Looking back over the past 15 years, I realise how much my career has influenced my retired life in the volunteering activities I have undertaken, and also in my personal life. Like many transgender women, my partner wanted to improve her female voice, and through Bulletin, I was able to link her needs with an SLT. My Swedish grandchildren (now aged 5 and 8) speak English, Swedish and Danish, and listening to and being involved (and occasionally giving advice) in their language development has been fascinating.

Soon after retiring, I trained to volunteer on a telephone helpline for IPSEA (Independent Parental Special Educational Advice), a demanding but satisfying commitment that I have now been involved with for 14 years. Although much of my working life was with children, the IPSEA work has been a huge learning curve, especially since statements became EHCPs (Education and Health Care Plans) in 2014. I joined a board at the RCSLT for two years, where I was actively involved in working to support retired members, in particular. For five years, I was also a governor of a local special school for secondary-age pupils with moderate learning difficulties, where I enjoyed the contact with staff, parents and students.

I am also involved in local health groups as a member of the patient panel at my local surgery, my local Trust, and also of Healthwatch in Warwickshire. The challenges facing the NHS are huge, but so too is the commitment of its staff at all levels.

Retirement has also given my partner and I the time to travel in the UK and abroad. A walking trip to Patagonia, a kayaking holiday in Mexico, a visit to relatives in Australia and, most recently, a two-week walking trip to Iceland have been some of the highlights.

So far retirement has been kind to me—my partner, myself and our daughters are all fit and well, and we follow with delight the exploits of our four grandchildren. As for the future, I hope to carry on with my present commitments and continue to develop our garden using the tools given to me as a retirement gift.

This article was written at the suggestion of the late Gill Stubbles, to whom thanks are due.