



# 'I am not a hero'

Peter Glover (Woking) shares with Shanelle Manderson how God is using him to help others during the coronavirus crisis

**'**I n the past three weeks I've worked on average around 70 hours a week. I've never been busier than I am now!' says Peter Glover, clinical lead for proactive medicine at Farnham Integrated Care Services. The service offers a streamlined way of accessing same-day GP appointments for patients of Farnham's three largest GP practices.

Peter, who has been a registered clinician for 20 years, normally heads up a team of community paramedics, doctors and nurses who work alongside people from multiple health

disciplines: community nurses, mental health practitioners, staff from the voluntary sector, GPs and social work teams. His role involves identifying patients, particularly older people, who are at an increased risk and intervening to prevent them from getting ill or needing hospital admission. This is particularly important during the coronavirus pandemic as the disease is easily transferable. He also ensures that the right care is in place at the right time for patients who have ended up in hospital, to enable a safe and quick discharge.

Peter achieves this in a number of ways: arming individuals and families with knowledge about their conditions; looking ahead at patients' notes, identifying potential health issues that may arise and organising reviews to get on top of them; and taking a whole-person approach when looking at an individual rather than looking at an illness in isolation. He makes sure the problem at hand is not the result of something else, then shares his insight and allows the patient to choose the best pathway for them. This moves the care away from hospital to the home, where the patient can be better cared for.

'If someone with a lung condition like asthma suddenly had a chest infection, they could end up in hospital on medication given through an IV drip,' explains Peter. 'They would be at a higher risk of picking up an infection. So, one of the things I would do is make sure they know how to get hold of their GP just in case they suddenly feel unwell, provide the correct medicine for the patient to have at home just in case and create an escalation plan with a clear list of dos and don'ts.'

'The more I can help a person understand and self-manage their conditions, the more likely they are to be able to stay at home, healthy and well.'



*Peter in the hospital chapel*

On a normal day Peter would visit prospective patients in their homes to talk about how holistically they live day to day, but many of the conversations currently take place over the phone or Skype, and many of the people he speaks to are at risk of catching coronavirus.

'I've found I'm having more meaningful conversations with patients about their deepest fears and how I can support them,' he says.

Despite a sudden influx of patients,

Peter remains focused on ensuring he does his job well and has been involved in setting up various enterprises. He identified the need for a coronavirus assessment and treatment area in the town after realising an increasing number of at-risk residents had no choice but to attend accident and emergency.

With the support of GPs and the NHS 111 telephone service, he set up a rapid assessment centre for up to 100 patients a day with suspected coronavirus symptoms. These patients are examined in their cars by the advanced clinical team and, where possible, signposted and treated on the same day. While some attendees have not been diagnosed as suffering with the virus, all have been ill and some have required emergency hospital treatment. Local volunteers, including from The Salvation Army, have been sourced to staff the area, alleviating pressure on other areas of the NHS.

An outdoor phlebotomy clinic has also been set up to ensure older patients, who are already at risk from complications and require regular routine blood tests, maintain some consistency, while minimising the risk of transmitting the virus.

A community freephone service has brought together groups, churches and

much ties in with my faith and my belief that you can't treat a soul if the head is hurting.'

While by day Peter supports vulnerable members of the community, he is also a registered clinician with the NHS ambulance service and has been doing extra work at weekends and in the evenings. He wears PPE along with his uniform to work, including a face mask, gloves and an apron.

'Every time I walk into someone's house I'm putting my family at risk because I'm potentially exposing myself to the virus,' he acknowledges.

'Two colleagues that I've known personally have died. But if I and others don't go to work, systems fail. Systems, for me, are real people – real souls in peril needing a friendly face to share their current pain or problem with.'

His family is supportive of all that he is doing but having his faith to lean on has also been beneficial.

'I believe I was given this job, blessed with these skills and given these life experiences to help others. I'm just allowing God to use what he created in the first place,' Peter enthuses.

'God's love has helped me when I couldn't cope or see, God's practical support has strengthened me when I fell and couldn't get up, God's grace



*Coronavirus rapid assessment centre*

organisations to provide volunteers who can deliver groceries or medication to vulnerable people or talk to those who are lonely.

Peter's contribution to these initiatives originates from his faith and experience of the Army.

'As a faith-based organisation, we don't conform, we challenge and confront,' says Peter. 'We take church to the people. We don't pick the bits of society we like; we care and serve the whosoever. My professional role very

has provided the forgiveness to heal and rebuild and God's hope has allowed me to dream and believe.

'People talk about NHS heroes but I am not a hero. I'm just trying to live a life by, and share, my faith. If I can affect one patient, one family, if I can hold someone's hand when they are unexpectedly poorly, that to me is the loudest clap I could ever receive, the biggest pat on the back, as that's a privilege not many people are afforded. I feel very humbled.'