

HEALTHCARE SUNDAY

15 October 2000

Involvement with the Voluntary Sector

The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 seeks to establish greater involvement with the independent sector in terms of providing care within the community.

Without the involvement of the voluntary sector, which includes the Church, health and social care could not function or provide adequate services. The Hospice movement was founded by a Christian as were Cheshire homes, MENCAP and many others. A Christian organisation, The Shaftsbury Society, runs homes for the elderly and a furniture project for those on low incomes. All of these initiatives and many more, are integral to the smooth running of care provision in this country.

Where to get involved?

Think about your community. Think about what you and your friends are saying about your community. What are the perceived needs? Where are the gaps that could be filled by Christians?

There really are so many opportunities out there. Try these for starters but do some brain storming with your Church or Home Group and see what you can come up with.

1. Volunteer at the local:

- Hospice;
- Hospital volunteer bureau or Chaplaincy;
- Day center for people with learning disabilities;
- Mental health centres or hospital;
- Day centre for elderly;

2. As a Church adopt:

- a residential or nursing home providing care for the elderly;
- a hospital ward;
- a local day centre.

3. Offer to:

- become involved on the Board of a healthcare Trust, Primary Care Group, or similar organisations;
- recruit volunteers from your church to join the local hospital 'taxi service' for out patient appointments;
- bring a group from church to do a carol service in an old people's home;
- provide a more regular Sunday service for those that can not get out to a Church service;
- provide transport for elderly persons to attend a Church service;
- arrange a hymn singing session.

4. Identify your own ideas:

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