



Margaret Mulkerrin

Triangle of Care Implementation Lead

“ I find it hard to imagine life before or after the NHS ”

What is your job title, what does it involve day-to-day and how long have you been working in that role and/or at the Trust?

My job title for the past 2 years has been Triangle of Care Implementation Lead. I work predominantly in Community Services but liaise and support colleagues in other areas to take the project forward. This project is to improve the way the organisation engages and works with the family and friends who support our service users day to day.

My role involves helping teams assess their current performance in relation to the principles set out in the National Triangle of Care Framework and making the changes identified to deliver more effective and carer friendly services. I often meet with carers who have been very informative in taking this work forward. I work in many areas of the Trust supporting colleagues and delivering training to raise awareness of carers and improve working practices. I also work closely with Carers Leeds who are our partners in this project and that has been a different and interesting experience.

I have worked for the trust in various roles since joining as a student nurse just over 30 years ago in January 1988. My main working area has been in Community Mental Health Teams as a Mental Health Nurse and also as a Clinical Team Manager in the past

Why did you choose to work for the NHS?

I have never been really sure why I started working in the NHS! I knew that I wanted to do something useful and that would make a difference in some way. I also needed to earn a living as a single parent at that time. I stumbled across Mental Health Nursing and was hooked.

What's your favourite part about your job?

The best part about the job has always been the amazing people I have met and worked with over the years. Both those who use our services and also the staff I have

worked with.

It is very satisfying to think you have been able to help someone at a difficult time in their life and I have always seen the benefit of involving family and friends in this. My current role fits with this belief very well.

What's the most challenging part about your job?

Over the years there have been many challenges, often to do with organisational change which can get in the way of the day to day work. The need to adapt to different ways of working and particularly to the increased use of technology has had its moments!

Working with people in distress can be a challenge, but it is also an opportunity to learn and develop professionally and personally.

Tell us about:

a time you were really proud of your work

I recently literally "bumped into" a service user with whom I had worked. We both took a moment to recognise each other and then it felt a bit like meeting an old friend. He was looking well and was pleased to see me and was very positive about our work together. Feedback like that is not always something you get at the time. I felt proud to have known and contributed to his progress in some small way.

your fondest memory of working at the Trust

I cannot pick out one memory. I have worked with some brilliant teams and people who have been very supportive and dedicated to helping others. As I now travel around the Trust I frequently bump into people from my past and it is lovely to catch up and to look forward as well.

What do our values of integrity, simplicity and caring mean to you? How do you show these values in the work that you do?

I think the caring part is second nature to me and that's probably why I started with the NHS in the first place, although I did not realise it. I have believed in treating everyone fairly and equally throughout my life. As well as caring about people in general I also want to ensure we give the best most efficient and effective service to all involved with us. I need things to be simple so I hope to keep things simple for other people. We need to be able to understand and work with each other.

What message would you give to inspire the future NHS workforce in your area of work or in general?

I think we do important work often with people in a vulnerable period of their life and if we can help at that time that's invaluable.

How has the NHS made a difference to you/how have you seen the NHS help people?

I have experienced and learnt so much working in the NHS over the years. I find it hard to imagine life before or after the NHS. I am still working although only part time now but I really do not feel ready to leave yet.

The service has changed enormously but at its heart we still care for people and that's the best bit.