



## **League of Friends Role and Contribution**

### **Membership of the CHA**

Leagues of Friends play an invaluable role in supporting their local community hospitals.

#### **Volunteering**

Volunteers help on a daily basis, such as offering a befriending service, offering transport, helping patients at mealtimes and reading to patients.

#### **Providing Services**

Friends provide services in hospitals such as a hospital shop, a tea bar, a library service, and a trolley service.

#### **Fundraising**

Friends organise events such as fetes, coffee morning, fashion shows, carnivals and concerts. Friends also provide an opportunity for local people to subscribe to the Friends, become a member, make a donation, and leave a legacy.

#### **Financial Contributions**

Friends often respond generously to requests from the hospital for items such as equipment, furnishings, and even large projects such as extensions to buildings. Friends also contribute to staff training and development, such as conference fees and training expenses. Friends in some cases pay for a hospital to be a member of the CHA.

#### **Promoting the hospital**

The Friends provide information on the hospital to the community through their annual general meetings, newsletters, websites. Friends often feature in local press coverage, highlighting the work of the hospital and its impact on the community.

#### **Giving Voice to the community**

Leagues of Friends are often called upon to represent the views and wishes of their members, and also reflect those of the wider community. This may be in planning and management discussions. Friends have carried out surveys of communities, to help to demonstrate the views and preferences of local residents.

#### **Sharing Good Practice**

Leagues of Friends have received awards in the CHA Innovation and Best Practice programme. These have included Blandford League of Friends and also Friends of Crowborough which received awards in 2017 and now have national recognition. The Friends of Honiton and Crowborough spoke in the plenary session of the CHA national conference. The Friends of Blandford and Crowborough held workshops to share their experiences and practices. Chantel Wilson and Richard Hallett from the Friends of Crowborough Presentation "[The Role of the Friends - Being Creative](#)"

## **Membership of the CHA**

Leagues of Friends continue to be vital to the work of the community hospital. They ensure that the hospital has the most up to date equipment and facilities, and that the staff are well supported and trained. They provide practice support through their services and volunteers. They listen to what is important to the community and help provide a voice to local people. Leagues of Friends promote and support the work of their community hospitals. They can find themselves having a role when significant changes are proposed for their hospital, such as a reduction in service provision or a change in building and location. Leagues of Friends have always been vital to community hospitals, to link the hospital to the community and to enable the hospital to function as effectively as possible. There is every sign that this important relationship and role will continue to be needed.

There are challenges facing Leagues of Friends. In some areas, there are difficulties in recruiting to committees, and in particular to have a representation from all ages from the community. There are an increasing number of fundraising activities from different charities and voluntary organisations in communities. The changing ownership of some community hospitals has seen some of them being run by the private sector.

The CHA are regularly contacted by Friends organisations asking for advice and support, and we will continue to assist where we can.

We welcome all Leagues of Friends of Community Hospitals to join our growing network by becoming a member of the CHA. Join here <http://www.communityhospitals.org.uk/join-organisational.html>

Between us we will continue to promote the valued contribution of community hospitals on behalf of patients and communities.