Volunteers Policy

Solent NHS Trust policies can only be considered to be valid and up-to-date if viewed on the intranet. Please visit the intranet for the latest version.

Purpose of Agreement	This policy aims to provide the Trust with robust and consistent approach for enrolment, induction and support for volunteers.
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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

The organisation recognises the important and valuable contribution volunteer roles can make to achieving these objectives, as well as in enhancing patient experience and enabling communities to participate in the community health agenda. Providing volunteer opportunities and supporting volunteering helps promote active citizenship and social inclusion. In addition, developing volunteer opportunities may increase the organisation's relationships and profile within the communities we serve. It is important to recognise that volunteers do not fulfil roles that paid staff provide; rather they enhance and enrich this work.

A volunteer is any participant who supports our services in an unpaid capacity.

1.1   Volunteer roles help enhance our services in a variety of ways. Examples include:
- Meeting, greeting and directing patients
- Gaining patient feedback
- 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
- Befriending
- Peer support (see definition 1.2)
- Gardening

1.2   Peer support (also known as Expert by Experience) are volunteers recruited to share their own life experience, for example a health condition or experience of using a service. Peer support consists of trained individuals volunteering to support people with specific or multiple needs providing practical advice and guidance.

1.3   The role of the volunteer is complementary to the work of Trust employees.

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 and staff at Solent NHS Trust. It also provides guidance to ensure volunteers and staff 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 including 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   Volunteers are people, who, of their own free will and without payment or expectation of payment, contribute their time, energy and skills to benefit their community, or to acquire relevant experience.

It should be noted that this policy does not relate to people who are involved in engagement activities, research or work experience and training schemes which have a specific context outside of volunteering.

This policy also does not relate to professional students who are undertaking clinical placements within the Trust as part of their training programme, e.g. student nurses, doctors etc.

All queries about whether this policy applies in a specific context **must** be discussed and agreed with the Volunteer Manager.

4.0   Policy Objectives

4.1   Through this policy the Trust aims:
- To set out that recruitment of volunteers is in line with safe recruitment practices and in keeping with Trust policy.
- To attract and retain a diverse volunteer community which is representative of the local 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 / re-join the jobs market and apply for paid posts.

5.0   Roles and Responsibilities

5.1   The **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.

5.2   The **Volunteer Lead (someone identified within the service/team)** is responsible for:
- Ensuring that volunteer enrolment follows 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.
- Interacting with volunteers, respecting and valuing their contribution.
- Providing assurances to the Trust of the recruitment, pre-employment screening and adherence to equality legislation processes.

5.3 **Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager/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 Learning and Development; ensuring three yearly training such as safeguarding is undertaken.
- Keeping a central record of all volunteers within the Trust, their placement and volunteer supervisor.
- Monitoring the reliability, attendance and performance of volunteers.
- Interacting with volunteers, respecting and valuing their contribution.
- Assisting managers in identifying and developing appropriate volunteer roles.

5.4 **Volunteers** are responsible for:
- Ensuring they adhere to all Trust polices including the Trust's policy on Data Protection and confidentiality.
- Keeping within the boundaries of agreed tasks and may refuse tasks not specified within their role description.
- Wearing an official identity badge whilst volunteering within the Trust and returning this and any parking permit when they leave.
- Behaving in a manner which reflects positively on the organisation and to promote our vision and values.
- Reporting to the person in charge of the ward/department on arrival, introducing themselves and awaiting any advice or instructions.
- Actively taking part in induction and training as required.

5.5 The **Human Resource Department** will support the volunteering team in the recruitment and selection process in line with Trust policy and procedures. This will include 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 service users and daily support.

5.7 The **Learning and Development Department** will work with the Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager to deliver a programme of statutory and mandatory training for volunteers in compliance with legislative and organisational requirements. The Trust 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 patient experience at Solent NHS Trust and are expected to contribute in accordance with the Trust Values.

6.2   Operational procedures adhere to key Trust policies, including confidentiality, health and safety and recruitment guidelines. The overarching standards are set out in section 7.

7.0   Recruitment

7.1   Prior to recruiting volunteers, consultation and discussion must take place within the service area and with the Volunteer Manager & Patient Experience Manager 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 to support the individual.

All new volunteers are required to:
- Complete an application form
- Attend an interview
- If provisionally accepted, complete pre-employment checks as required
- Commit to attending a programme of Trust induction and statutory and mandatory training

8.0   Role outline

8.1   Role specifications are established prior to recruitment, with key activities, competencies and minimum time commitment described.

9.0   Pre-Employment Checks

9.1   Volunteers are required to complete the following checks before they are issued with an identification badge and volunteer agreement:
- Provide the names, contact details of two independent referees for reference clearance
- 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
- Attend relevant part of Corporate Induction

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, Diversity and Human Rights 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. Information Governance training should be completed 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 those who volunteer for more than 5 consecutive hours in one day. An additional contribution towards travel costs can be made to ensure the volunteer role is accessible. This must be agreed in advance with the Volunteer Lead (see toolkit 18.1 for further information).

13.0   Reporting Concerns

13.1   Volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns they may have with their Volunteer Lead. A record should be kept of any issues raised. Volunteers are given local contact names where possible and are encouraged to raise any issues or concerns, for early resolution. Any unresolved issues should be escalated to the Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager. All volunteers must be informed of Freedom to Speak Up.

14.0   Information Sharing

14.1   Staff side will be kept informed through Joint Consultation Committee 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 volunteer role description as agreed by their 'manager' and within the time frames of their 'shift'.

16.0   Statement of Agreement

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

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 Safeguarding Adults Management of Allegations Lead 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 Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager.

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 Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager.

16.5   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 Objectives	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	
To attract and retain a diverse volunteer team which is representative of the community it serves.	Review of recruited volunteers annually	Quality Improvement & Risk (QiR)	The Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager / Volunteer Lead
To ensure that the roles are open to all sections of the community and consistent with our Equal Opportunities policy on recruitment.	Audit recruitment process annually	Quality Improvement & Risk (QiR)	The Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager / Volunteer Lead
To ensure that paid staff understand why volunteers are involved and the role they have within the organisation.	Audit staff understanding biennially	Quality Improvement & Risk (QiR)	Chief Nurse / The Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager
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 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		The Volunteer Lead / Departments

18.0   Supporting Documents

18.1   Enrolment packs for volunteers and managers when recruiting:

Document	Contains	Owner
Enrolment Pack for Volunteers 1. Application Pack.zip	Application Form Health Assessment Form Declaration Form DBS Form	Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager
Enrolment Pack for Managers	Role Description Personal skills & attributes form	Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager

2. Managers Pack.zip	Role Hazard Form Induction Form Leavers Form	
Toolkit	Expenses Handbook Reporting Concerns / Complaints Flow Chart Induction & Training	

18.2 **Trust Policies**

Dignity at Work Policy 2016
Recruitment & Selection Policy
Data Protection, Caldicott & Confidentiality Policy
Managing Concerns & Complaints Policy and Procedure 2016
Grievance Policy
Freedom to Speak Up Policy Disciplinary Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Standard Precautions Policy 2016
Management of Violence & Aggression Policy
Fire Safety Policy
Freedom of Information Policy
Moving & Handling Policy
Uniform Policy
Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy
Induction & Essential training Policy
Drug, Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Mental Capacity Act Policy
Policy on the Management & Allegations of Abuse Under Safeguarding Procedures
Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy 2016

References

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

Appendix: A   **Equality Impact Assessment**

Step 1 – Scoping; identify the policies aims	Answer
1. What are the main aims and objectives of the document?	To provide guidance and governance structure to staff on the process for volunteers.
2. Who will be affected by it?	All employees of Solent NHS Trust.
3. What are the existing performance indicators/measures for this? What are the outcomes you want to achieve?	There are no existing performance indicators. To ensure that there is a robust governance and database in place to ensure volunteer safety and compliance.
4. What information do you already have on the equality impact of this document?	N/A
5. Are there demographic changes or trends locally to be considered?	N/A
6. What other information do you need?	N/A

Step 2 - Assessing the Impact; consider the data and research	Yes	No	Answer (Evidence)
1. Could the document unlawfully discriminate against any group?		x	This policy is designed to ensure equity of treatment and adherence to legal requirements.
2. Can any group benefit or be excluded?		x	All groups would be treated equally in accordance with the stipulations of the policy.
3. Can any group be denied fair & equal access to or treatment as a result of this document?		x	As above.
4. Can this actively promote good relations with and between different groups?	x		Volunteers are to be actively encouraged from all community

			groups.
5. Have you carried out any consultation internally/externally with relevant individual groups?		x	Internal only.
6. Have you used a variety of different methods of consultation/involvement		x	Volunteer working group.
7. Mental Capacity Act implications		x	
8. Will this document require a decision to be made by or about a service user? (Refer to the Mental Capacity Act document for further information)		x	

If there is no negative impact – end the Impact Assessment here.

Step 3 - Recommendations and Action Plans	**Answer**
1. Is the impact low, medium or high?	Low
2. What action/modification needs to be taken to minimise or eliminate the negative impact?	
3. Are there likely to be different outcomes with any modifications? Explain these?	
Step 4- Implementation, Monitoring and Review	**Answer**
1. What are the implementation and monitoring arrangements, including timescales?	Recruitment exercises for volunteers are monitored by the Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager to ensure that a consistent process is applied.
2. Who within the Department/Team will be responsible for monitoring and regular review of the document?	The Volunteer & Patient Experience Manager.
Step 5 - Publishing the Results	**Answer**
How will the results of this assessment be published and where? (It is essential that there is documented evidence of why decisions were made).	Through Quality Improvement & Risk group (QiR).