

Volunteer Services Policy

Version Number	6	Version Date	29 th November 2021
Policy Owner	Health and Wellbeing and Volunteers Team		
Author	Health and Wellbeing and Volunteers Manager Volunteer Services Co-ordinator		
Last Reviewed	May 2018		
Staff/Groups Consulted	Health and Wellbeing Human Resources Department Occupational Health Department Risk Manager Matrons Business Manager Volunteers		
Draft agreed by Policy Owner	November 21		
Discussed by Policy Group	Not applicable		
Director Approval	On completion of final draft		
Next Review Due	November 22		
Policy Audited			
Equality Impact Assessment Completed	Yes		

CONTENTS

- 1. VOLUNTEER POLICY INFORMATION
 - 1.1 INTRODUCTION
 - 1.2 PURPOSE OF POLICY
 - 1.3 DEFINITIONS
 - 1.4 BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING
 - 2. VOLUNTARY WORK WITHIN THE TRUST
 - 2.1 ELIGIBILITY
 - 2.2 LENGTH/LOCATION OF THE VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT
 - 2.3 VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS
 - 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 3.1 MANAGERS' AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 3.1.1 REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS
 - 3.2 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 3.3 VOLUNTEERS' RESPONSIBILITIES
 - 3.4 MONITORING PERFORMANCE
 - 3.5 SUBSTANCE MISUSE
 - 4. THIRD PARTY SECTOR VOLUNTEERS
 - 5. TRAINING
 - 6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
 - 7. EXPENSES
 - 7.1 FUEL ALLOWANCE
 - 7.2 PARKING EXPENSES
 - 7.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT EXPENSES
 - 8. INSURANCE COVER
 - 9. CONFIDENTIALITY
 - 10. DATA PROTECTION
 - 11. HEALTH AND SAFETY
 - 12. RISK ASSESSMENT
 - 13. TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT
- ANNEX A - RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Volunteer Policy & Procedure

1. Volunteer Policy Information

1.1 Introduction

Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust recognises the important role which voluntary activity plays in complementing the work of its staff and therefore values, supports and encourages the efforts of these individuals who give freely of their time and energy to benefit the Trust. Volunteering can also contribute to raising individual self-esteem and self-confidence and volunteers can make a valuable contribution to the quality of life of service users and carers.

Volunteer placements provide many opportunities and benefits to the Trust including; influencing the quality of future employees, developing recruitment channels through building

links with local schools and the local community, influencing career choices and raising the profile of the Trust in the community.

1.2 Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to advise both the volunteers and the Trust of their respective responsibilities when volunteers are working with the Trust, thus providing volunteers with a well-supported and fulfilling environment which, in turn, enables the Trust to benefit from the long term commitment of appropriately supported volunteers.

It is also to provide a consistent framework for the recruitment and placement of volunteers across the Trust and to detail the arrangements and procedures necessary to ensure that those undertaking volunteer placements are engaged in accordance with current health and safety legislation and that our staff, service users, and volunteers are not exposed to any hazards that would have adverse effect on their health and safety. The procedural arrangements outlined below will help to ensure the policy is operated consistently and fairly across the Trust.

1.3 Definitions

Volunteers: someone who freely gives regular, unpaid help that either enhances the services that NHS staff can provide or helps the Trust to improve and develop its services.

Volunteer Promise: The volunteer has the knowledge, skills and support to make a full and rewarding contribution and the unique contribution the volunteer makes is agreed, respected and recognised by all.

1.4 Benefits of volunteering

Volunteers help to provide a wide range of activities and services that contribute to the quality of the patient and visitor experience. Volunteering enables those who take part to participate and make a real difference.

Many people, be they patients, carers, relatives, visitors, people with disabilities, children, and more, benefit from the extra attention or assistance that volunteers can offer.

Volunteering offers a way for individuals to contribute to their local community which in turn provides the Trust with the benefit of local support

Volunteers gain new experiences, skills and confidence, and can offer the Trust a different perspective on the working environment.

2. Voluntary work within the Trust

2.1 Eligibility

The minimum age for volunteers within the Trust is 16; volunteer applicants aged between 14 and 16 can be considered in a limited number of areas due to the emotional and sensitive issues of any clinical environment.

The decision to accept volunteers aged 14 – 16 is on a case by case basis via partnership agreements with the youth organisation, including Duke of Edinburgh.

Individuals requiring a period of work experience are not classed as volunteers and will be referred to the Academy Business Co-ordinator.

The Trust welcomes applications for volunteering from across the community and there is no upper age limit, however the volunteer must be able to fulfil the duties and demands of the volunteer role which will be subject to risk and Work Health assessments.

The Volunteer must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and willing to do regular lateral flow tests.

2.2 Length/Location of the Volunteer Placement

Volunteer placements of any length may be organised within the Trust, all volunteer roles must have a written role description and be clear about the purpose and activity associated with each volunteer role.

2.3 Volunteer role descriptions

There are a variety of volunteer roles within the Trust. The most important thing is that volunteers are matched to good quality roles where they can make a real difference. Volunteer roles should always complement or add value. The role should not replace the job of paid staff. The task should be a specific activity for which the volunteer can take responsibility for and something that the volunteer wants to do, and which benefits the service and the service users.

Volunteer placements will be made in line with vacant volunteering positions, and the individual's ability to perform the task required. Individuals will be placed after consideration of their maturity, experience and any health issues. Volunteers will not be under the direct supervision of a relative, unless in the role of a carer or as agreed by all parties. Volunteers between 16 and 25 years of age, will not be placed on Ward 10 (the Children's Ward), due to the sensitivity of the patients on this ward and the closeness of age.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that volunteers are placed appropriately, any concerns should be highlighted immediately to the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator by either the volunteer or the ward/department manager. Every effort will be made to address the concerns and alternative, mutually agreed arrangements will be made if necessary.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Managers' and Staff Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for ensuring that they and their staff are familiar with, and follow the provisions of, the Volunteer Services Policy and that the volunteers are integrated into the team whenever practicable.

Managers should ensure that all staff within their team are clear about the role of the volunteer and foster good working relationships with them. The standards of care and conduct of volunteers should be the same high quality as those of staff.

Volunteers should be assigned a named contact person by the manager of the area they are working in to provide supervision, support and regular reviews.

The manager should ensure that the volunteer receives full information about their work area and their responsibilities to the Trust. The manager should provide the volunteer with induction and training in the specific tasks to be undertaken and they should receive ongoing opportunities for learning and development.

The manager must ensure that the volunteer has a clear understanding of the duties of care and confidentiality attached to working in a healthcare environment and that they have the necessary levels of supervision at all times.

The manager may wish to appoint another member of staff within the area of the work to act as a mentor. This person will have delegated responsibility for the volunteer in particular regard to the supervision of the volunteer on a daily basis and will provide support and guidance.

Any accident/incident involving the volunteer should be reported in the normal way by completing an incident form.

It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that the requirements of Health and Safety legislation and Trust Policy on this subject are satisfied.

Managers will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate safeguards and controls are put in place to ensure the health and safety of volunteers within the Trust.

Staff should ensure that any volunteers working in their area are made to feel a welcomed member of the team. This is key to ensuring volunteers are fulfilled in their role and ensuring their long term retention.

3.1.1 Requests for Volunteers

Any ward/department requesting a volunteer placement should email the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator. Volunteer placements will be co-ordinated in accordance with Trust policy through the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator.

A role description will be drawn up by the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator working with the Ward/Department Manager leading on the proposed volunteer placement.

The role description and training requirements will be agreed prior to the commencement of any recruitment.

3.2 Occupational Health Responsibilities

The Occupational Health Department is responsible for ensuring that volunteers are fit and able to undertake the work for which they have volunteered and for informing the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator of the outcome of any occupational health review.

Volunteers will be offered an Occupational Health check, if required, following a break (in excess of three months) in their volunteer duties following ill health.

3.3 Volunteers' Responsibilities

All volunteers are expected to maintain the same professional standards as the Trust's employed staff and adhere to Trust policies and guidelines at all times.

All volunteers not affiliated to an outside organisation are accountable to the Trust Volunteer Services Co-ordinator and the identified Ward/Department Manager.

Volunteers are expected to participate in all training and induction sessions which the manager feels is relevant and necessary to their role. Volunteers may only undertake their voluntary work at times agreed with their manager/supervisor.

Volunteers should raise any issues of concern relating to their voluntary work with their immediate manager/supervisor/volunteer co-ordinator or through the Trust Freedom to Speak Up/ Whistleblowing procedures as appropriate.

Volunteers are required to wear suitable clothing and footwear for the work situation and be neat and tidy at all times. In keeping with our commitment to professionalism and customer service, volunteers are expected to adhere to the dress code while in their volunteer placement both on Trust premises or representing the Trust outside the hospital.

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to notify the area to which they are allocated if they are unable to be present and to do so as far in advance as possible. Volunteers should always report on and off duty on each occasion to the appropriate Manager/Supervisor.

Volunteers are expected to sign in on arrival on the sign in sheet for their area, to ensure we have an accurate and up to date record of who is in the trust.

Volunteers are expected to hold in confidence any information about the employer, staff or patients which they may obtain during the work period and comply with all Trust policies and procedures, particularly in relation to accident reporting and, health and safety. The volunteer must always alert the appropriate manager if a client or patient is known to them.

Every workplace has its own hazard and volunteers are expected to act responsibly at all time and take care not to expose themselves, or others to risk. Volunteers should not operate machinery unless they have been trained in its use and should not attempt to lift heavy or awkward objects without formal manual handling training. If in doubt, ask.

Any Volunteer who is arrested on any charge or served with a summons on a criminal charge must inform their Manager/Supervisor immediately. The Trust reserves the right to terminate the Volunteer agreement immediately.

Volunteers are expected to inform their manager immediately and complete an accident form if they sustain an injury at work. Volunteers should also inform their manager immediately if they feel unwell.

Volunteers are strongly advised not to bring any items of monetary or sentimental value into the hospital. Any property brought onto the premises is at the volunteer's own risk. The Trust cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage.

Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free site. This means there is no smoking allowed inside or outside any of the hospital buildings, including car parks, grounds or walkways. This applies to all those visiting or working in the hospital.

3.4 Monitoring Performance

While volunteers are not employed by the Trust it is still necessary to establish a level of performance, conduct and attendance in order to provide a safe and consistent service. All volunteers are expected to adhere to Trust policies applicable to volunteers. For further guidance regarding which policies are relevant, advice should be sought from the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator.

Any arrangements for monitoring performance will be agreed with the volunteer, the Volunteer Service Co-ordinator, and the Ward/Department Manager at the beginning of a placement for a review after an agreed length of time.

If a manager has concerns about a volunteer's performance or behaviour, the manager should highlight to the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. The manager and the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator should then consider what line of action is to be taken, and seek guidance from Human Resources as appropriate.

In the case of volunteers from affiliated organisations, the nominated lead from that organisation and the Trust Volunteer Services Co-ordinator will work together to address any performance issues.

Volunteers who feel they have a complaint should, if they are able, refer the matter to the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator. If this is not appropriate they should raise the matter with their Ward/Department Manager.

3.5 Substance Misuse

If volunteers report for duty under the influence of alcohol, drugs, solvents or any other substance they will be asked to leave the Trust premises immediately.

4. Third Party Sector Volunteers

As well as engaging directly its own volunteering workforce, the Trust works in partnership with a diverse range of third sector organisations enabling volunteers to enhance the services offered by the Trust.

The Trust works with these partners to ensure that we develop mutually productive placements that are meaningful for the volunteers and enhance the experience of our service users.

5. Training

All volunteers are expected to complete the Trust Induction, which can take place virtually or in person and includes training which goes hand in hand with the duties outlined in the written description such as fire safety training, manual handling or management of aggression training.

Volunteers are also expected to attend specific familiarisation and training sessions associated with the area in which they are placed.

Volunteers may also be offered the opportunity to attend suitable training courses to improve their skills or enhance their knowledge.

The Academy will play a role in supporting volunteers in achieving their role. In addition to Trust Induction, volunteers will undertake training as required for specific roles which may be both Academy and department based.

6. Equal Opportunities

The Trust is committed to diversity in all areas of its work and to developing and maintaining an organisation in which different abilities, backgrounds and needs are valued.

The equal opportunities principles that apply to the recruitment and employment of paid members of staff also apply to volunteers. Furthermore, the Trust recognises the value that volunteers with different backgrounds, skills, outlook and experience bring to the organisation and will not discriminate against volunteers on the grounds of any protected characteristic, i.e. age, disability, race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, gender reassignment, or political affiliation.

7. Expenses

7.1 Fuel Allowance

Volunteers are eligible to claim reimbursement of fuel allowance towards the cost of their fuel within the following limits:

A fuel allowance claim must be no more than the distance of the return journey from home to Yeovil District Hospital up to a maximum of 40 miles per volunteer shift.

7.2 Parking Expenses

Free parking is provided in the main visitors' car park (space permitting). When your vehicle registration has been registered with Staff Car Parking.

7.3 Public Transport Expenses

Public transport expenses will be reimbursed up to £6 per return journey per volunteer shift (this is in-line with on-site parking reimbursement) on presentation of a valid ticket and completed travel claim form.

8. Insurance Cover

All volunteers will have the same indemnity cover as employees for the purposes of claims arising from any such placement. The Trust is a member of the NHS Litigation Authority's Liabilities to Third Parties Scheme, which provides indemnity for employer and public liabilities.

However volunteers working on behalf of an affiliated registered charity are covered through the indemnity liability insurance of that charity. All volunteers are covered through the public liability scheme for working on Trust premises.

Volunteers who use their own vehicle in the course of their volunteering duties should ensure that their car insurance covers them for driving as part of a volunteer scheme. The manager must ensure they receive a copy of the insurance policy.

9. Confidentiality

During the discharge of their duties, volunteers may find themselves in possession of confidential or highly personal information about patients, their relatives and visitors, staff or colleagues. Confidentiality applies to all hospital issues including a person's attendance at a clinic, presence on a ward or any other department. In addition, volunteers must never try to elicit information from a patient about their medical condition or reason for being at the hospital. Volunteers must not disclose or discuss such information either during or after a volunteer placement.

Confidentiality is regarded as a serious issue and a volunteer may be asked to leave if found to be in breach of this code of practice. All volunteers will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement as part of the recruitment process.

10. Data Protection (changes to come into force with GDPR 25 May 2018)

Volunteers can be assured that the Trust only requests information that is needed and that it will keep the information securely, limit access to it and will not pass on any details without consent, unless legally obliged to do so, in line with the Data Protection Act.

Volunteers have the right to view information held by the Trust about them under the Freedom of Information Act. Any questions about the information the Trust keeps should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

All volunteers must ensure they comply with Trust policies regarding the confidentiality of information and data protection. Any queries should be directed to the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator in the first instance.

Further information on the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts can be found at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.

11. Health and Safety

Volunteers are covered by the Trust's Health and Safety and associated policies, copies of which can be found on the Trust's intranet. All volunteers must ensure they comply with these policies.

12. Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of the Ward/Department Manager to advise the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator of any associated risks applicable to a volunteer placement in their area. Any specific risks identified will be covered through induction and additional training.

A risk assessment will be completed on each volunteer role, to identify any risks associated with the role and agree actions to remove or reduce these risks and ensure a safe volunteering environment.

A risk assessment for COVID will be completed on each volunteer before they begin their new volunteering role.

13. Termination of Appointment

A volunteer may resign at any time by informing the Volunteer Service Co-ordinator. It is appreciated if termination can be given in writing or by e-mail, providing as much notice as possible. All Trust property must be returned to the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator e.g. ID badge and uniform. If the volunteer has been given IT access, the IT department should be asked to close down their account on leaving.

The Trust reserves the right to remove any volunteer whose performance or placement is unsatisfactory.

ANNEX A - RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1.1 Application

All prospective volunteers must complete an application form and attend an interview.

1.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Volunteers are required to complete a DBS application form for some placements in the Trust. All DBS checks will be handled in line with the DBS Policy. Any previous offences will not necessarily preclude an individual from volunteering with the Trust. It is important to be honest in the registration process. Any disclosures will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If a DBS check is returned with a conviction, advice will be sought from the Human Resources Department.

1.3 Occupational Health

Prospective volunteers are required to complete an Occupational Health Questionnaire. The aim of health screening is to:

- ensure the volunteer is fit to carry out the mental and physical tasks of the intended role without risk to themselves, colleagues or patients
- identify whether any role or task modification or additional support is required, ensure it is accurately identified, that the Trust puts in place any agreed modifications highlighted or to provide an assured process to the Trust when adjustments are not required

All volunteers must be prepared to complete an immunisation and vaccination form and provide evidence of an up to date history of vaccinations where required.

1.4 Interview

All volunteer applicants are interviewed by the potential Ward/Department Manager and/or the Volunteer Services Co-ordinator.

Any person recruited as a volunteer, will have their specific duties and responsibilities explained to them. It will also be provided in writing in the form of a role description, a signed copy of which will be kept on their personal file.

1.5 Honorary Contracts

All volunteers are issued with an Honorary Contract, a signed copy of which is kept on the volunteer's personal file.