

# Helping Hands

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NHS Foundation Trust



## Setting the scene

Even prior to the pandemic and all that brought, chaplaincy was involved in supporting our staff both practically and financially, for example:

Period Poverty

Foodbank voucher provision

Support at HR meetings

Financial support from Chapel Funds



# Numbers...Staff support

From Apr 21 – Mar 22 we conducted **1269** individual sessions (1 hour minimum) in this reporting period for Trust staff

- From bereavement to shielding
- Foodbank vouchers
- Emergency accommodation following Domestic Violence
- We provided food for staff to take home when they came to see us in despair
- Helped source charitable grants or funds

But what we realised....



**‘We are all but one pay statement  
away from problems’**



Healthcare at its best  
with people at our heart

## Areas of need which became more apparent during the pandemic...

- Workplace hunger
- Rent arrears/mortgage
- Relationship breakdown
- Furlough knock on
- Latterly the fuel cap lifting
- Price of living
  - Combined with the stress of the pandemic



# Pay it Forward meal cards

## Meal card guide

Your meal card has £30 when it is first issued and can be used at these outlets to pay for food and drink whilst at work.:

- The Bistro at the RVI
- The canteen at the FH
- The café at Regent Point

Receipts are available to help keep track of a running total.

When the card gets to £0 credit the cashier will remind you to contact chaplaincy.

Please contact the chaplaincy team 48129, or in person, or by emailing [nuth.chaplaincy@nhs.net](mailto:nuth.chaplaincy@nhs.net) to hand the card back in and discuss further support.



# Period Poverty

- Red box project with Mutual Aid organisations for schools
- Staff donated to these boxes across the Trust
- When period provision became statute in schools we kept our collection boxes recognising the need for our staff continued
- We make up and hold a month 'Little brown bag' with a selection of sanitary products, a nice body spray or such and a decent bar of chocolate
- Staff can collect from us across the Trust without question



# Foodbank vouchers

- We have been involved with the Foodbanks since 2016
- We have collection points across the Trust
- Certain times of the year we do themed collections
- We have been Foodbank voucher providers at that time
- Staff come to us for a voucher
- On occasion we take staff up to the Foodbank
- Sometimes we go for the staff member so as to protect their dignity at work





*‘Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day.  
Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a  
lifetime.’*

It can be more beneficial in the long run to teach a person how to do something than to do that something for them.



## Recognition we needed to adapt, overcome and improvise

A need for bespoke advice that was too multi faceted and complex for us as chaplains to deal with

A way of making sure people could be sustained as this came into being



**citizens advice** Gateshead

# Quick access to free, confidential advice.

All staff at Newcastle Hospitals can directly access impartial support from Citizens Advice Gateshead.

- Struggling to make ends meet?
- Worried about your money?
- Need advice on budgeting?
- Anxious about your energy bills?
- Looking for benefits advice?
- Concerned about your housing?
- Having problems with your relationship?
- Seen changes in your health?

Citizens Advice Gateshead is an independent charity and all information you provide will be in confidence.

**Newcastle Hospitals Charity**

This service is funded by Newcastle Hospitals Charity

Email : NuTHStaffAdvice@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk  
Call: 0191 814 4215

**Flourish** at Newcastle Hospitals

Having seen the success of a similar project for families in our Great North Children’s Hospital

- ❖ We submitted a grant application to the Newcastle Hospitals Charity
- ❖ We were successful in our bid and the service came on stream in August 2021



## Example

The direct access to social welfare advice service for staff of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals supported 10 staff members during the month of January.

We assisted the clients with 33 separate issues the main ones were:

- Financial services and capability
- Relationships and family
- Universal Credit



**Helping Hands** provides support to Newcastle Hospitals staff in urgent financial need.

 **Flourish**  
Staying Well



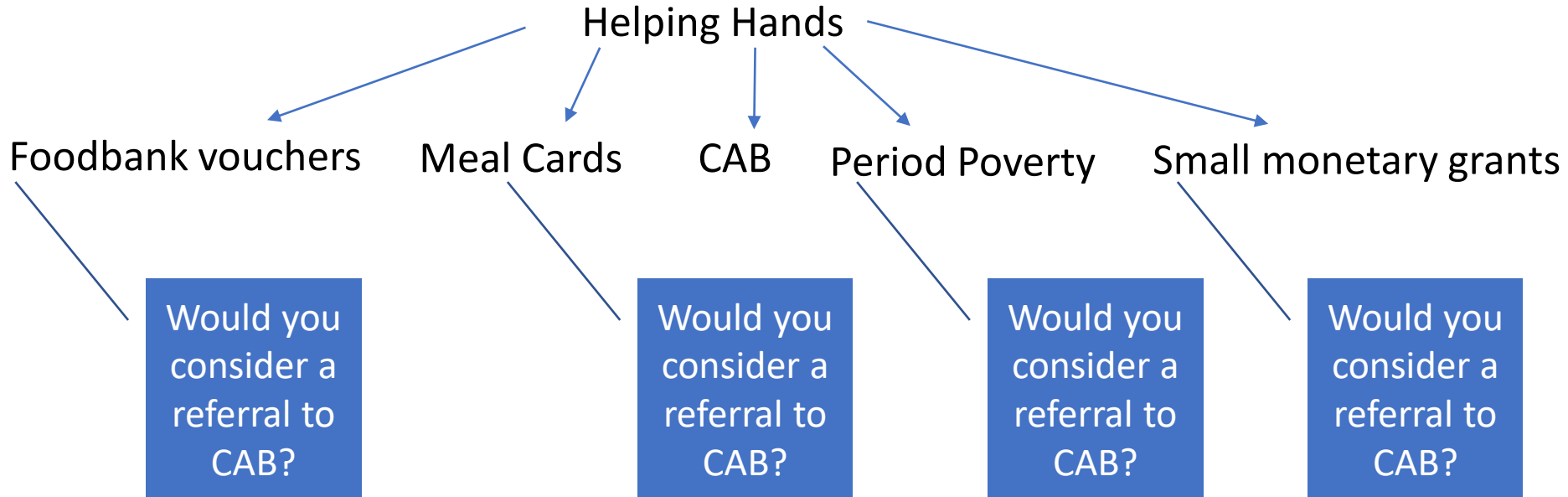
## Helping Hands



The service is delivered by our Chaplaincy Team and is open to any member of staff at times of financial crisis. Chaplaincy can be reached 24/7 every day of the year on either **48129** (8.30am – 4.30pm), or via switchboard at all other times.



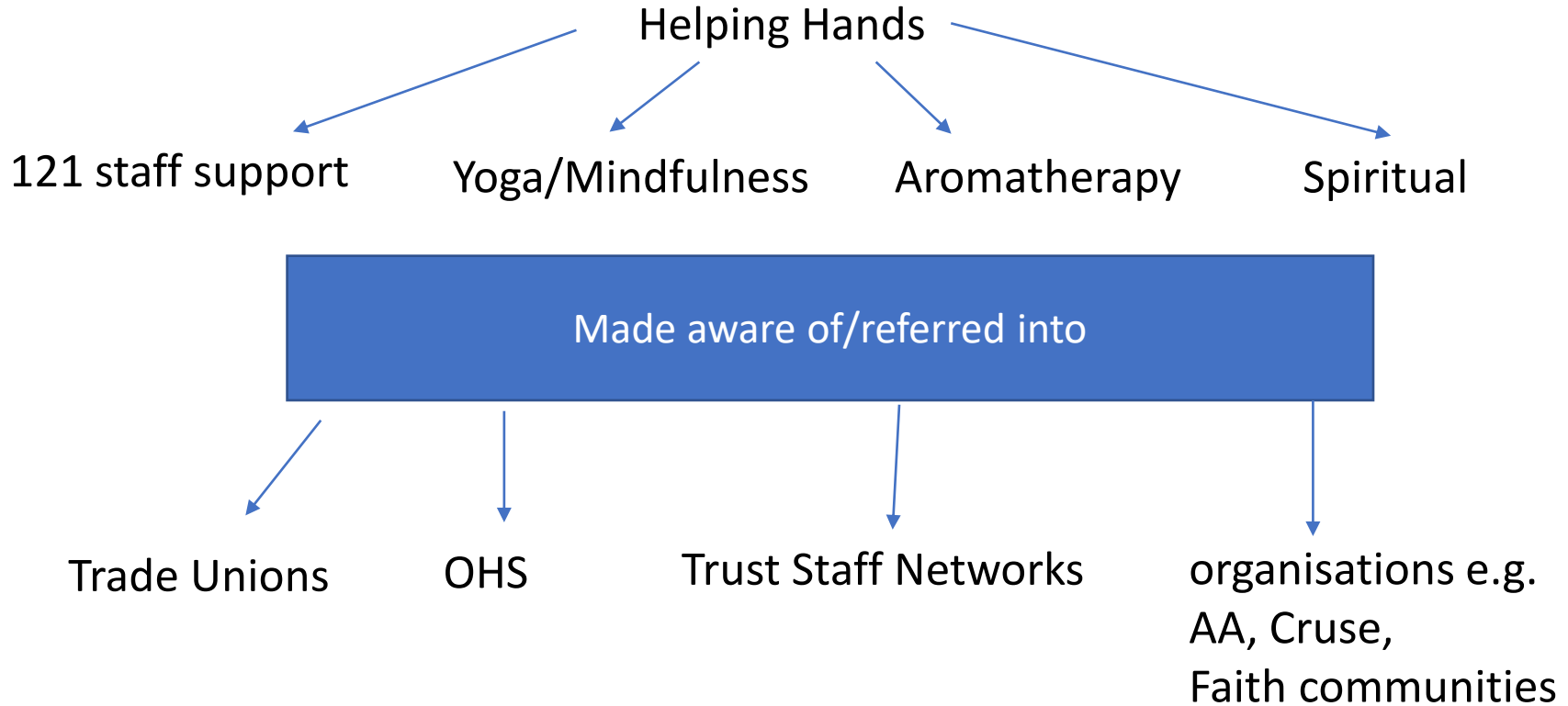
# Bringing it all together



Help is not conditional on a CAB referral being accepted by the Staff member



# And combining our holistic approach



## Offers across the wider Trust

The Helping Hands stable is only one of several staff support offers across the Trust, other examples are:

- Benefits Everyone - Salary Sacrifice Schemes
- Subsidised Childcare
- Cycle to work scheme
- Work bus/public transport travel passes
- Staff Social Club
- Moneywise Credit Union
- WageStream





## Offers across the wider Trust

- Pensions Information Webinars
- Retirement Planning Workshops
- Discounted Will Writing Services
- Opportunity to buy and sell Annual Leave
- Barclays Bank Financial Wellbeing Webinars
- Occupational Health Service
- Trade Unions
- Access to the TogetherAll Mental Health service



## Going forward....

- Extend the CAB scheme for another year
- Implement a Pay it Fwd hardship fund for all staff to access or donate to
- Strengthen our links with the Trade Unions
- Ongoing myth busting and barrier busting



# Questions/Comments?



Healthcare at its best  
with people at our heart