

Our hospitals and NHS in the community have taken on so much symbolic meaning in the last few weeks – holding for us both our greatest collective hopes and our unspeakable fears.

The lived experience of those in hospital, and those living with poor health in the community have, until recently, been hidden from all – except those who live or work with them. The roles of those workers have also been hidden – but are coming to be known and their value I hope, realised more fully– those family members who care for vulnerable relatives at home, porters, cleaners, home carers, district nurses, occupational therapists, phlebotomists, radiographers, midwives, community psychiatric nurses, chaplains, speech and language therapists, NHS logistics workers, canteen staff
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I've been so moved by how much genuine mutual care and love the hospital and community I work in have shown each other – and the patients to us – we thank each other, we ask after one another, we smile with our eyes when we are wearing a mask.

I am wary of romanticising this time though, and of that 'heroic' narrative - both as an NHS worker and as an NHS patient. It's really, really hard, from both sides.