

# Community Engagement Newsletter

Edition 02



In April 2021, we launched our plans to improve health, reduce health inequalities and improve the experience of care of people who use our services in Alongside Communities – the Solent approach to engagement and inclusion. I am delighted to share our 2<sup>nd</sup> newsletter which profiles the stories of our adventures with our community partners over recent months, what we have learned and what we are doing differently as a result. We offer a spotlight on some of our inspirational community partners we have the privilege of working with and highlight the work of some of the fabulous clinical teams and team members. This is just a snapshot of what we have done and what we aim to do, so if you would like to know more please do drop us a line and we would love to chat!

**Sarah Balchin**  
*Associate Director of Engagement and Experience*

## What have we been up to?

Alongside Communities – progress so far:

- We have continued reaching out to local communities and have increased our community partners database to 228, giving us a potential reach of over 400,000 people.
- We hosted an Engagement Event at the Sikh Temple in Southampton along with our community partners - Carers in Southampton, Saints Foundation, Southampton City Council and Wessex Cancer Research. The event was well attended and gave the community an opportunity to find out about different services in their area, in addition our HR team were in attendance to speak to the community about recruitment and volunteering opportunities within Solent.
- Carers Rights Day – We hosted two virtual events to recognise, support and celebrate our Carers working with us in Solent. We had the privilege of Carers in Southampton and Portsmouth Carers Centre joining us as our community partners, sharing what they do, how to access their services and bringing to life what is available to carers in the community. The hosts were able to offer help and answer any queries around carers. Thirty-six staff members took time out to attend and share their thoughts and experience.



- The Volunteers team have also been busy doing wonderful things such as:
  - Handmade dolls which were made by a volunteer and delivered to patients in our inpatient ward Lower Brambles. The dolls offered a good talking point and provided an easy way to open a conversation.
  - Working with Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust, our volunteers supported them during a pressured time providing support with basic tasks on the ward/s, making beds, helping at mealtimes, issuing leaflets, sign posting and capturing feedback.
  - Jubilee House continues to have a makeover with volunteers helping to clear the garden and freeing the paths of weeds and cutting back any overhanging branches off the trees.
  - 13 volunteers were successfully recruited into paid employment with us.
- The PALS & Complaints team have been busy designing and implementing new templates and process maps to aid our Children and Families teams for the NHS Complaints Standards Pilot that we are testing.

We are early adopters in this PHSO incentive, and the hope is that we will be able to share our learning from this pilot with other Trusts and disseminate and implement the learning throughout other services. Some of our Key Performance Indicators include: earlier face to face conversations with people that have raised a concern; increased feedback from younger people and increased bespoke training for staff.

The Patient Experience Team continue to be instrumental to services by supporting them to get their data about patients from our systems. They have also been busy ensuring that our wonderful volunteers are placed in the right roles for them to be able to thrive.

We published our community engagement documentary which you can view here:

<https://vimeo.com/652427339/e53cbf4212>

## Moving Forward into 2022

2021 was a difficult year in so many ways but working alongside our communities we were able to achieve so much. We look forward to continuing working together with our Community Partners in 2022. In 2022 we will:

- Celebrate the work that we have done together, and we shall host an event to celebrate organisations and individuals who have shown exemplary commitment and contribution to our communities. More information will be available on our website.
- Refresh our Alongside Communities Delivery Plan together to ensure the work of the Community Engagement and Experience team continues to align with the priorities that the community has set for us. For more information on our Alongside Communities approach visit: <https://www.solent.nhs.uk/about-us/community-engagement/useful-information/>
- Develop and strengthen our work with those groups that we know are under-represented and often do not use our service.
- Continue to develop and follow the principles of asset-based community development and make coproduction a standard way of working for us.

We look forward to continuing to develop the friendship and relationship that we have developed with our community over the past year. 2022 will be a great year!



# SPOTLIGHTS

*In this section we get to find out more about some of the community services in the area and find out about some of the services Solent provides.*



W: [www.simonsays.org.uk](http://www.simonsays.org.uk)  
T: 02380 647550  
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## Simon Says supports grieving youth

Simon Says aims to support Hampshire children and young people up to the age of 18 years who has a significant person in their life who has died or is dying. Young people often find it hard to understand bereavement and when children are dealing with the death of someone close, they may go through all sorts of different emotions, they may feel angry, guilty, frightened, and alone. It can also be very difficult for a parent, carer, close relative, or friend to help a bereaved child when they are grieving too but Simon Says is there to help on this journey.

Emma Clewer, Education Lead at the Charity, says support from the charity is growing with new support groups available for children, right from the ages of 0-18 years old. Each group has different activities for the children to take part in to help them through the bereavement journey, from art therapy, to sports. "We also run activities throughout the year to build children's self-esteem and help them realise it is ok to have fun again...Children grieve in many ways, and what may work for one child may not necessarily work for another, so there is a range of support and advice we can give through our work and our volunteers.

"We have support groups right across Hampshire, making sure these are age appropriate, so everyone gets care that's right for them. For example, we have recently set up two new groups for teenagers and young adults from the ages of 11-18 in Portsmouth and Basingstoke. These groups aren't mandatory and there is no set amount of sessions a child needs to attend, but it's a release that's there if they need.

"We also have a telephone support line that professionals, parents, and young children themselves can phone for instant advice and a listening ear. Professionals can also refer children to our services if they feel it is appropriate."

Emma also explains the importance of education for teachers. "Teachers are not armed or prepared with how to support a child that is dealing with grief or a bereavement, it's not something that is included in the training, so we offer training for schools to help bridge this gap. Sometimes a child can be the only one in the class experiencing grief and this can lead to even more feelings of loneliness, so we think it's so important that teachers are also supported with information and education, and we can provide this as part of our work...To us it's the child that matters and we are there to help them and their families, in any way we can."

# Community radio station for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic



Awaaaz FM was set up as a radio station for the local community especially the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. We spoke to Ali Beg, programme manager at the station to learn more about its roots, and what it means to him to be a community partner at Solent.

“Because we didn’t have a voice or a platform and there were a lot of issues around the local area that we wanted to address and tackle we started the station. We started off online where the radio station just got more and more popular. We then went on the DAB channel which was about six years ago. This combined allows us to broadcast from Southampton and the whole of South Hampshire where we reach out to the best part of 1.5 million people.

“Some of our presenters are also researchers, we research into particular topics where issues are prevalent in ethnic minorities. We’ve been doing a series of programmes and in this series, we’ve been talking about the different types of cancers and how you get it if it’s something which is more prevalent based on your diet or lifestyle. So, we do touch on really important issues.

“We have a team of up to 42 presenters. Some of the team do programmes in English, some of the team do it in the regional languages, and some of our team do programmes which are regional programmes but in English language just so everybody gets to understand a bit of everything. We do nine different languages right now so it’s as accessible as possible.

Ali explains why it’s so important to have a community station that’s available for all. “I think it’s important for people to have a community radio station which is community focused. It’s a hub where they feel safe to be able to talk, it’s not just about the entertainment, we provide the entertainment which is what we’re good at, but we also want to get things right in the community.

“Radio is free so anyone can tune in at any time, we broadcast on 99.8FM. We broadcast on the DAB channels locally, we do a lot of social media and we do have a leaflet which goes out once and month where we tell people about the different programmes that are upcoming. We also go out into the community and talk to members there, we do community consultations.

**Awaaaz**  
99.8 FM

W: [www.awaazfm.co.uk](http://www.awaazfm.co.uk)  
T: 02381 9800 72  
E: [info@awaazfm.com](mailto:info@awaazfm.com)

# Supporting older people at home



[Caraway](#) is a Christian charity, supporting older people at home, in the community, and in residential care, across Southampton. Caraway aims to promote and resource the spiritual well-being of those in their older years. Working in partnership with churches and the health and social sectors, for those with and without faith in Southampton and beyond. Caraway supports those at home, in the community and in residential care, particularly addressing the needs of those who are lonely, socially isolated or living with dementia.

This young charity celebrates the richness and wisdom of old age, founded in 2018 by Revd Canon Erica Roberts. Navigating the recent challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic Caraway has grown and evolved, now focusing on connecting with those who have been most isolated through befriending initiatives, online events and hand delivered activities, our work has brought joy to our growing community. Caraway celebrates the elderly by working throughout Southampton with:

- **Anna Chaplains** are trained individuals, sent out by their local church to come alongside older people, irrespective of their faith, to listen, to affirm and to help those in later life celebrate the gift of years. [Anna Chaplains](#) offer befriending for carers living with dementia, spiritual end of life care and bereavement support.
- **Supporting Care Homes** as they emerge from Covid, remains at the heart of our work at Caraway. Developing relationships is at the heart of providing spiritual care as we help residents discover joy, hope and meaning amid the reality of increasing frailty, possible regret and facing the end of life.
- **Creating community** to share memories, laugh together and learn from each other is hugely beneficial to the wellbeing for those in their later years. Caraway resources, runs, and supports events that provide safe spaces to encourage friendships, share life and faith, and bring joy to those come along. Events include Holiday at Home, Vintage Adventure at Home, Dementia Zoom Soirees and Memory Cafés

They have a fantastic team of volunteers from across Southampton, which they are always looking to grow. They are always looking to grow and if you are interested, please contact them.

W: [www.caraway.uk.com](http://www.caraway.uk.com)  
T: 07535164014  
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## Sindija from Solent gives children a voice



Within the Solent NHS Trust Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS), there are Specialist CAMHS Teams, such as Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST), Building Resilience Service (BRS) and CAMHS In-reach Team.

Sindija Geruka, CAMHS WEST and MHST Participation Lead tells us a little more about the service and in particular her unique role within the Trust. “I work across all of the specialist teams to ensure the ‘participation’ strategy and action plan is at the heart of what they do. This means I advise and lead on the participation of children, young people and their families/carers in the commissioning, design, and delivery of the Solent Mental Health Teams available to them - along with the participation of children, young people and their families/carers in the individual mental health, care and treatment of those who are using the services, who have used the service or have an interest in joining the participation group to improve the services.

“My goal as the participation lead for these teams is to build the knowledge, confidence, and skills of all professionals across all Solent Children’s Mental Health Teams. To increase the participation of young people and their families/carers within all Solent Children’s Mental Health teams and to increase, confidence, skills and resilience of children/young people and empower them to have their voice heard.

“There are many ways I work alongside these people to get them involved in service improvements and developments. Such as, staff training, recruitment of new staff, leaflet developing, poster developing, building décor improvement, feedback and review of policies, groups, promotion, artwork projects, and working alongside the professionals to ensure the voices of children and young people are heard in their decisions making around their care.

“There is also plenty of opportunity for involvement within wider Solent, which some of the young people from my current participation group, identifying as ‘The Wellbeing Group’ have been involved in, for example, the development of the Solent Portal, Community Engagement Documentary, proving feedback on the Solent’s Complaint Process, and interviewing for the Head of Qualities role.”

Sindija loves being able to create positive opportunities, encourage skill development, promote self-esteem and confidence for children and young people. “I get to build on community spirit and play an active role to help to eradicate negative attitudes towards young people in society and give them a sense of belonging, value, being influential but most importantly give them a VOICE.”

Portsmouth: 0300 123 6632  
Southampton: 0300 123 6661  
[www.solent.nhs.uk](http://www.solent.nhs.uk)

## Solent's Stoma Care Service provides support



W: [www.solent.nhs.uk](http://www.solent.nhs.uk)  
T: 0300 123 3910  
E: [snhs.enquiriesstomacare.nhs.net](mailto:snhs.enquiriesstomacare.nhs.net)

Within Solent NHS Trust there is Stoma Care Service and Joanna Wagland, Stoma Care Manager, tells us a little more about the team and how they provide specialist care to those who use their service. "The Stoma Care service provides support to people who have or are about to have a stoma formed. A stoma is formed from the small or large bowel and allows waste (urine or faeces) to be diverted out of your body. A stoma may be temporary or permanent. People with a stoma wear a bag or pouch over the stoma that collects the waste and can either be closed or have an opening at the bottom."

According to research carried out by the NHS, there are 176,824 people in the UK living with a stoma, with the most common conditions resulting in stoma surgery being colorectal cancer, bladder cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and other conditions or injuries that will affect the bowels or bladder.

Joanna adds: "We are a referral service, and our main referrals come through from the acute hospital. Many of the people we look after would be fitted with the stoma due to conditions such as cancer. It is a life changing procedure and we have people of all ages, who will be referred to our service. You can also self-refer or be referred through your GP."

"We are the only specialist stoma care service in the area and we not only help with the management of the bag or stoma, we also signpost people to others who have lived experience so they can access support through a real person. They can also find out helpful hints and tips to help with their overall health and wellbeing."

"In addition to showing people how to empty, clean and generally manage day to day life with a Stoma, we also provide informal counselling, lifestyle advice and other health promotion. We also signpost people to counselling services like iTalk if they are struggling with their mental health due to their surgery or lifestyle change. We empower people to live a healthy and normal life with a stoma and are there for them throughout their journey."

Here is what one of our patients had to say:

*I had my stoma reversal 2 weeks ago (privately). All seems to have gone well. I would just like to take this opportunity to thank you for your wonderful care over the last 6 months – you made a horrible experience tolerable. It was so reassuring in the early weeks when I was bleeding quite a bit and struggling with leakage to have your advice. You took the time to find a bag that fitted and gave me valuable advice (and glue removal wipes) for when I went on holiday. And the booklet "Outside in" on the reversal procedure was extremely useful too.*

# Connect with us

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