inclusion teams opportunity for therapists to work with individuals in their own homes is likely to increase.



### Giving people the possibilities

Margie Woodward is Scope's empowerment co-ordinator. She works with people to enable them to exercise choice and control over what they want to do in their life. She explains how she gives information to people on their rights, independent living, and the organisations and people who can help:

*"It's not only about how we at Scope can support you, but also how disabled people and others from your community can get involved. It's about learning how to work together and negotiate choice and control."*

### Did you know?

- 19% of the UK working population – 6.9 million people – are disabled
- Only 50% of these people are in work
- Nearly 2 million disabled people have stated that they would like to work.

Source: <http://www.scope.org.uk/work/employment/index.php>

To find out more about working with Scope see [www.scope.org.uk/jobs/](http://www.scope.org.uk/jobs/)

## Sense – high calibre teams remove the barriers to independent living



The importance of voluntary organisations and their contribution to UK health related services cannot be underestimated – especially when it comes to supporting the treatment of those affected by a disease or disability, and influencing procedures across the wider health sector.

Sense has capitalised on nearly six decades of experience to become the leading national charity that supports and campaigns for people who are deafblind. It helps thousands of individuals and their families across the UK, working with children and adults who have communication support needs because of deafblindness, sensory impairment, learning or physical disability.

In addition, the charity is involved in:

- Campaigning and raising awareness among policy makers and professionals across education, health and social care
- Services and 1 to 1 support such as health promotion, day services, outreach, skills training and work experience for deafblind people
- Information and advice for deafblind people and their families
- Holidays to give deafblind people a chance to try new experiences.

Around 2,000 people work with Sense, a core group in health related roles. The latter include roles such as speech and language therapist, support worker, therapy coordinator, walk leader, activities coordinator, education support worker and many more. In some cases, wider staff in frontline roles will be involved in supporting healthcare needs and carrying out activities such as administering medication.

### Staff members tell of their experiences of working with Sense

Maureen d’Inverno, a former learning disability nurse, is a Healthy Living Coordinator for Sense Scotland. Maureen explains that no two days are alike in her role:

*“Working at Sense Scotland gives you flexibility and variety, more so compared to working in other organisations. One day you could be hill walking, the next swimming, and all the while supporting people’s*

*healthcare needs, for example checking blood sugar levels as and when required.”*

Before joining Sense Scotland 13 years ago, Maureen spent 10 years working in the NHS. She found that many of her skills transferred well into the charity which she joined because of its good reputation and values of treating people holistically:

*“As an organisation, Sense Scotland gives a lot of independence in decision making. As a manager you have more autonomy and can get things done more quickly. We also treat people more holistically, thinking of the whole person and building relationships over time.”*

Maureen’s role is typical of many of the staff at Sense Scotland who support people with complex health needs on a daily basis. Diabetes can be a major contributory factor to blindness, so staff are involved in a range of interventions such as addressing lifestyle, diet, support with injections and other related activities.

Staff have access to specialist training so they have the skills to be able to carry out tasks with confidence. The charity has an accredited centre, enabling staff to develop valuable skills such as understanding communication needs, understanding of rubella (a main cause of deafblindness) and supporting mobility issues.

*“We can help people to gain the right skills, but most importantly we value staff with the right attitude.”*

Maureen d’Inverno  
Healthy Living Coordinator for Sense Scotland



## CASE STUDY: Sense

### Campaigning for a better future

At Sense's head office in London, Jim Lewis is a Public Policy Assistant, and his day to day activities can range from event management and devising awareness campaigns to updating databases and coordinating consultation responses. All of which gives him a broad perspective of the charity's policy and campaigning work:

*"My role is to support the Public Policy team, which works at UK and European parliamentary level influencing legislation and policy, and to collate parliamentary questions on behalf of Sense. I'm also involved with working with children's services and older people's development, so forging links with partner organisations and raising awareness among policy makers is an important part of what I do."*

Jim has had training in minute taking, project management and 'Introduction to Parliament', all of which have helped to equip the Public Policy Assistant, who has severe visual impairment and a hearing impairment, for his day to day activities. Before joining Sense, Jim worked at the BBC for four years, and then volunteered for two years. Volunteering provided a vital stepping stone to career progression and in Jim's opinion:

*"It helped me to meet lots of new people, showed I had initiative and was willing to pursue opportunities which helped in my securing my post at Sense. I'd recommend it to others to do voluntary work, especially graduates, so you don't lose skills and you can pick up new ones as well."*

Having strong communication skills has been important for Jim, as well as organisational skills, because of his involvement with public consultations:

*"I canvas families and focus groups to inform Sense's response to consultations, so it's great to play a part in making sure that the clients' voice – many of whom can be quite isolated due to their complex needs – is heard at the highest levels."*

### Helping people to adjust and adapt

Michelle Simpson is Community Services Manager and part of this role is to manage the Domiciliary services at Sense, Northern Ireland. Heading a team of five, the former nurse enjoys her challenging, yet rewarding role which involves ensuring that individual client needs are met, developing new services and raising awareness of the needs of older deaf blind people.

Having previously worked for 13 years as a nurse, Michelle welcomes the way she is challenged to use

her skills and experience for the benefit of clients living within the home setting who are supported for up to 10 hours a day:

*"We encourage people to be as independent as possible and to participate in new experiences – doing things with people rather than for them, so it's a change of mindset for many people. The one thing I enjoy in Sense is being able to implement a holistic approach which is one of the reasons I left nursing because I had limited opportunities to work with people in this way."*

Her work is diverse and varied. The day to day tasks for Michelle can range from meeting clients and their families, liaising with GPs and social workers, to facilitating training for staff in other care settings and inducting new staff who are working in the domiciliary setting.

Working in partnership with other organisations, Sense supports a range of interventions which can have positive effects on people's lives. As Michelle continues:

*"A sensory loss has a great impact on people's day to day lives. As an organisation we have been able to put in place simple things that will support individuals such as befriending, which will reduce social isolation, plus providing information and advice. This makes such a difference to an individual and very often these can be inexpensive measures. Following an information session with other organisations I would often hear staff remark that they now realise how small changes within their setting can have such an impact on an individual's life."*

Michelle and her team have recently seen the results and impact of a support package put in place for one particular client which meets all of his daily needs:

*"It has helped him to adjust to his sensory loss and other difficulties that he faces on a daily basis. Now that he is more confident in moving around the home and getting about outside, he has become better able to communicate with staff and to tell them what he wants and we have seen a whole change to his demeanour, self confidence and overall well being. It's lovely to see the achievements made through being given the right kind of support."*

Working in the voluntary sector has other benefits too:

*"There's a great deal of scope when working for a not for profit organisation such as Sense, where you can be a bit more creative in delivering a service. It's more fulfilling from a job point of view; you get such a sense of joy and this gives me the commitment to keep going."*

## St Ann's Hospice – making a difference every day



St Ann's Hospice is one of the largest adult hospices in the UK, and has built a firm reputation for improving the quality of life for people with life limiting illnesses, while supporting their families and carers.

The hospice is committed to providing the highest standards of free care to its patients and is equally committed to its staff who all contribute significantly to the overall running of the organisation. Around 3,000 people use the hospice's services each year. As an independent charity, two thirds of its funding comes through voluntary contributions, which need to total around £16,000 every day.



### Working at Greater Manchester's largest hospice

St Ann's takes great pride in recognising the value of its staff who offer high quality nursing care.

*Staff must be so happy to work here; everything is done with such enthusiasm and care, they obviously love their jobs. I've been welcomed like a long lost friend by all staff here.*

*Isobel Walto, day care patient at St Ann's Hospice*

The hospice employs around 300 people, providing a care ratio of around 2:1 for people accessing services, and it is supported by over 750 volunteers. The hospice has 58 beds at three sites in Greater Manchester and provides care in people's own homes in Salford and Trafford. The majority of patients are admitted with cancer-related illnesses. It also admits patients with non cancer-related life limiting conditions. Forty per cent of patients are able to return home again after their time in the hospice.

*Staff working at the Hospice, whatever their role, feel privileged to journey alongside patients and families at this momentous time in their lives. The rewards speak for themselves. The deep satisfaction that staff feel in a job well done cannot be measured in monetary terms.*

*Sue Taylor, inpatient services manager*

St Ann's multi-disciplinary team comprises many people – from doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, complementary therapists and occupational therapists, to social workers, chaplains, a dietician, infection control nurse, pharmacists and a psychological support nurse – all of whom may be involved in the direct care or support of a patient

## CASE STUDY: St Ann's Hospice



or family member. Indirectly, the team supporting each person accessing care includes kitchen staff, cleaners, fundraisers, volunteers, finance, communications, maintenance and administration staff.

All staff benefit from continuing professional development to ensure they are able to maintain the high levels of care expected by patients and their families. This ranges from induction training through to more specialist education courses in palliative care, end of life care and long term conditions.

*"The purpose of providing such a comprehensive mix of training is to support our staff in every possible way to keep St Ann's Hospice care at the highest quality."*

Catherine Williams, Director of Fundraising & Communications

### A centre of excellence

As a centre of excellence in palliative care St Ann's achievements, in both clinical and non-clinical areas, have been recognised at national level.

For three years running the Sunday Times named St Ann's Hospice in the top 10 of the Sunday Times 100 best companies to work for. The hospice received a commendation for Deafblind Awards in the category of 'Best Healthcare Provider' by the friend of a previous inpatient at St Ann's. She was extremely impressed with the level of care that he received and wanted to express her thanks for St Ann's making people feel protected at a difficult time of their lives. St Ann's staff at the Neil Cliffe Centre in Wythenshawe were UK Joint Runners Up in the prestigious Foundation for Integrated Health 2008 Awards<sup>21</sup>. Staff at the Heald Green hospice site were named winners of the Proud of Stockport's Community-Spirited Organisation award in February 2010, nominated by a member of the public after the hospice provided care for her sister.

### A leader in specialist palliative care

St Ann's has its own Practice Development Centre, which supports all staff at the hospice and also other healthcare practitioners locally, regionally and nationally.

Working with Leeds University, 11 members of staff attended a 'kick start' Practice Development unit programme in March 2009. It's a 'bottom up' approach where every member of staff can contribute their ideas and aspirations to ensure the best possible practice and care for St Ann's patients.

In another development, a few years ago hospice staff devised a ground-breaking initiative, the Integrated Admission Assessment Care Pathway for patients, which ensures the right staff with the right skill mix care for those with end of life care needs. The model has been adapted and disseminated to hospices throughout the UK with many adopting the Pathway for their own use.

The hospice is a pilot site for the development of the role of 'Assistant Practitioners' in which Skills for Health set up a task and finish group to develop the core standards for this role. For the past 10 months St Ann's Hospice has been working with partner organisations to develop this role for palliative and end of life care and it is anticipated that the first cohort of Trainee Assistant Practitioners (TAPs) will begin their training in January 2011.

To find out more about St Ann's Hospice and career opportunities visit [www.sah.org.uk/jobs/why-work-for-st-anns-hospice](http://www.sah.org.uk/jobs/why-work-for-st-anns-hospice)

<sup>21</sup> Integrated Health Award <http://www.sah.org.uk/news/news-stories/2008/april/prince-charles-accolade-for-hospice-initiative>

## St John Ambulance – giving people the skills to save lives



No one should die for lack of first aid knowledge and skills. It's a simple yet powerful maxim that St John Ambulance, England's leading first aid charity, has set out to make into a reality. Its members know that first aid expertise can mean the difference between a life lost and a life saved.

The charity takes its mission into workplaces, schools and community groups across the country. It has successfully trained hundreds of thousands of people – both volunteers and employees – so that lives are not needlessly lost. Over 800,000 people across England alone were trained in 2009. The charity, which employs 2,500 people, provides emergency response, community projects, transport services and event first aid cover.

It's not unusual for people to start out as a volunteer and then progress into employment with St John Ambulance. Several employees have followed this route according to Darryl Bagley, the charity's Project delivery coordinator for the West Midlands. He offers an example from the charity's own community first responders. They are volunteers specially trained to attend emergency calls received by the ambulance service and provide care until the ambulance arrives:

*"In the past two years, around 25 of our community first responders have progressed further. As we provide ambulance transfer services on behalf of a number of trusts, some volunteers have been recruited into patient transport positions within St John Ambulance to facilitate this. Others have gone either into employment as a paramedic or to university to study subjects such as paramedic science or nursing."*

### A pathway to employment and education

With over 1,000 ambulance and support vehicles, the charity regularly provides a valuable support service to the NHS Ambulance Trusts. So there are plenty of opportunities to put first responder skills into practice. It's a solid way for individuals to get their

working career or higher education off to a flying start, as all volunteers are specially trained in a range of areas such as:

- Health & safety
- First aid
- Manual handling
- Leadership skills, with specialist courses for young people
- Patient transport attendance (e.g. from GP to home, Hospital to home)
- Emergency transport attendance (qualifies individuals to carry out a frontline role).

In Darryl's view, following the volunteer route is an ideal way to get a career underway in the third sector:

*"If you join as a volunteer, get some volunteering under your belt and spend time in the sector, you will gain great employability skills and first aid expertise, not to mention some qualifications. Many people find they are suited to it and they move on from there."*

Before being put on frontline duties, they will complete an eight day course, so that they have the confidence and ability to deal with all sorts of situations.

## CASE STUDY: St John Ambulance

A unique feature of the organisation is the way people use their professional skills to benefit their volunteering duties as Darryl explains:

*“Even if members gain employment in the emergency services, they usually stay on to volunteer. Several volunteers are registered paramedics, and the way they are able to use their additional skills developed in the emergency services is invaluable. It also demonstrates the dedication of our volunteers and staff alike.”*

As well as paramedics, the organisation also benefits from the input of surgeons, doctors, nurses and a wide range of other health professionals who act as volunteers.

### From volunteer to employee – a personal journey

Taking the volunteer route was one Darryl followed himself when he began competing in first aid competitions with St John Ambulance over 20 years ago. After gaining a first aid qualification at college, in 1988 he was taken on by St John Ambulance as a trainer, delivering first aid courses.

Since then Darryl has risen through the ranks of training and management, and now is responsible for delivering training for the charity’s commercial training division. He has come a long way since his early days, as he explains:

*“Although I left school with few qualifications because I wasn’t very academic, I was lucky – I had an affinity with first aid, and soon found my niche with St John Ambulance.”*

Darryl’s day to day activities take him into many organisations where no two days are the same. As Project delivery coordinator, he trains people to provide first aid at work. This covers areas such as manual handling, automated external defibrillation, and administering medical gases (oxygen and entonox). He also trains St John Ambulance community first responders. As a qualified assessor, he gets immense satisfaction from helping others in the organisation gain their City & Guilds first aid qualifications.

### Committed to the learning and development of employees

The charity is an accredited Institute of Leadership and Management centre and an accredited Edexcel centre. Employees are therefore well catered for if they wish

to undertake leadership training and other learning and development. Seven years ago, the charity introduced an option to take a foundation degree in voluntary sector management through St John Ambulance in conjunction with Derby University. The fully accredited programme could be taken either as a two year foundation degree or a three year BA honours programme, and the first cohort of 15 students graduated in 2006. This offered an exciting new pathway for people wanting to progress in their career and one which the charity was instrumental in developing.

Darryl has benefited from investment in his training and development throughout his career, which includes gaining additional qualifications including level three and level four in training and development. His training expertise and enthusiasm, which has taken him not only around the UK but also further afield, is a great asset to the charity:

*“In 2004, just months before the Boxing Day tsunami, I went to Sri Lanka to train some of St John Ambulance’s volunteers. There are around 80,000 volunteers in Sri Lanka, and their skills would have been vital during the aftermath of the disaster.”*

### A global perspective

There are opportunities to work in many other parts of the world as the charity has a global presence. People could find themselves working in the Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, delivering first aid training in Afghanistan, or taking up other opportunities in Malta, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, or the Caribbean.

According to this highly experienced employee, if you have the courage and drive to gain vital first aid skills, and a willingness to share these with others, there are plenty of opportunities available in St John Ambulance. For Darryl, it’s hard to beat working in a job that you feel passionate about:

*“It’s more than work for me. I love working with people and am doing a job that I consider myself very lucky to have – not only did I get the opportunity to gain qualifications, but I also get to practice what I preach.”*

Darryl Bagley  
Project delivery coordinator  
for the West Midlands



For more information, please visit [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk) or telephone 08700 10 49 50

## St Wilfrid's Hospice – bringing hope and optimism



Since St Wilfrid's Hospice opened in 1987, the Chichester based charity has cared for over 10,000 local people. Providing hospice services free of charge to people in the community and support to their families and friends, St Wilfrid's Hospice relies on public support to raise 85% of its annual running costs of £5.1 million.

The hospice provides care within day hospice, inpatient unit and community settings. At the heart of the services are 160 employees, around 50% of who are involved in clinical care.

Patients benefit from a high standard of care delivered by teams of people dedicated to providing professional and caring services. Nurses and healthcare assistants (HCAs) are an invaluable part of the team, and benefit from a full programme of training and induction alongside other health colleagues.

The hospice prides itself on having a flexible approach to recruitment. New recruits are expected to have previous caring experience, for example in an NHS or care home environment. Amongst the staff are one or two former hospice volunteers who have gone on to complete a 'back to nursing' programme before being taken on as bank or permanent staff.

All employees benefit from a structured induction period, where they have the opportunity to meet colleagues, work with another member of staff and learn 'on the job'. The hospice has an education centre and library, and is at the forefront of providing training not only for its own staff but also colleagues from NHS organisations. It offers an accredited Diploma or Degree in Palliative Care which staff can follow as well as management training and advanced communication skills.

One advantage of having an education centre on site is that hospice staff can access study days and learn end of life care alongside colleagues from the NHS, private care homes and other hospices from West Sussex. St Wilfrid's has built strong partnerships with other End of Life Care providers, working closely with partners across the region. It has a unique partnership with the local primary care trust and hospitals and in association with Winchester University runs accredited courses free of charge to all employees of the three organisations.

A recent graduate is Vicky Adams who was a Community Registered Nurse with Intensive Care at Home in Chichester, but has now found her niche working in the Hospice. Two and a half years earlier, Vicky came to the Hospice to complete a one-year certificate course in palliative care. Since graduating, she joined the Hospice and works in a variety of settings including the Hospice at Home service. According to Vicky, making the transition to Hospice care was a life changing experience:

*"This last year has been fabulous. I am so happy here and have been supported and made very welcome by everyone at the Hospice. Everything I have learnt through the diploma course is being put to good use."*

## CASE STUDY: St Wilfrid's Hospice



Vicky was one of the newest recruits to join St Wilfrid's Hospice at Home service which began in May 2009. The service has helped to increase choices available to patients and so far over 100 patients have been cared for in the place of their choice. Evaluation shows that the service is highly valued by loved ones of patients cared for by the Hospice at Home team, as one commented:

“It was like two giant arms encircling all of us. They brought calm to what was utter chaos in our home.”

Many of the nurses and health care assistants working in the Hospice at Home team are former NHS staff working in the community. The charity also recruits staff into a wide range of other roles including:

- Education
- Occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Complementary Therapies
- Psycho-social work
- Bereavement team
- Volunteer coordination
- Housekeeping
- Fundraising
- Finance.

### Why people join St Wilfrid's Hospice

There are many sound reasons, as these employees explain:

Christina Satturley, Senior Physiotherapist, said:

*“During the two years I have been here, I feel totally supported, which has enabled me to develop the physiotherapy service, and enable patients to maintain maximal functional independence.”*

Siew Ping Crane, Night Sister, said:

*“I could not think of a more rewarding place to work than palliative care in the hospice. We are being rewarded more than what we give out – the richness of skilled nursing care is summed up in palliative care service.”*

According to Alison Moorey, St Wilfrid's Hospice Chief Executive, working in a charity based organisation brings its own unique rewards:

*“St Wilfrid's Hospice staff have to deliver a high standard of care, because they are dealing with high expectations. Families and patients are going through a difficult time and they do need a high level of care and support. As an organisation we invest in support for all our staff. We have an employee assistance programme, which is a core provision. Experience has taught us that people can struggle sometimes, so this extra support for staff is very important. Ultimately this helps us to be flexible and responsive in terms of delivering outstanding patient and family care, and excellent education provision – which makes us unique in what we can offer the community.”*

To find out more please see [www.stwh.co.uk/](http://www.stwh.co.uk/)

## The British School of Osteopathy – providing excellence in healthcare and education



The British School of Osteopathy (BSO) is an organisation with a worldwide reputation – as a higher education institution and a public health care provider offering treatment to the public, it has a dual focus to ensure it offers both excellent osteopathic treatment and education.

Osteopaths work through the neuro-musculo-skeletal system, mostly on muscles and joints, using holistic and patient-centred approaches. A key principle of osteopathy is that the body is an integrated and indivisible whole, and contains self-healing mechanisms that can be utilised as part of the treatment. Taking a holistic approach to treatment, they apply a wide range of gentle, non-invasive manual therapeutic techniques such as deep tissue massage, joint articulation and manipulation.

Set up in 1917, the BSO is the UK's oldest school of osteopathy. In 1963 the BSO became a registered charity, educating osteopaths, treating patients and promoting osteopathic research. The treatment cost to patients, where charged, does not meet the costs of providing such valuable healthcare to vulnerable communities. The BSO is dependent on the generous support given by donors and trusts, to support this essential work. Today it educates over 600 undergraduates and practitioners each year through a range of comprehensive and innovative modern osteopathic education programmes.

These include a new Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost) degree programme, introduction to osteopathic sciences and continuing professional development courses. It also has a pioneering research department which explores and contributes to best practice in clinical care and technique.

The BSO provides 40,000 patient appointments each year from its clinical centre at Southwark, London which is Europe's largest osteopathic

clinic. Work there includes osteopathic clinics for expectant mothers, children, people with sports and performance-related injuries, and people with HIV/AIDS. The BSO's award winning community outreach clinics also provide treatment which is free to a variety of patient groups, and which supports those who might otherwise not have access to osteopathic care.

Treatment at the outreach clinics, as at the BSO's clinical centre, is provided by BSO students who are supervised by qualified osteopaths. Whilst gaining vital experience in giving high quality patient care, students are also able to develop their skills and experience in a supervised clinical environment.

Qualifying as an osteopath with the BSO can be approached in a range of flexible ways, as Donna Clift-Williams, a qualified osteopath and Practical Osteopathic Skills Lecturer with the BSO demonstrates.



## CASE STUDY: The British School of Osteopathy

### Finding a career that fits

It was the combination of therapeutic techniques and practices that was attractive to Donna, who had looked into becoming a doctor, but was put off by the prospect of a junior doctor's working hours:

*"I liked the fact that osteopathy is a manual primary health care system: it is non-invasive, considers the body as whole working unit, and you have more time with patients than, say, working in general practice as a doctor would normally allow."*

Donna came to osteopathy after having already worked as a professional dancer and fitness instructor. Having made an active choice to leave her first career, she was coming to study osteopathy already very motivated to succeed, and to put the hours in. Combining study with being a mother of small children, it was important to find a study option which would work around family commitments. Donna started off by doing the BSO's one year Access course, and then went straight on to do its B.Ost degree course, which was the predecessor to the BSO's current M.Ost course introduced in 2008. Donna followed the BSO's 'Mixed Mode' pathway which offers people the opportunity to begin their studies on a part time basis:

*"It was definitely not something I just fell into! As a mother, I was also attracted by the flexible working opportunities that osteopathy as a career offers. For example, being able, once I had graduated, to be able to set my own working hours as I set up my own practice."*

### Working in private practice

Whilst there are growing opportunities to work as an osteopath within the NHS, the vast majority of osteopaths in the UK, once they are qualified, will still work in private practice – either setting up their own practice or working as an associate or partner in another practice. Even those

osteopaths working within the NHS will mostly probably do so part-time, and also work privately.

For Donna choosing osteopathy was definitely the right decision at the right time:

*"I think my social skills and ability to communicate with patients confidently were vastly improved not only because I had had a first career, which had given me a certain level of general confidence, but also because I had general life experience, including being a parent."*

*"Patients can often come to you stressed, in pain, or worried because they don't know what is wrong with them – a key part of working effectively as an osteopath is being able to empathise and communicate with them. I feel my first career and life experience has helped me build a rapport with my patients."*

### Combining practice with tutoring – an enriching way to work

An added benefit for Donna is that she combines practice with tutoring at the BSO. Having a dual role provides a way to offer students the benefit of her experience in private practice, as well as helping Donna to keep her own learning and development up to date:

*"I find it really helpful to tutor at the BSO – as a top educator in osteopathy it is at the cutting edge of all the latest developments and thinking, and it also offers me access to professional networks where I can gain information and advice. Working on your own in private practice could be isolating: it helps me as a practitioner to have ready access to other osteopaths."*

*"Osteopathy is a hugely rewarding profession that allows you to make a genuine difference in your patients' lives."*

Donna Clift-Williams, Osteopath and Practical Osteopathic Skills Lecturer with the BSO



Photos by Mark Anderson, BSO

To find out more about the BSO please visit [www.bso.ac.uk](http://www.bso.ac.uk)

## The National Autistic Society – accepting difference, not indifference



'Autism' is a term which describes all diagnoses on the autism spectrum including classic autism, Asperger syndrome and high-functioning autism. It is more common than many might think – around half a million people in the UK have autism, and if you include their families, autism affects over two million people every day.

### What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability. People with autism have said that the world, to them, is a mass of people, places and events which they struggle to make sense of, and which can cause them considerable anxiety.

In particular, understanding and relating to other people, and taking part in everyday family and social life may be harder for them. Other people appear to know, intuitively, how to communicate and interact with each other, and some people with autism may wonder why they are 'different'.

### The leading organisation to raise awareness of autism

The National Autistic Society (NAS) is the UK's leading autism charity. Its mission is to change the world for people living with autism through education, campaigning, support and pioneering services. The charity is the UK's largest provider of specialist autism services and three and a half thousand staff assisted by volunteers provide a lifeline for 100,000 people every year.

The charity was founded in 1962 by a group of parents who wanted a better future for their own children. Today, it has grown to become a leading advocate and campaigning organisation so that people living with autism can have a better future through education, support and pioneering services. With 19,000 members and 90 branches, it provides:

- Information, advice and support for individuals and families
- Six specialist schools and education outreach support for children
- Adult and community services, including specialist residential, supported living and day services for adults
- Out of school services for children and young people
- Employment support
- Courses and training to raise awareness
- Services for health, education and other professionals including training and research.

## CASE STUDY: The National Autistic Society



It's not always obvious that a person has autism. That's why the NAS works with a range of professional groups, in particular those in health and education, so they know how to recognise and understand people with autism they meet in their work. The charity also employs its own team of specialists which includes:

- Classroom Assistants
- Development Workers
- Family Service Workers
- Nurses
- Psychologists (Clinical/Educational)
- Support Workers
- Teachers
- Therapists (Drama, Speech, Art/Music).

Qualifications are important for many specialist staff working with the NAS, which has been accredited with the Investors in People award. The charity will provide opportunities for in house training and career development for qualified and unqualified staff who demonstrate the commitment and enthusiasm to go further. Opportunities include QFC qualifications for all care staff.

### From public sector to third sector

Joanne Neill is the Principal Speech and Language Therapist at the NAS's Helen Allison School in Kent, which provides education for pupils aged 5-19, and offers a weekly boarding facility.

Having worked in the NHS for eight years, Joanne gradually became more specialised within the paediatric and special needs field and worked directly with two Special Schools. She joined the Helen Allison School 20 years ago to set up its speech and language therapy service, whilst pursuing a Masters degree. The Principal Speech and Language Therapist at Helen Allison School is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and Joanne recognises that her time in the NHS was invaluable and provided a good grounding for the next stage of her career.

Today, she heads up a small team of three – comprising one highly specialist speech & language therapist and two communication

assistants (job share) who are able to work intensively with the school's 70 children all of whom have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Some of the children have additional diagnoses such as Challenging behaviour, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Epilepsy, Tourettes syndrome and Obsessive-compulsive disorder. Joanne explains how the high therapist to pupil ratio makes a difference to all concerned:

*"When I recruited a therapist from the public sector, she'd had a case load of 300 children. At Helen Allison School, that figure is 35 – which speaks for itself. We can offer a more holistic service to pupils; our service is embedded into the school curriculum and this impacts favourably on both the child and their family."*

Being able to work as part of a multi disciplinary team is all part of the role, and Joanne regularly liaises with the school's psychology department, teachers and occupational therapist as well as colleagues within the local education authorities. Working closely with parents too is important so that they can be supported to help develop ways of coping and dealing with their child's communication and behavioural needs.

### Extending the boundaries of knowledge

Joanne has made it a priority to continue with her professional development during her career at the school, having completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Asperger syndrome. As an Accredited trainer for the NAS, she ensures that by teaching other professionals they are then able to offer the best support they can for children with autism. Joanne also presented at the 2009 College of Speech Therapists Conference, with the full support of her employer:

*"Working within the NAS has given me the opportunity to specialise and extend my knowledge and expertise within the field of autism. This has involved being proactive in liaising with other professionals, being willing to share ideas and best practice with other colleagues locally and further afield within a special interest group."*

To find out more about the National Autistic Society visit [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

## Links to further information

Information to support the development of people and skills in charities and social enterprises <a href="http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk/">http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk/</a>	Search through charity jobs online by function, location and salary, plus careers advice <a href="http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk">http://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk</a>
Browse over 1000 jobs online by category, sector, location and fundraising. Plus information on training and events and forum discussions <a href="http://www.charityJOB.co.uk">www.charityJOB.co.uk</a>	Search through jobs by sector, role and region. Links to advice, case studies and news <a href="http://www.goodmoves.org.uk">www.goodmoves.org.uk</a>
Information about every charity and voluntary organisation in England and Wales. Includes links to data & analysis, case studies. Browse by topic such as mental health, older people, and 'quitting smoking' <a href="http://www.guidestar.org.uk">www.guidestar.org.uk</a>	Search through over a thousand charity jobs and health posts <a href="http://www.jobs.guardian.co.uk">www.jobs.guardian.co.uk</a>
Dedicated section on health and social care posts, plus news <a href="http://www.charitypeople.com">www.charitypeople.com</a>	Search for jobs by key employer and location across UK and abroad, plus news section <a href="http://www.jobsincharities.co.uk">www.jobsincharities.co.uk</a>
Online source of UK charity jobs and not-for-profit jobs <a href="http://www.forum3.co.uk">www.forum3.co.uk</a>	Explore opportunities in the voluntary and charitable sector and links to specialist recruitment agencies and advice on working as a volunteer <a href="http://www.workingforacharity.org.uk">www.workingforacharity.org.uk</a>
National Council for Voluntary Organisations <a href="http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk">www.ncvo-vol.org.uk</a>	The sector skills council for the UK health sector <a href="http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk">www.skillsforhealth.org.uk</a>
Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations <a href="http://www.scvo.org.uk">www.scvo.org.uk</a>	Wales Council for Voluntary Action <a href="http://www.wcva.org.uk">www.wcva.org.uk</a>
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action <a href="http://www.nicva.org">www.nicva.org</a>	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action <a href="http://www.navca.org.uk">www.navca.org.uk</a>
Directory of Social Change, with information and training for the voluntary and community sector <a href="http://www.dsc.org.uk">www.dsc.org.uk</a>	The Charity Commission registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Links to news, services, information and advice <a href="http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk">www.charity-commission.gov.uk</a>
The Institute of Fundraising website with links to jobs, news, events, best practice, courses and training, <a href="http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk">www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk</a>	The Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations <a href="http://www.acevo.org.uk">www.acevo.org.uk</a>
Links job hunters and employers, and search through vacancies in small local charities to large NGOs <a href="http://www.voluntarysectorjobs.co.uk">www.voluntarysectorjobs.co.uk</a>	Career information resources on paid or voluntary work connected to working with young people from the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services <a href="http://www.ncvys.org.uk/index.php?alias=carinfoshe">http://www.ncvys.org.uk/index.php?alias=carinfoshe</a>

# Who are Skills for Health?

Skills for Health is the Sector Skills Council, for all health employers; NHS, independent and third sector. Its purpose is to help develop solutions to meet employers' skills and workforce needs.

Skills for Health helps employers in three ways:

- it offers tested solutions and tools to help them improve productivity and quality
- it can directly support employers and their staff to plan and manage workforce development and change
- as the employers' authoritative voice on skills issues, it represents their views and champions the effective investment in skills that they need.

It understands the importance of drawing new people into the healthcare workforce, and to support existing employees with high quality learning, development and qualifications.

That's why Skills for Health has developed a new, comprehensive careers resource specifically for the health sector. The Careers Information and Advice website is a one stop shop that brings all the relevant information and data in a single place, giving users access to over 1000 links to further resources such as:

- Careers in health
- Information on professional development
- Funding guides for employers and individuals
- Searchable database of UK-wide and national data related to Careers Information and Guidance (CIAG)
- Information on developing careers advice and guidance skills for career guidance counsellors.

To find out more visit

[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/careersinformationandadvice](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/careersinformationandadvice)

Skills for Health does not claim responsibility for content and workings of other websites. The information and web links in this document are correct at the time of publication April 2011



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