

A S U M E

Volunteering in Dementia



attract

Interests

People were attracted to volunteering in dementia care because of their interests and hobbies that linked with the volunteering role. Some people had an interest in history and reminiscence so volunteered within museums or reminiscence groups for people with dementia.

The reason I'm interested in Reminiscence is because I'm 78 and when I was a child life was almost Victorian. Things have changed so much and is anybody writing it down? Because things have changed so much and things are forgotten of what used to happen...We were talking before about ladies wearing hats and gloves to go out to do their shopping - I mean nobody bothers about that anymore. Just little things like that, but its social history...I've always been interested in social history, and that, sort of, marries up. (CVF12, Cumbria)

A number of the groups that we recruited research participants from involved the arts, singing, dancing, poetry and art. The focus of these groups could be an influence in why people got involved. Examples of this are also seen above in the section on experience where people discuss interests in music, singing, dancing, and poetry.

I adore music and I adore dancing, because I'm part of a dance group myself. (CVF08, Cumbria)

For a few, usually younger volunteers, volunteering had been a stepping stone on a path to a job in a caring profession.

I think social care is one of those things that until you have qualification they don't let you do anything. But you have to have done something to get the qualification. It's silly sometimes. I always remember trying to contact social work organisations to see if I could shadow for a day or something and they were always like oh, you have to have experience to be able to do that. But how do you get experience if you can't. (SVF03, Stirlingshire)

I think to support my studying, I felt it was important to get some practical voluntary experience to support my developing knowledge but also my skills and job prospects in the future. I think what we're learning in the university in a classroom, you know when you get out there and you're doing it practically its quite different so I was keen to get some more practical experience. I think it was a combination of opportunity came along, I was very inspired by what I saw and I felt it supported my studies in self-development really. (CVF07, Cumbria)

These findings suggest that volunteering opportunities that enable people to pursue particular interests and skills will be popular and attract new volunteers. In Cumbria particularly there were a lot of opportunities for volunteers to get involved in arts based projects with a dementia focus and this was attractive to them.

A few people talked about a direct interest in dementia but this was less common, for most participants their link with dementia was personal, rather than seen as an interest.

Dementia is something I've been interested in. I think it's something to know something about. It's happening more and more now and I think one should be aware of it. (SVF01, Stirlingshire)



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