



The objectives/aims for the conference were:

- to develop knowledgeable volunteers and deliver key messages about our strategy;
- to show the rich picture of the work Macmillan does and how volunteers' support contributes to this work;
- to provide a range of practical skills and development opportunities;
- to showcase a range of volunteering opportunities to enable volunteers to take up other opportunities;
- to gain insight from volunteers about a range of Macmillan projects involving volunteers;
- to provide opportunities for volunteers to meet, share best practise, learn from one another and to feel part of a wider community.

The objectives for the awards were:

- to thank outstanding individuals and groups for their contribution to Macmillan's work and to showcase their stories.

As a result of attending do you agree with the following statements:	Results - either 'strongly agree' or 'agree'
I know more about Macmillan's work and future	96%
I feel inspired to tell others about Macmillan's work	96%
I feel part of the wider Macmillan team	95%
I found the networking opportunities beneficial	92%
I can see how my contribution makes a difference	87%
The event provided opportunities to further my skills	86%
I feel that Macmillan listens to and values my opinion	85%

*'I feel valued as a volunteer and have been inspired to go the extra mile after meeting others and hearing their views.'*

**Delegates were also asked about the specific actions they would take as a result of attending the conference.** The majority responded that they would tell others about the event, that they would encourage others to volunteer with Macmillan and encourage other volunteers to attend the conference in the future.

### Volunteer Awards

Despite a slow start to the evening following a fire alarm the awards ceremony, hosted by gold medal-winning Paralympian Giles Long, ran very smoothly. There were 33 individual and group winners selected by the national awards panel, each of whom received a Macmillan volunteer award. Almost 70% of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the ceremony was a good way to recognise the outstanding work of volunteers and described the event as humbling, inspiring and well delivered.

*'As part of the conference it did help enthuse all those delegates and screamed, "We can't do this without you and we appreciate your support so much...." I felt the awards demonstrate Macmillan's respect for volunteers'*

The awards were also a great way to obtain press coverage to promote the awards and the dedication of our amazing volunteers. Press activity and photos were sent out with coordinated press releases for the first time the very next working day after the conference. Of the 32 press releases 18 obtained at least one piece of coverage (56% hit rate). Viewing/circulation figures ('opportunities to see') for print, TV and some of the online coverage was: **281,779 people**. The AVE (advertising value equivalent) of print only was **£12,806**.

## Things to improve on

You Said	We Listened
<b><i>'Registration was over complicated.'</i></b>	<i>'The overall registration was very time consuming – including pre-registration, registration and travel booking as well as ongoing delegate queries.'</i> <i>Moving forward we are going to simplify these steps and we aim to get clear information out to volunteers to explain the registration process.</i>
<b><i>'The venue was lovely but didn't seem practical for disabled people and finding workshops was complex.'</i></b>	<i>'The venue, while it was in a good location and the service they provided was great, it was unsuitable for a number of delegates'.</i> <i>A venue with better disabled access and signage will be our top priority for the next conference.</i>
<b><i>'It would be useful if the exhibitions could be made more distinguishable, e.g. colour variation.'</i></b>	<i>In our planning for the volunteer conference 2016 we are looking to group the exhibition stands into topics and to produce a different area layout and map. We are also looking into the possibility of allocating time in the programme for the exhibition and not coupling it with refreshment breaks. This will give volunteers more time to seek information regarding Macmillan about which they would like to hear.</i>
<b><i>'I thought we were lectured at with opportunity for two way interactions only at the very end.'</i></b>	<i>We are going to be providing more guidance and structure around the planning and development of the workshops next year. The focus will be on listening to volunteers' ideas and opinions or learning and development opportunities. We will be involving volunteers in the planning of the programme and content through social media, the UK Volunteer Forum or other advisory groups of volunteers.</i>
<b><i>'Perhaps others should be taking my place at future conferences.'</i></b>	<i>We would like as many individual volunteers as possible to attend the volunteer conference. It's also important that we give everyone a chance to attend so that more people have the skills and motivation to ensure no one faces cancer alone. Therefore we will be offering priority registration to those volunteers that didn't attend any Macmillan conferences in 2015 first, along with those representing a volunteer group or team.</i>

***'I have come away feeling more enthused than ever about the volunteering I started two years ago. I will do a talk at the next Buddy team meeting telling other volunteers about the weekend'***

**And finally, when asked about next year...a whopping 97% of delegates think the conference should continue next year.**