



Special edition Newsletter

Highlighting Heroes



Recognising those who have displayed a remarkable act of kindness, or who have gone above and beyond the call of duty during the pandemic

Highlighting Heroes



Welcome to a special edition of our e-newsletter. After a very challenging 18 months, we wanted to pause and reflect on some of the positive ways in which our community has responded to turbulent times. In this publication we recognise some of the individuals who have really made a difference during the pandemic. All of the people have been nominated by someone: a friend, colleague, volunteer, client or manager who felt that the person they were nominating had gone above and beyond in the line of duty. Many displayed an incredible act of kindness, or really stepped up and helped someone who was struggling.

These stories demonstrate emotional and practical support and the power of listening to people. They testify to holistic ways of working; individual skill and expertise in key roles, fields or areas of work; and extraordinary strength during the most demanding of times. They show how everyone has played their part in ensuring that services continued to run under the most extreme pressure.

We hope you will, like us, feel that these stories demonstrate the very best of human nature and community spirit.

We wish to congratulate all of the nominees and thank them for their hard work.

Lorraine Silver,
Chair,
Healthwatch Redbridge

Cathy Turland,
Chief Executive,
Healthwatch Redbridge





Sreeparna Roy

Sreeparna was nominated by Motsan Holab who received public health support during lockdown.

Motsan told us:

“ I want to nominate Sreeparna Roy. She works for Redbridge borough Council. Sree did special project on Roma community vaccination in June. She help lot of our community people to get information about vaccine, answer our fears and tell us the right reason why vaccine is important. In a special clinic we also get the vaccine which Sree made arrangement. No one cares about Roma/Gypsy people before and everyone think we are not existing. Sree discover us and goes from street to street with another person who can speak Romanian and gypsy language and talk to all hidden community members.

“Today more than 250 Roma/Gypsy person in Redbridge get their vaccine only with Sree’s help. We call her our lady hero. She is always keeping contact and she will tell us when we can take second vaccine. We feel good that someone recognize us and think we have right to live healthy and well. She also send me weekly information by email about rules of government, what we can do and cant. It is so easy now. So any people in our community died before because no one knows what to do in Corona. But now we get vaccine and so many lives are safe, because one employee of Council make special efforts.

“When we talk to Sree, she also help us with other issues. One example - my friend has a child with Autism. Sree arrange for Romanian speaking family



“I have been doing some targeted work with the Roma community lately and I am indeed pleased to know that the community feels benefited.”

worker from council for the family. The child now get therapy online. For my nephew, who is dropout of school. Sree help with charity contact who can help him to find interviews. They also give him formal clothes for interview on hire. We did not know anything without Sree’s help. With her help we know about how I can get council help now. We feel good to speak to Sree. She is never judging or thinking us to be bad people, but always good help and good advice from her. She is doing more than her duty and with a big heart and lots of care. Please give Sree Covid Hero status, she is very important for Roma community, Redbridge.”

Gladys Xavier, Director of Public Health, Redbridge commented:

“Sree has been a hugely valuable member of Redbridge’s work to combat Covid since joining the Public Health Team in 2020. She has shown exceptional levels of commitment, ability, and compassion in working with communities across the borough to raise awareness, increase resilience, and support the vaccination programme. Her innovative work has gained her a wonderful reputation as a caring and highly-skilled community worker. She is a true pleasure to work alongside.”

10/10/2021

Date

L. Silver
Cathy Tinsland

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Kristy Cody

Kristy was nominated by Ghislaine Stephenson, Associate Director of Nursing for Children at Whipps Cross Hospital

Ghislaine told us:

“ Kristy is a paediatric oncology nurse specialist and at the time of the first wave of the pandemic she worked at Whipps Cross Hospital.

“In order to ensure the safety of Children and Young People (CYP) with Cancer the decision was made in March 2020 to relocate Paediatric Oncology Services to the Royal London Hospital. This meant that Kristy’s role at Whipps Cross was also moved to follow the CYP and their families.

“Whilst the CYP, parents and staff understood the rational for moving the service it wasn’t easy for anyone. Relationships and bonds existed, trust had developed and the world was becoming a scary and unpredictable place so to move an entire service was huge for everyone involved.

“Kristy is adored by the CYP and their families and because she was moving with them it built confidence and the support they were so desperately in need of at this uncertain time.

“The move wasn’t easy for anyone but Kristy’s positive outlook and professionalism was amazing. Kristy truly partnered those CYP and their families to make the transition, safely.

“Kristy also up-skilled herself to care for adult intensive care patients. Showing



“That’s absolutely lovely.”

the same dedication and professionalism to this challenge.

“Kristy worked in adult intensive care at Whipps Cross and Royal London Hospitals during the first and second peaks. During the second peak Kristy was able to support more junior none intensive care staff to learn the art of caring for a critically ill patient and their family.

“Kristy demonstrates compassionate leadership in every aspect of her work and it’s an honour to work with her.”

Heather Noble, Acting Chief Executive, Whipps Cross Hospital said:

“On behalf of us all at Whipps Cross, I want to congratulate Ashley and Kristy on their well-deserved nominations.

“Kristy continues to go above and beyond for both our staff and patients and has been superb in supporting both groups during extremely difficult times. We are also incredibly fortunate to have Ashley as part of our Estates team - having someone with his knowledge and dedication has been invaluable. His care and passion shines through in everything he does.

“We hope these nominations go some way in letting Ashley and Kristy know how proud and grateful we are to have them as part of the Whipps Cross family.”

10/10/2021

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Ashley Nayeck

Ashley was nominated by David Herriott, Estates Manager Mechanical at Whipps Cross Hospital.

David nominated Ashley for his Outstanding work with the oxygen supplies for both Whipps Cross and the Royal London during the Covid crisis.

Ashley monitored and ensured that the supply of oxygen across the site was kept as stable as possible this was a 24 hour 7 day a week task to ensure the hospitals did not run out of oxygen in critical areas.

Ashley also kept the hospital medical team aware of the situation and informed them of the best areas for High-Flow patients.

Throughout the first and second Covid waves he single-handedly produced the daily oxygen demand report for the Trust to help us safely plan the use of oxygen to support our patients through those critical periods.

"I feel really proud to be nominated."

10/10/2021

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Claire Hartley

Claire was nominated by Lorraine Silver, a family friend.

Lorraine explained:

“ Last year, Claire set up a group on Facebook called Bags of Kindness. The organisation is there for women and children who have left their homes and have moved into a refuge. The families need many items for themselves and/or their children. Many people donate clothing, toiletries, items needed such as a fridge. There is also a birthday club where children receive presents and a birthday cake.

“Claire has a heart of gold. She works with people from all walks of life and is a fantastic example of what can be achieved in the community.

“Claire has worked so hard with Bags of Kindness and deserves to be nominated for all the work she has done and what she continues to do whilst also looking after her young family.”

"I was so touched to receive this nomination."

10/10/2021

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Abdullah Mohammed

Abdullah was nominated by Maryam Muhammad a volunteer who worked with him

Maryam explained:

“ I would like to nominate Mr Abdullah Mohammed who is an experienced Employment Solicitor who exclusively runs the Employment Law Project with occasional assistance of volunteers like myself. It is one of the most successful projects and probably the only service of its kind in the borough, helping vulnerable and low paid workers in resolving their employment problems and enforcing their rights.

“After the pandemic hit, the Employment Law Project led by Mr Mohammed completely changed its strategy to react to the situation and help many more people as they needed help due to the impact on their jobs. The service was kept open but remotely. Instead of doing a few concentrated casework, Mr Mohammed helped many more people by providing short employment advice for up to half an hour to tailor to the needs of the clients. Many more people reached us by phone and by email. Mr Mohammed advised and helped 4-5 clients a day which would be the number before the pandemic for a month.

“To deal with the overflow of employment enquiries, Mr Mohammed also trained myself and other volunteers at the Citizens Advice Redbridge to provide basic employment advice. He also reached out to local community organisations and trained them to identify basic employment issues and signpost to us. At the same time our GP Outreach Project was active and many clients came through



“Communities thrive best when they support each other and we’ve seen great initiatives by individuals and groups to lift the collective spirits during the pandemic. So it’s been a pleasure in helping and assisting as many people as possible during this crisis with their employment queries, especially vulnerable workers, as I strongly believe that “with every difficulty comes ease.”

that route for employment advice.

“I can honestly say that Mr Mohammed made a huge impact on everyone he advised and helped them save their jobs or enforce their rights when tensions were heightened and at these unprecedented times. He also was a great mentor for the volunteers as he gave us confidence, provided us necessary resources and was always on the lookout for our welfare.

“I think Mr Mohammed is an unsung hero and he deserves to be nominated as a hero for his service to the community over and beyond his work as he puts much more time and energy to his role as he genuinely believes in social justice and uses his profession to advance that cause.”

10/10/2021

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David Howard

David was nominated by Steffi Fisher, Practice Manager at Glebelands Practice

Steffi shared with us:

“ David is a patient at Glebelands Practice and he goes above and beyond to help us and the local community. David became an NHS Volunteer Responder in early 2020. The role was ‘Check in and Chat’ which involved predominantly vulnerable people or those at risk and shielding to offer support or just a listening ear.

“David then on top of that role David then got involved with Hospital transport which included transportation and collection of equipment from NHS facilities to patients with known or suspected chronic conditions who could not travel or leave the house. This also included delivering medication to those less able patients.

“When the vaccination hubs started up David also volunteered as a steward in the hubs and as a volunteer for the Redbridge Vaccination programme operated by Healthbridge Direct.

“All the above roles are still ongoing. David is also an active volunteer for NHS



“I do feel absolutely appreciative, if not deeply humbled by this nomination. However, there are far more health professionals, emergency services personnel, essential workers and volunteers - to mention just a few, whom perhaps, are far more deserving than I.”

Covid19 clinical research studies looking into the Beta Variant and has just been called up for a new trial at University College Hospital.

“In our eyes David Howard is a hero who offers his time freely to help others.

“True Heroes don’t wear capes!”

10/10/2021

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Jason Blackwell

Jason Blackwell, Blood Sciences Reception Supervisor has been nominated by Eden Watts, Medical Laboratory Assistant.

Eden told us:

“ I would like to nominate Jason Blackwell. He is the Pathology Reception Supervisor at King George Hospital (KGH).

“Not only did he get promoted during the pandemic to our supervisor, he also went above and beyond by helping out in the mortuaries across sites when the death rate was at its highest.

“He gave the utmost care to our patients who had sadly passed, he always put them first, and he made sure that our patients in the mortuary were looked after to the highest standard and cared for. He carried on throughout it all, regardless of how much of a mental toll it was taking on himself, he never gave up.

“He looks after us all in our reception area at KGH, everyone knows him in the Pathology department for his helpful, kind and caring nature. He has developed so much since his promotion and we have all seen such a positive change in him professionally too, he has taken to his new role like a duck to water and we are all so proud of him!



“I was very surprised when I found out I had been nominated. I feel honoured to be able to work with amazing teams of people who have persevered through these challenging times.”

“Throughout the whole of the pandemic, he has adapted, educated and developed himself incredible amounts. He has turned such a negative time into such a positive one for himself as a person.

“He doesn’t even realise the positive impact he has had on our department since he has taken on his newest role. So I think an opportunity like this will hopefully help to make him realise how much his work is appreciated, and noticed.”

10/10/2021

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Marianne Govinden

Marianne was nominated by her colleague, Nicola Loncke

Nicola shared with us:

“Marianne is a Speciality Matron working in a busy Emergency Department (ED). Marianne has dedicated her whole nursing career to Emergency Medicine, meaning she has worked in Emergency Departments both at KGH and Queens where she is still currently based.

“Marianne can be described as a very silent leader; she shows compassion, kindness and calmness at all times. Working alongside Marianne is an absolute pleasure but my biggest worry is she does not get recognised as much as she should do because she’s such a calm leader.

“As we went into the first and then the second waves of the Covid Ppandemic I used to look into her face every day and I could see the fear of the unknown. The worry of just not knowing how many patients were going to attend the ED every day and how little workforce we had because staff there self were becoming unwell despite every effort being made to keep them safe.

“Marianne was my personal strength, she just faced it head on day after day and she never complained, the only time I ever saw her shake is when she sat me down and asked are we really doing everything we possibly can to protect



“I am delighted my colleagues, Marianne and Jason, have been nominated for these awards. Like so many others who work at our Trust, they were dealing with the impact of Covid-19 on their own lives while also going above and beyond in delivering care to patients and support to their fellow workers. I am proud of them both.”

- Matthew Trainer, CEO of BHRUT NHS Trust

our team. I remember the day so clearly, her lips were dry, her hair going crazy after working in Resus for the morning making sure patients were safely being cared for under extreme circumstances.

“This was the day I realised she was a little HERO.... I say little as she’s tiny, but not in strength. Marianne worried about her nursing team so much and always went around the busy ED checking in on all staff members making them feel valued and cared for and never once did you hear her share her own worries.

“Marianne accepted that it was her calling to lead the ED throughout the pandemic; her team needed her and she never let them down.

“Throughout the pandemic I know there were many heroes but I just wanted to share that she was mine mainly just because she never ever lost her cool and she just gave 200% every second of every day for her ED team and patients.”

10/10/2021

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Dr Corinna Midgley

Corinna was nominated by Dr Lucy Bemand-Qureshi, Consultant in Palliative Medicine and Dr Rory Carrigan, Locum Consultant in Palliative Medicine

They told us:

“ Dr Midgley always goes above and beyond, keeping team morale at Saint Francis hospice high despite such a worrying time for everyone; but particularly so for the hospice sector which faces such financial hardship as a direct consequence of the pandemic. She often sends individualised and handwritten cards of condolences to patient’s families whom she has been involved in, and has done even more so throughout the pandemic.

“Dr Midgley worked throughout the entire pandemic and shifted her role as per the need and covered areas of staff shortages. She kept the hospice running at 80% bed capacity despite the need for creating new bed spaces, social distancing and high levels of staff sickness. This enabled even more people with advanced illness than usual to access palliative care services - due to the higher need for palliative care during the pandemic including those with Covid-19 infection who wished to avoid hospital admission.

“Dr Midgley carried out even more home visits (Redbridge, Havering, West Essex and Barking & Dagenham) than usual to support care of patients in their own homes whilst existing services were stretched. She helped take some pressure off hospitals e.g. by offering blood transfusions at the hospice, and met



“Thank you so much for this nomination: For me it’s all about the team. I work with both the Redbridge Macmillan Community Palliative Care team and the Saint Francis Hospice team (As Medical Director). The hospice provides support alongside the Macmillan team.

The sum and value of these teams, plus family and friends, carers, District Nurses, GP, hospital and care home staff is much more than any one component part.

We have seen huge need for help to access treatment, and of course support and care when dying. We have never seen and served so many in crisis. Covid-19 has been very isolating. The teams have been heroic and I so appreciate the recognition of that team effort through this nomination.”

increased demand for specialist advice from GPs and district nurses. She worked to deal with double the number of referrals over the past ten years without any increase in numbers of staff. Dr Midgley has gone above and beyond for her patients and staff.it’s an honour to work with her.”

10/10/2021

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Rough Sleepers Mental Health Team

The whole team were nominated by Kevin Sole, Assistant Integrated Care Director, Redbridge Integrated Care Services, NELFT

Kevin shared with us:

“ Throughout the pandemic, this team continues to work tirelessly to support Rough Sleepers on the streets of Redbridge. They were not able to make contact by virtual means, so they went above and beyond to be out and about through all weathers to ensure that people had access to care and support. Last Christmas they collected presents for all the rough sleepers they were aware of and personally supporting in the delivery of these to their client group. They did the same at Easter, ensuring everyone received an Easter egg.

“The team showed complete and utter flexibility, dedication and compassion to the needs of rough sleepers and helped a multitude of people gain access into services for treatment and support.

“The service set the bar high and put themselves at risk by supporting people in an outreach approach, as they felt their clients’ needs came first and they could not be left. They worked with outreach services, to offer support and ensure that referrals did not stop.



“I believe they are extremely worthy of this nomination, the service is a pilot for two years and we hope that at the end of the scheme, the service will and already has put care pathways in place for people and raised awareness amongst mental health services regarding the needs of rough sleepers.”

Oliver Shanley, CEO, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) commented:

“I am so proud of the work the team are doing in supporting rough sleepers. We know this client group need an enormous amount of support given the complexity of their needs. The pandemic made their needs even greater, and the team worked tirelessly in supporting the needs of the people they serve.

“Underpinning all of their expertise was care driven by compassion and a relentless focus on improving the life quality of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. In my eyes they are simply outstanding.”

10/10/2021

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Bushra Tahir

Bushra has been nominated for Covid hero status by many different members of the Redbridge community.

She is described as a selfless, devoted leader of the AWAAZ women’s empowerment and support group in Ilford. Bushra is described as a person whose hard work and dedication has led to women in vulnerable situations feeling supported, respected, heard and motivated to progress in their educational and family lives. Many nominations have articulated Bushra’s kindness and great skill in offering tailored support to women in many different situations.

Numerous nominations reflect her ability to ‘make pathways for families to get better.’ For example, one nominee who is a single parent with young children, felt that Bushra had been an “awesome support in motivation” to do a course to progress in her education. Another nominee felt that Bushra had enabled access to a food bank which sustained a family through acute disadvantage during lockdown.

Bushra further enabled a link between families donating to the foodbank and those families in receipt of crisis support. The nominations further demonstrate support given by Bushra to a family in order to access free legal advice in a situation which threatened their safety.



“I strongly believe sympathy should go towards to Empathy to empower someone in their life.”

One nomination simply read, “Bushra looks after me.” In all these ways Bushra is clearly a cherished and greatly valued community leader who is devoted to those around her and is a Covid hero to many.”

10/10/2021

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L. Silver
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Lesley Caroline

Pat Fitzsimmons from AGE UK Redbridge, Barking and Havering (Age UK RBH) nominated three of their volunteers as Covid heroes.

Pat told us:

“Everyone at Age UK RBH would nominate Lesley as a hero, but for very different reasons than other volunteers. She is unique at Age UK RBH because of her skillset - she’s an IT wiz. It would not be untrue to say that Age UK RBH, like many charities, does not have the most up to date IT system. We have IT support, but it’s absolutely invaluable to have Lesley as a volunteer here. She is regularly called upon to help numerous members of staff with our database, Charity Log.

“She has trained me long-distance (during lockdown) on how to use Charity Log, and regularly manages the printing out of labels, which isn’t an easy task. We need labels printed out on a regular basis because we have to write to our clients instead of emailing.

“During lockdown, she was happy to answer questions over the phone about the database for all staff to enable people to work safely from home and helped to sort out problems and mistakes made. She even took time to help



“How nice to be nominated! I feel privileged to volunteer with Age UK RBH because they do such worthwhile work. It’s good to be doing something useful.”

train a new member of staff that started during the pandemic.

“She’s also so nice, cheerful, calm and reliable, everything you need from a volunteer.

“I know that Age UK RBH would really suffer if Lesley weren’t here to help.”

10/10/2021

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L. Silver
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Lorraine Dawes

Lorraine was nominated by Pat Fitzsimmons from AGE UK RBH

Pat told us:

“Lorraine has been beavering away in the background, getting all Wanstead service users onto our database, Charity Log, into clubs and clinics, collating statistics and offering IT classes as well.

“During lockdown, she was prepared to talk service users through the ‘setting up’ process to enable them to access classes that were available via zoom, not only ensuring that older people maintained their physical and mental well-being and kept contact with the organisation, but also enabled them to use the technology with family and friends, which was a real life line.”

“How nice to be nominated! I feel privileged to volunteer with Age UK RBH because they do such worthwhile work. It’s good to be doing something useful.”

10/10/2021

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And finally, a fitting nomination from Edmond Smithers at BHRUT that seemed to sum-up the views of many nominees. We felt it deserved to be turned into a poem!

Superheroes

*I wish to nominate every member
of the nursing and allied healthcare workforce
deployed at anytime
during the covid waves at BHRUT
In the critical care areas.*

*Each one of them is not just a hero/heroine
In the face of death.*












*Each one of them is a superhero
delivering care,
hour upon hour
at the bedside
without any concern for their own mortality
sometimes 1 nurse for six critical care patients.*

*If that is not a superhero/heroine
I do not know what is.*

Edmond



Links

-  [Redbridge Council](#)
-  [Citizens Advice Redbridge](#)
-  [Glebelands Practice](#)
-  [Whipps Cross Hospital](#)
-  [Rough Sleepers Mental Health Team](#)
-  [AWAAZ women's empowerment and support group](#)
-  [AGE UK Redbridge, Barking, and Havering](#)
-  [Saint Francis Hospice](#)
-  [Redbridge Macmillan Paliative Care](#)
-  [Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals](#)
-  [Coronavirus information hub](#)





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