

MELINA PELLING

Organisations I've Participated With
Royal Free Hospital



Name: Melina Pelling

Age: 18

Where I Live: London

"My curiosity has grown and developed. I'm increasingly self-aware in relation to working with many and varying people, and I always strive to be as sensitive and helpful as I can be."

I'm a volunteer at the Royal Free Hospital in London, working on the wards as a Dementia Companion. I think it's so crucial to recognise hospital as a hostile environment to those staying with Dementia, but also that kindness can help to counteract this.

I work directly with the patients in the hospital who have been diagnosed with Dementia, providing companionship and general help on the wards. I also get involved with other volunteering opportunities - tea parties hosted for lonely older people in the community, greeting guests at hospital events, and public speaking to represent the hospital's volunteers. I've spoken at a 'Medicine for Members' lecture about the role of volunteers in creating 'dementia-friendly' environments, and at Parliament.

It's an important part of my role to train new volunteers at the hospital, especially the youngest, helping them to feel safe, assured and equipped with

all the knowledge they might need.

Volunteering at the hospital has given me the confidence to pursue my dream of studying Medicine at University. I'm taking a gap year to continue volunteering at the hospital - although applying to competitive subjects like Medicine comes with a lot of uncertainty, I know now that I want to make a difference to the way patients in hospital are cared for and challenge perceptions of dementia in society.

CHARACTER VIRTUES

I'VE DEVELOPED THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL ACTION

Confidence | Resilience, Perseverance & Determination | Compassion
| Leadership | Citizenship

#iwill

... continue volunteering at the hospital and at a local children's hospice, speak publicly and organise events to raise awareness on dementia, and continue to help other volunteers on their social action journey.