# Press Release | 25.01.24

**Popular patient buggy service expands**

* **Service now running weekdays 9am to 3.30pm thanks to 14 trained volunteers**
* **Buggy stops at Main QEH car park, Emerson Unit (outpatients) and hospital entrance**
* **New signs, bus stops and eye-catching flags go up around site to raise awareness**
* **Patients call buggy ‘best ever idea’ for patient experience and a service that ‘takes the dread out of the hill’.**

Our volunteer-led car park buggy service to assist patients and visitors with mobility issues getting around The QEH site will be operating for longer each weekday after a hugely successful trial.

A group of people standing on a small vehicle

Description automatically generatedOur newly expanded team of 14 fully-trained volunteer drivers are now working in shifts to put on a 9am to 3.30pm weekday service.

This buggy follows a circular route from The QEH main car park, up to the Emerson Unit, through to the main entrance and the back down to the main car park and means patients and visitors with mobility issues should not have to wait longer than 15 minutes for the shuttle service, subject to seating availability on the six-seater vehicle.

New signage advertising the service and bus stop signs are being installed around the hospital site as well as some eye-catching flags put up in the main car park to promote the buggy.

Since the service was piloted in September, operating a 9am to noon schedule, patients have been quick to praise the service and our fantastic team of volunteer drivers, with some calling it our ‘best ever idea’ for patient experience and a service that ‘takes the dread out of the hill’.

Other patients and visitors have told us through user surveys that:

* I am disabled & walk on crutches. Parking availability left us in the big car park so walking to the Emerson Unit would have been very painful. I was very grateful that the buggy & lovely volunteer driver was available.
* Great option. It was service with a smile. Thank you.
* Brilliant, helped a lot. Driver very friendly.
* Excellent service very helpful, made appointments less stressful.
* Saved me a very painful journey up hill. Excellent service.
* Driver and helper were very helpful and kind, most grateful for their advice and directions.

The hill is the difficult-to-manouevre incline from the main hospital car park to the hospital reception and it was feedback from visitors to our site who voiced concerns about the difficulty of walking up the gradient that led to the development of the patient buggy service.

Members of the Patient and Carers Forum were involved in the service planning stages and, by working with the QEH Estates and Facilities and Volunteer Services teams, were able to advise on how the service would best benefit users.

Linda Purdy, Associate Director of Patient Experience, said: “We are all really delighted that the patient buggy is making such a difference to people and by extending the hours we will be able to help even more people get to where they need to go with greater ease. We will continue to review the service and see how it can be further developed over time and as the weather improves.”

Jo Rowe, Voluntary Services Manager, added: “Our fantastic team of volunteer drivers and helpers thoroughly enjoy delivering this service. So many from our army of volunteers at The QEH have wanted to be involved with it and the great feedback they receive from those it is helping has been truly heart-warming.”

The route of the service is depicted in the map, *right.* You can also take a whistlestop tour yourself in this sped-up video on the [QEH YouTube channel here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBGjyVGvs1c)

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**Notes to editors;**

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