
Policy

Volunteers Policy

Policy Summary

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Volunteers are recruited, managed, developed and supported in line with Trust Policy, best practice and in compliance with both legislative NHS standards.

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1.0 Introduction

A volunteer is any participant who supports our services in an unpaid capacity by the Trust. They are individuals who give valuable time to help the Trust deliver its quality service and enhance user experience in roles where they are not remunerated for the service they offer.

1.1 Volunteers help in various ways to provide a wide range of extra services, which improve the quality of life in hospital for patients. Examples include:

- greeting and directing patients: we have information points at both hospitals, where volunteers greet people on arrival and direct patients and visitors to wards, clinics and departments
- providing clerical and general assistance:
 - in outpatient clinics, volunteers may file information and letters, deal with simple queries and chat to waiting patients
 - on the wards, volunteers may tend to flowers and visit patients as chaplaincy volunteers
- distributing magazines and books: volunteers use our trolley to provide library books and magazines to wards and departments
- providing complementary care: some qualified volunteer complementary therapists offer staff support sessions within cancer services
- helping in cancer services: volunteers may befriend and help patients with refreshments, offering general support during a patient's visit or stay in hospital and help staff with simple clerical tasks.

1.2 The role of the volunteer is complementary to the work of our paid staff.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide reference and guidance for the recruitment, selection, management, support and training of all volunteers at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. To also ensure they know how to speak out safely in line with Trust policy, best practice and in compliance with both legislative and NHS standards in order to ensure that volunteering remains a valuable experience for all.

2.2 The findings from the Themes and lessons learnt from NHS Investigation in matters relating to Jimmy Savile (DH :2015) set out clear recommendations on safe recruitment that should include DBS checks and safeguarding training that should both be renewed three yearly.

2.3 The benefits of having volunteers as part of an organisation are widely recognised. Strategic Vision for Volunteers in Health and Social Care (DH: 2010) recommends NHS Trusts enhance their services through the engagement of volunteers. Furthermore Volunteering in Acute Trusts in England (Kings Fund : 2013) highlighted that volunteers help by:

- Improving patient experience
- Building a closer relationship between services and local communities
- Tackling inequalities
- Supporting integrated care

2.4 This policy will also demonstrate the Trust's commitment to the volunteer

programme and the individual volunteers as a valuable resource. The role is to complement, not substitute the work of paid staff.

3.0 Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all volunteers for all Trust services.

4.0 Policy Objectives

4.1 Through this policy the Trust aims :

- To set out that recruitment of volunteers are in line with safe recruitment practices and in keeping with Trust policy.
- To attract and retain a diverse volunteer force which is representative of the community it serves.
- To ensure that the roles are open to all sections of the community and consistent with the Trusts recruitment policy and our commitment to fair and equitable treatment.
- To ensure that paid staff understand why volunteers are involved and the role they have within the organisation.
- To support the aims of improving the experience of patients, engaging the local community and maintaining the reputation of the organisation.
- To help individuals gain the confidence and skills they need to join / rejoin the jobs market and apply for paid posts.
- To expose the career opportunities in the NHS to volunteers who may be looking for a career in healthcare.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Accountability is to the **Office of the Chief Nurse**.

5.2 The **Deputy Chief Nurse** is responsible for ensuring that:

- Voluntary services are developed, promoted, organised and managed across the organisation.
- Effective policies and procedures are established and developed for the utilisation of volunteers.
- Volunteers are recruited, trained and placed appropriately across the Trust.
- Assurances are provided to the Trust of the recruitment, pre-employment screening and adherence to equality legislation processes.
- There is participation in internal audits as required.

5.3 The **Voluntary Services Lead** is responsible for :

- Ensuring that volunteer recruiting follow the correct protocols and procedures and adhere to Trust policies.
- Ensuring the procedures for recruiting and supporting volunteers are proportionate to the roles being undertaken and kept as simple and straightforward as possible within legal and organisational constraints.
- Ensuring paid staff have the support and information they need in order to work well with volunteers.
- Ensuring good practice in health and safety matters ie a duty of care towards volunteers.
- Ensuring volunteers have the same respect and care as employees with clarity for all that the relationship is non contractual.

- Ensuring volunteers are aware of how to raise any matters of concern.
- Ensuring regular feedback sessions are organised for volunteers.
- Ensuring the volunteer handbook sets out boundaries of roles, access and supervision whilst within organisation
- Interacting with volunteers, respecting and valuing their contribution.

5.4 **Voluntary Services Team** are responsible for:

- Performing administration relating to recruitment and selection, including all pre-employment checks and arrangements for three yearly DBS renewal
- Arranging a programme of statutory mandatory training in partnership with Training and Development; ensuring three yearly training such as safeguarding is undertaken.
- Implementing a programme of operational support and training for volunteers not attached to a clinical area or department, for example Wayfinding.
- Monitoring the reliability, attendance and performance of volunteers.
- Interacting with volunteers, respecting and valuing their contribution.

5.5 The **Head of Workforce Resourcing** will support the volunteering team by ensuring recruitment and selection of volunteers are in line with Trust policy that includes DBS clearance.

5.6 **Clinical or departmental staff across the organisation** are responsible for the role of the volunteer in their work setting, including local induction, provision of any necessary training, detail of their access within departments, boundary of roles including relationship with users and daily support. They will work with the voluntary service lead on the recruitment of all volunteers.

5.7 The **Training and Development Department** will work with the Voluntary Services Team to deliver a programme of statutory mandatory training for volunteers in compliance with legislative and organisational demands. They will organise training as required to ensure fulfilment of volunteering roles, including any updates.

6.0 Policy Delivery and Implementation

6.1 This policy sets out the principles which inform the involvement of volunteers. Volunteers play an important part in enhancing the patients' experience at Guys and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and are expected to contribute in accordance with the Trust Values. It should be noted that it is not intended for volunteers to replace paid staff.

6.2 Operational procedures adhere to key Trust policies, including confidentiality, health and safety and recruitment guidelines. The following overarching standards will apply.

7.0 Recruitment

Prior to recruiting volunteers, wherever possible consultation and discussion should take place with staff requesting volunteers to ensure there is a genuine need for volunteers and to develop a clear description of their role. Once a volunteer is placed, each department should have an identified lead for supporting them.

All new volunteers are required to:

- Complete an application form
- Attend an interview
- If provisionally accepted, complete pre employment checks as directed
- Commit to attending a programme of Trust induction and statutory mandatory training.

8.0 Role outline

8.1 Role specifications are established prior to recruitment, with key activities, competencies and minimum time commitment described. In accordance with Trust Policy each role is required to have a Functional Requirement Form completed to show the functional requirements of the role.

9.0 Pre-Employment Checks

9.1 Volunteers are required to complete the following checks before they are issued with an ID badge and volunteer agreement:.

- Provide the names, contact details of two independent referees for reference clearance
- Provide photo ID
- If necessary provide evidence of right to remain and work in Great Britain
- To have Disclosure and Barring Service clearance commensurate with role ie regulated/unregulated and provide copies of the certificate when issued
- Undergo Occupational Health Screening

10.0 Diversity

10.1 Volunteering offers opportunities and it is essential that roles are open to all sections of the community and any advertising and recruiting procedures are consistent with our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

11.0 Induction and Training

11.1 All volunteers are expected to attend a planned programme of corporate and mandatory training; this should include health & safety, safeguarding, infection control that are updated three yearly. Any additional local training will also be provided at no cost to the volunteer. All volunteers are to attend requested training that will provide updates on any trust changes or that may help to enhance their role.

12.0 Expenses

12.1 A contribution towards refreshments is provided for all volunteers. This is normally in the form of a meal voucher. An additional contribution towards travel costs can be made to ensure the volunteer role is accessible. This must be agreed in advance.

13.0 Reporting responsibilities

13.1 The Volunteer programme is co-ordinated by the Voluntary Services Team. Volunteers are given local contact names where possible and are encouraged to raise any issues or concerns there, for early resolution. Any unresolved issues should be escalated to the manager of volunteering services.

14.0 Information Sharing

14.1 Staff side will be kept informed of developing roles to ensure the positions of volunteers remain complementary and distinct from paid roles.

15.0 Insurance

15.1 Volunteers are insured for the activities they do on behalf of the Trust, provided they are within the guidelines agreed by their 'manager' and within the time frames of their 'shift'.

16.0 Statement of Agreement

16.1 Volunteers will not have a contract with the Trust nor will they be considered an employee. A written volunteer agreement is signed to clarify the intended relationship between the volunteer and the Trust.

16.2 The Trust will end a voluntary placement with immediate effect in cases of concern relating to harm or risk of harm by a volunteer. Should the matter of concern relate to safeguarding; this should be escalated to the named nurse for safeguarding and reported to the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) as appropriate.

16.3 Staff should raise any non safeguarding concerns about a volunteer with the departmental lead where the volunteer is based; if their concern is unresolved then it should be escalated to the voluntary service manager. Examples of concerns could be punctuality or dress code.

16.4 Volunteers should raise any concerns with the departmental lead where they are based; if their concern is unresolved then it should be escalated to the voluntary service manager.

16.4 Volunteers who require training on patient information systems will be issued with an Honorary Contract prior to accessing training in line with Trust Information and Governance Policy.

17.0 Monitoring and Assurance

17.1 The process for monitoring compliance are outlined in the following table:

Policy Objective	Monitoring method	Assurance	Lead
To set out that recruitment of volunteers are in line with safe recruitment practices and in keeping with Trust policy. This should include DBS checks.	Annual audit of recruitment practice	Safeguarding Assurance Board	Deputy Chief Nurse
To attract and retain a diverse volunteer team which is representative of the community it serves.	Review of recruited volunteers annually	Quality Committee	The Voluntary Service Lead
To ensure that the roles are open	Audit recruitment	Quality	The Voluntary

to all sections of the community and consistent with our Equal Opportunities policy on recruitment.	process annually	Committee	Service lead
To ensure that paid staff understand why volunteers are involved and the role they have within the organisation.	Audit staff understanding biennially	Quality Committee	Deputy Chief Nurse / Voluntary Service Lead
To support the aims of improving the experience of patients, engaging the local community and maintaining the reputation of the organisation.	Annual staff survey	PPE Committee	PPE Lead
To help individuals gain the confidence and skills they need to join / rejoin the jobs market and apply for paid posts.	Volunteer feedback annually	PPE Committee	The Voluntary Service Lead/ Departments
To expose the career opportunities in the NHS to volunteers who may be looking for a career in healthcare.	Volunteer audit annually	Quality Committee	The Voluntary Service Lead

18.0 Supporting Documents

Document	Owner	Approval Authority
Protocol for recruiting a volunteer	Volunteer Service Lead	
Functional Requirement Form	Occupational Health	
Role Description	Requesting Departments	

References

1. Kings Fund (2013) Volunteering in acute trusts in England, Kings Fund.
2. DH (2010) Strategic Vision for Volunteering in Health and Social Care, Department of Health.
3. DH (2015) Themes and lessons learnt from NHS investigation in matters relating to Jimmy Savile, Department of Health.