



60 Seconds with Vicky-Ann, Volunteer

Vicky-Ann was due to start volunteering as a **Patient Research Champion** at Newham Hospital with our Stroke research team before the COVID-19 outbreak. For now instead, she volunteers by attending virtual meetings twice a week; one representing Barts Health Patient Research Champions at the National Institute Health Research (NIHR) Research Champions catch ups and the other with the Barts Health COVID-19 research PPIE advisory group.

Why did you get involved? What motivated you?

I got involved because I want to learn more about what researchers do and to gain more knowledge and support others, support researchers, help to deliver and understand information about people taking part in research. I'm motivated because I've been diagnosed with a chronic disease so I wanted to find out more about other diseases, how and why it attacked certain people, what cure can be given and how to do research into diagnosis and new medicine.

What benefits do you think you personally received? Also, any negative experiences?

I benefit from the information given on what has been going on with COVID -19 research, how can we tackle each problem, what can we put in place to raise awareness and how do we go about it and how to get more people involved in the research. I have had no negative experiences but have gained more interest and awareness about COVID-19.

What benefits do you think COVID-19 research will bring to patients in the future? Also, any perceived negative impacts?

The benefits that it will bring in the future are that people will have a positive approach about the COVID-19 research and a better understanding of what COVID-19 is. They will know what symptoms to look out for and what to do if they have any signs. I have no negative impacts.

If you had to list some positive things that came out of your experience of being involved in COVID-19 research - what would they be and why?

1. Having a better understanding of COVID-19; to be able to answer a question on COVID-19 to friends and family.
2. Happy to be part of an amazing team; improve my skills and approach and confidence. I know I definitely want to pursue a career in research.
3. Want to encourage more people to volunteer in research; it has left a positive impact on my life.

In a nutshell how has being involved in COVID-19 research development activities had a positive experience on your life?

This has given me a better insight into COVID-19, more knowledge and understanding around the virus. It has given me the ability and experience to get to be part of something amazing, find out more about what is going on around us and get involved in more research.