

City Hospitals Sunderland  
NHS Foundation Trust



## Volunteers Handbook

## WELCOME TO VOLUNTARY SERVICES

We're very pleased to welcome you as a volunteer and look forward to working with you.

This booklet gives some important information about voluntary work in City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust. It explains the training and support you will be given, and includes the guidelines and regulations that you need to know about. So please do read it carefully.

If you have any questions, or there is anything you would like to talk about, please do not hesitate to contact the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator (VSC) on FREEPHONE 0800 5876 513 or email [shirley.gillum@chs.northy.nhs.uk](mailto:shirley.gillum@chs.northy.nhs.uk). In addition to this you can call in person to speak with the VSC who is based in the PALS office which is situated on B Floor opposite the lifts.

The help of volunteers is very much valued by the Trust as well as its directors, staff, patients and visitors.

We use volunteers in the Health Service because their help enables staff to use their time and their professional skills more effectively.

Volunteers have their own different skills and qualities. Working alongside health professionals, they enhance the whole service for the benefit of patients.

Some volunteers prefer to spend most or all of their time in personal contact with patients. Others are happiest if they can assist with practical tasks.

We identify the needs of patients and staff and match volunteers to those needs. To do this we keep in mind what each of our volunteers is hoping to achieve, as well as their personal preferences, qualities and skills.

Whatever roles you undertake for the Trust as a volunteer, your time and effort will be greatly appreciated.

### **The support available to you**

The Voluntary Services Co-ordinator tries to keep in regular contact with volunteers in a number of ways:

The Voluntary Services Co-ordinator might visit your placement, or phone or email you to see how you are getting on.

You will have an initial review after 6 weeks to make sure that you are happy and suited to the job that you are doing.

Further reviews will follow on a 6 month basis.

Volunteers must report to the PAL'S office when they attend for their volunteer duties to sign in and discuss any concerns they may have with the VSC.

If you have any problems or difficulties at any time, please don't hesitate to contact the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator who will do everything to help.

## **Induction and Training**

Once a successful application and CRB form are received you will be invited to attend a half day volunteers induction, usually this will happen prior to your start date but will always be within three months of commencing your placement.

The induction will consist of the following:

- Introduction to the Trusts Volunteer policies and procedures
- Health and Safety
- Occupational Health
- Manual Handling
- Occupational Therapy – wheelchair handling
- Infection Control
- PALS Service
- Patient nutrition
- Introduction to Care of the Elderly wards
- Confidentiality

In addition all volunteers are required to attend the Trusts compulsory Fire Training

At City Hospitals Sunderland we value our volunteers and recognize that additional training will enhance the Volunteers placement. As such we encourage our volunteers to attend optional training courses provided by the Trust, e.g.

- Customer Care
- Back care
- Introduction to Counseling
- Time Management
- Child Protection
- Dementia Training
- Basic Life support
- Conflict resolution
- Assertiveness
- Career Development and helping complete application forms
- Support with basic skills training

Every new Volunteer on starting their placement will be asked to sign a Volunteer agreement (Appendix 6) which will agree the terms and conditions laid out in this booklet and the offer of the placement.

## **Other Volunteer Benefits**

- Free parking permits and access to free Park and Ride scheme
- Discounted on site gym membership
- Staff discount at the on site Rainbow laundry
- 25% discount in dining room on production of identity badge

All volunteers are encouraged to join the Foundation Trust. Applications packs are available from the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator.

## **GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS**

This section covers the requirements you need to know about - and abide by - in order to work as a volunteer with City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the guidelines and regulations, please discuss them with the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator as soon as possible.

### **Identity**

All volunteers must be easily identified. An I.D. badge will be issued and must be worn at all times while on duty and returned to the Voluntary Services Department at the end of your placement. A uniform is also available for some areas.

### **Uniforms**

If you are helping in a clinical area in which the staff are wearing uniforms, you might be asked to wear a uniform too. Tabards are worn in the café.

Uniforms are supplied by Voluntary Services and should be returned on leaving.

We expect a high standard of cleanliness from our volunteers and uniforms can be laundered within the hospital laundry free of charge. Volunteers who do not need to wear uniforms should wear clothes suitable for the job such as smart trousers or skirt and sensible shoes. No jeans or trainers are allowed. A minimum amount of jewellery is permitted, e.g. a wedding band, a watch and small ear rings only.

### **Attendance**

It takes time and energy to get volunteers settled in. In return, we ask you to make an initial commitment of at least 6 months or 50 hours.

Some volunteers work at irregular intervals, as and when they are needed. But most work at more regular times. Once your tasks have been arranged, it is important that you take this commitment seriously.

If, at any time, you are prevented by holidays or sickness from attending, please let either the department where you help or the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator know.

In addition you are required to sign in at the start of your shift where this is appropriate.

### **Unsuitability**

A volunteer who proves to be unsuitable for the work, fails to comply with regulations, or does not attend regularly, may be asked to leave at any time.

### **Dealing with Complaints about Patient Care**

Patients are entitled to express their views on any aspect of their care and treatment. Any complaints made by a patient to a volunteer - or any complaints or concerns raised by a volunteer on behalf of a patient - should be discussed with the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator or raised with PALS staff.

### **Lifting and handling**

Manual handling training will be provided by the Trust. The general rule is that volunteers should not lift patients or **any** heavy loads.

### **Travel Expenses**

At present volunteers are expected to meet their own travel expenses however this policy is currently under review

### **Confidentiality**

It is likely that, while working in the Health Service, you will see and hear things of a highly confidential nature.

Such matters, and any other information relating to the diagnosis, treatment or personal affairs of patients - must not be discussed with anyone other than senior staff or the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator. Please bear in mind that it is not appropriate to discuss any problems relating to your placement with other staff, patients or family members and friends.

### **Fire, Health and Safety**

Fire training is part of the mandatory training which all volunteers are obliged to attend. Volunteers must make themselves aware of the fire safety precautions within the area they are working. Fire alarms are tested every Thursday morning from around 8.00 am. If alarms are activated at any other time volunteers will be directed to their nearest fire point.

### **Control of Infection**

Control of Infection is covered within induction training. However it is imperative that all Volunteers follow the guidelines laid out with regard to Control of Infection. It is vital that you wash your hands before entering and leaving any ward or department area and that you use alcohol gel between visiting patients. All volunteers are provided with a personal hand alcohol gel to assist in maintaining good hand hygiene. Gloves and aprons should be worn as directed by ward/directorate staff.

### **Legal Documents**

Should you be approached by a patient, relative, carer or staff member to sign any form of legal document e.g. will/power of attorney forms you must decline and bring the request to the attention of the VSC or your mentor.

### **Accidents and “Untoward Incidents”**

If you have an accident while on duty, however slight, or experience an untoward incident, it must be reported to the manager of the department where you are working, or to the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator by the end of the next working day.

It is in your interest to make as full a report as possible, in case of later repercussions.

### **Insurance**

Volunteers are covered by the Trusts insurance policy and will be supported in any accident caused by them in the same way as paid staff, providing they are working within the limits of their role.

## **Smoking**

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust has a no-smoking policy for staff and visitors, which also applies to volunteer. This means no smoking on the premises or within 5 metres of the Trusts gates, or while wearing your volunteer's badge or uniform. Your co-operation is appreciated.

## **Meals and Refreshments**

Volunteers are entitled to use staff facilities for tea and coffee etc. If your shift is more than four hours you will be entitled to a luncheon voucher from the Voluntary Service Co-ordinator which can be redeemed in the staff canteen.

## **Industrial Action**

In the event of industrial action by staff, volunteers may undertake their normal duties if they wish to do so, but not more.

## **Gifts and Money**

Volunteers should not accept money from patients. Small gifts may be accepted from patients or staff but for volunteers own protection the Voluntary Services Co-ordinator should be made aware of any such gifts.

## **Valuables**

The trust cannot be held responsible for the loss of money or valuables.

Purses, wallets and any other valuable items that have to be taken on duty should be kept with you, or in a locker or lockable drawer.

Any case of loss should be reported to the staff in charge at once and entered in the incident book. The Voluntary Services Co-ordinator should also be informed.

## **Security**

Security is a key issue in the Trust and every effort is made to ensure the safety of everybody on their premises.

Volunteers who find themselves in a situation that feels threatening or uncomfortable should always seek advice from staff, contact hospital security on 777 or dial (9) 999 to call the police in an emergency.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

If a Volunteer fails to perform to the standards agreed within the Voluntary agreement or adhere to the Trusts policies and procedures he/she will follow the Volunteer disciplinary procedure which is outlined in the Voluntary Services Policy and Procedures.

## **Termination of Voluntary Placement**

The Trust will terminate any volunteer placement with immediate effect in the following circumstances:

- Breaching confidentiality
- Gross Misconduct (as stated in the disciplinary policy)
- Any other circumstances it deems appropriate.

## **Volunteer Exit Procedure**

Exit interviews are an important tool for the VSC to ensure that the Trust is providing a positive experience for volunteers. The trust has an exit strategy which is outlined

in the Voluntary Services Policy and Procedures and every volunteer on leaving the Trust voluntary service will be asked to complete an exit form.

### **Complaints Procedure**

City Hospitals Sunderland aims to provide high quality services.

In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure through which you can let us know of for any reason you are not satisfied with your dealings with the organisation which is outlined in the Voluntary Services Policy and Procedures.

### **Policies and Procedures**

This list is not exhaustive. Please refer to the Voluntary Services Policies and Procedures for full details of all the above.

### **Volunteering is a Two Way Process**

Please keep us informed of any of the following changes:

- If any changes affect your voluntary work

- If you have a change of address, email address or telephone number

- If you are no longer able to continue as a volunteer

Our volunteers provide much-needed help, and we ask a lot from them:

- Time

- Reliability and commitment

- Observation of the guidelines in this booklet

- Support for the activities that are organised, both social and training

- Wearing of required uniforms and badges

We believe you should get as much out of volunteering as you put in e.g.

- Job satisfaction

- The opportunity to care for people who are ill or disabled

- The support and training needed to do the job

- The chance to gain experience and develop new skills

- Social contact and activity

- Refunding of expenses

- Appreciation - there is also an annual "thank you" social event hosted by the trusts' board and directors for all volunteers as well as a Volunteer Christmas lunch

We look forward to becoming partners with you in this two-way process.