

Volunteering Strategy 2024-2027





Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic brought into sharp focus the pivotal role of volunteering for CHAS, for children and their families and for volunteers. More widely, the impact of volunteering was felt throughout Scotland and the globe.

Within CHAS, volunteers and staff worked together to support families during the peak of lockdowns and isolation. While some volunteers were unable to continue, others stepped forward, embracing new roles.

As our services have evolved since the inception of the last CHAS Volunteering Strategy, so has our volunteer landscape. The introduction of a new Volunteering Strategy marks our organisational commitment to reintegrating volunteers as an essential part of CHAS. Providing a quality volunteer experience is everyone's business in CHAS. We must all work hard every day to make CHAS a great place to volunteer. This strategy has been co-created by volunteers and aims to harness the strength of volunteering and align it with our organisational ambition, fostering a renewed sense of community and purpose.

CHAS and Volunteers

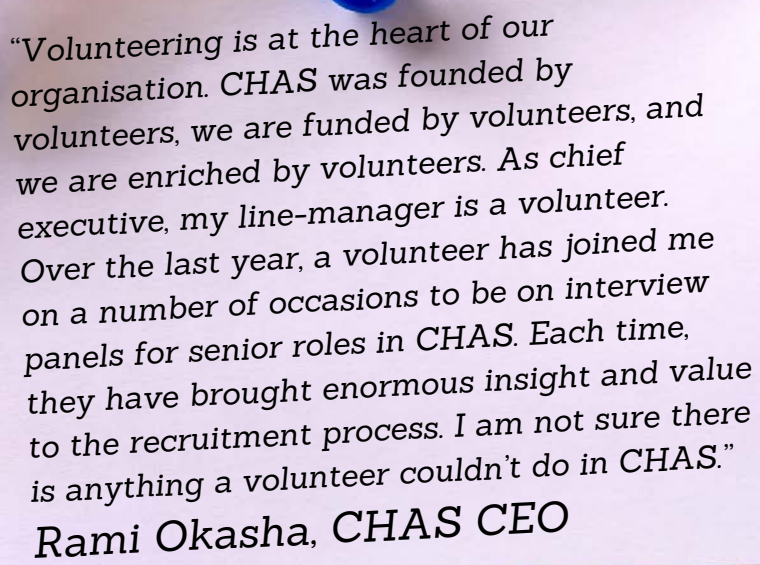
Knowing that your child may die before you is the unthinkable reality that thousands of families across Scotland have to cope with every day. CHAS provides unwavering care for children who may die young, and their families, at every step on this hardest of journeys.

The sole purpose of CHAS is to give every single one of these children, young people and their families, all the care and support they need where and when they need it. Delivering that mission requires a huge amount of effort. As a charity with over 300 staff and over 750 volunteers we know that it is only by working together that we will achieve our goal.

CHAS is committed to the involvement of volunteers. The charity was founded by volunteers, and our board of trustees who govern the charity are all volunteers. Volunteering is part of our organisation's DNA. Volunteers bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to CHAS which complement the existing skills of our staff.

Volunteers also allow CHAS to develop strong links with communities the length and breadth of Scotland. This builds a strong connection with those communities and raises awareness of CHAS and of the care and support that we provide.

We couldn't do what we do without our volunteer force.



"Volunteering is at the heart of our organisation. CHAS was founded by volunteers, we are funded by volunteers, and we are enriched by volunteers. As chief executive, my line-manager is a volunteer. Over the last year, a volunteer has joined me on a number of occasions to be on interview panels for senior roles in CHAS. Each time, they have brought enormous insight and value to the recruitment process. I am not sure there is anything a volunteer couldn't do in CHAS."

Rami Okasha, CHAS CEO



National Context

Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan was launched in June 2022 setting out an ambitious 10-year plan, with 47 ideas for action. The Vision for Scotland's Volunteering Action Plan is to create a Scotland where everyone can volunteer more often and throughout their lives. It builds upon the Volunteering for All: National Framework and is mapped to Scotland's National Outcomes as shown in this graphic.



The objectives for the plan include increasing volunteering participation, particularly among non-volunteers and those who will most benefit. Equality, diversity and inclusion is important, with a focus on widening access to volunteers by understanding and reducing barriers. The volunteer "voice" is also critical to achieving the success of the plan. Volunteers must help make the decisions that affect them. Finally, organisations have a responsibility to provide great experiences for volunteers whereby volunteers feel supported, valued and recognised for their contribution.

Building on CHAS's Volunteering Strategy 2020-2024

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, CHAS has made progress against the four outcomes set out in the current strategy. The CHAS volunteer force has become more diverse over the implementation period, volunteers are more satisfied with their volunteering experience, volunteers are more integrated into teams and increased levels of flexibility have been introduced into volunteering roles.

The new CHAS Volunteering Strategy aims to build on this success. The pandemic has highlighted the clear need for an even more robust infrastructure for volunteering which will be the focus of the new strategy.

Volunteering Vision

Volunteers will enable and enhance the unwavering care that we deliver to children, who may die young, and their families.

Our Strategic Outcomes

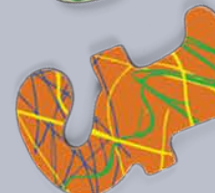
By 2027 we want to be able to say that:

1. Volunteers are an integral part of the evolution of CHAS services to support families going through the hardest of journeys.

CHAS's ambition is that no-one should face the death of their child alone. Staff and volunteers will need to work together to achieve this. Our services will need to evolve to support the increasingly complex needs of children and families. Volunteers will be integrated into the teams supporting this evolution: in our hospices, in our outreach services and through raising the money to fund all of these services. All staff will work with volunteers to ensure that their skills, motivations and availabilities are matched with what families and teams need, where and when they need it. This will result in a greater number of meaningful volunteer roles where volunteers can see and understand the impact of their contribution.

This outcome will drive both recruitment and retention of volunteers and ensure that volunteering in CHAS is fit for the future, giving volunteers a range of choices for how and when they engage with CHAS. To make sure we're on track, we'll listen to families, volunteers, and teams supporting our services. We'll further integrate the volunteer voice into decisions that are made about volunteering, and we'll measure how volunteering impacts everyone. This way, we can create a great experience for volunteers, meet their expectations, and help them learn or use skills. In doing so we will build loyalty, community and a lifelong support for CHAS.

The annual volunteer survey, exit survey and retention data will enable us to measure the success of this outcome. The annual staff engagement survey will also provide insights into the staff experience of working with and managing volunteers in their teams. In addition, new volunteering roles will be evaluated individually to ensure they meet the needs of the staff teams, families and volunteers.





2. The diversity of CHAS volunteers reflects the families who use our services and the communities in which we operate.

Increasing diversity in the CHAS volunteer force isn't just about numbers; it's about creating a more inclusive, equitable, and effective organisation for everyone. Families and volunteers alike should feel safe, included in our work, that they belong and can bring their best selves to CHAS. Increased diversity ensures that families from various backgrounds recognise CHAS as a place for them. A diverse volunteer force brings a range of perspectives, experiences, and ideas to support the delivery of services for families.

In line with the CHAS EDI Strategy, our ambition is that CHAS volunteers come from a range of backgrounds. In addition, volunteers are more diverse, focusing in particular on sex, age, disability and race.

The volunteer equalities data that we gather and cross-reference with census data, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data and data of families being supported by CHAS will enable us to measure the success of this outcome.

3. All CHAS staff are trained and supported to deliver a consistent, positive volunteer experience at all levels of the organisation.

Every member of staff and every volunteer in CHAS has the potential to be a volunteer manager. Quality volunteer management is key to a great volunteer experience. It's not just about administrative tasks – it's about creating a positive and supportive environment for volunteers. Managers who focus on training, support, clear communication, recognition and appreciation help to make volunteering rewarding. This will lead ultimately to higher retention rates and more committed volunteers.

With quality guidance, training and support from the CHAS Volunteering Team, volunteer managers will take ownership of the volunteer experience. They will effectively lead their volunteer teams, resulting in greater capacity and access to a broader skillset. This will in turn ensure the sustainability of our income generation and service delivery.

Our annual Volunteer Survey will enable us to measure the success of this outcome for volunteers. The annual staff engagement survey will also provide insights into the staff experience of working with and managing volunteers in their teams. The number of volunteer managers actively engaging in the CHAS Volunteer Managers Network and training for volunteer managers will also enable us to measure the success for CHAS staff.





Critical Success Factors

To continue to build on the success of the previous Volunteering Strategy, the following factors are key:

1. All staff recognise and prioritise volunteer management in line with staff management, understanding that both are essential to CHAS. We must value and support volunteers just like we do our paid staff, recognising their important role in achieving our purpose of supporting children and families.
2. There is a cross-organisational commitment to a devolved model of volunteer management. Volunteers are managed by the teams where they volunteer, instead of being managed by the central Volunteering Team. This includes CHAS staff having access to volunteer data in order to support their volunteer teams effectively. This is even more critical as we scale up volunteering across the whole organisation.

3. The CHAS values of:

“Time is precious”,
“We are courageous”,
“With love and compassion”
and
“We play as one team”

are experienced by volunteers in all their day-to-day interactions with CHAS staff.

4. The volunteering team is involved early-on in service design and workforce planning, to ensure that volunteering options are explored fully at all times, in order to secure the most appropriate roles and resource for teams.
5. All new volunteering developments consider impact measurement so that we can continue to showcase the impact that volunteering is having on volunteers, children and families and CHAS.

Volunteers are part of the culture at CHAS and culture is created by everyone. Every member of staff will have their part to play in the success of this strategy. Working in partnership with staff and managers across CHAS, the Volunteering Team will support teams across the organisation to put this Strategy into action. To ensure the seamless integration of volunteers across all levels, it is critical that the CHAS senior leadership team and managers across the organisation model how to involve volunteers and clearly communicate the value they bring to CHAS.

The table below shows the key initiatives that will be delivered under each of the four strategic outcomes.

1. Volunteers are an integral part of the evolution of CHAS services to support families going through the hardest of journeys.

- We will work with colleagues to scope new volunteering roles to expand existing services, such as in our outreach services and additional support for families in our two hospices.
- We will listen to volunteers, families and teams to measure the impact of volunteering programmes.
- We will continue to develop flexible volunteering roles to reflect the flexibility that volunteers and families need.
- We will improve how we match volunteer skills and experience to specific project and roles across the organisation.
- We will amplify the volunteer voice and provide a platform for volunteers to be more engaged in our work, creating a greater connection and to the organisation.

2. The diversity of CHAS volunteers reflects the families who use our services and the communities in which we operate.

- We will be inspired by children and young people and support them to create the volunteering roles that will support our services, in turn future-proofing volunteering at CHAS.
- We will embrace partnership working with key community groups and organisations. We will proactively look for ways to reach the communities we serve.
- We will listen to lived experiences of barriers to participation in volunteering and make adaptations to improve inclusivity.
- We will tell the story of our existing diversity internally and externally, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.
- We will explore how best to involve CHAS families as volunteers, for example as peer supporters for other families, and support them throughout their volunteering journey.

3. All CHAS staff are trained and supported to deliver a consistent, positive volunteer experience at all levels of the organisation.

- We will embed volunteer management as a fundamental part of relevant staff roles by clearly defining roles and responsibilities.
- We will create a suite of training, resources and a network to support volunteer managers.
- We will work with volunteer managers and their managers to build capacity and plan for volunteer involvement.
- We will address the need for cultural change around the role of volunteers in CHAS and address misconceptions.



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